

SYMBOLIC BOUNDARIES AND SOCIAL CAPITAL MOBILIZATION  
AMONG LOW-INCOME WORKERS IN SINCAN, TURKEY

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## ABSTRACT

### SYMBOLIC BOUNDARIES AND SOCIAL CAPITAL MOBILIZATION AMONG LOW-INCOME WORKERS IN SINCAN, TURKEY

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This thesis explores how low-income workers mobilize their social capital in the labor market. Distinguishing accessed social capital from mobilized social capital, it analyzes the criteria of evaluation which low-income workers in their decision to give hand to their connections in job-finding assistance. It employs the concepts of symbolic boundaries and frames to understand why some individuals are deemed unworthy of helping in the labor market. It argues that symbolic boundaries, conceptual distinctions made by actors to categorize people, have reflections on the mobilization of social capital. Thus, this study aims to accomplish three tasks: to analyze the mechanism which produces symbolic distinctions by exploring the frames of work, success and worth, to discover the content of symbolic boundaries and to illustrate their effects on the social capital mobilization. The informants make a distinction within decent and vagabond (*düzgün vs çakal çukal*) type of people. In the labor market, where active social network to provide inside track of jobs is imperative, their decision-making articulations overlap with the symbolic

boundaries they create between decent and vagabond people. They require the job-seeker to be *decent (düzgün)* in order to mobilize their social capital.

**Keywords:** social capital, symbolic boundaries, decency, frames

## ÖZ

### ANKARA, SİNCAN'DAKİ DAR GELİRLİ İŞÇİLER ARASINDA SEMBOLİK SINIRLAR VE SOSYAL SERMAYE MOBİLİZASYONU

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Bu tez dar gelirli işçilerin işgücü piyasasında sosyal sermayelerini nasıl harekete geçirdiklerini araştırmaktadır. Erişilen sosyal sermayeyi, mobilize olmuş sosyal sermayeden ayırarak, dar gelirli işçilerin, bağlantılarına iş bulma konusunda karar verirken kullandıkları değerlendirme kriterlerini analiz etmektedir. Bazı kişilere işgücü piyasasında neden yardım edilmediğini anlamak için sembolik sınırlar ve çerçeveler kavramlarını kullanır. Sembolik sınırların - aktörlerin insanları kategorize etme konusundaki kavramsal ayrımlar - sosyal sermayenin harekete geçirilmesinde yansımaları olduğunu savunmaktadır. Görüşmeciler, düzgün vs çakal çukal sınırında bir ayırım yapmaktadırlar. Bağlantılarına iş bulma konusunda yardım ederkenki karar verme söylemleri, düzgün ve çakal çukal insanlar arasında yarattıkları sembolik sınırlarla örtüşmektedir. Sosyal sermayelerini harekete geçirmek için iş arayanın düzgün olmasını şart koşarlar.

**Keywords:** sosyal sermaye, sembolik sınırlar, düzgünlük

*To my mother...*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

How do low-income workers mobilize their social capital? This thesis aims to explore the criteria of evaluation of low-income workers in deciding whether to mobilize their social capital in the labor market. I take the job-finding assistance of low-income workers living in Sincan as my case to illustrate the mental process through which they evaluate their connections in their decision-making. Given the importance of social networks in the Turkish literature, this thesis takes this empirical fact one step further and analyzes the ways those networks are mobilized. In other words, I explore why some individuals are deemed unworthy of giving hand while some are not. I argue that the definitions of worth, or systems of evaluation, of low-income workers have effects on the mobilization of social capital. Following Lamont (2012, p. 210), I will approach the ways they evaluate other people through the tool of boundary work and find out the content of internal symbolic boundaries within their community. I state that the symbolic boundaries they create have social effects by shaping the likelihood of mobilizing social capital.

There has been a long tradition of studies in the role of social networks in the Turkish context. This is often marked by urbanization processes and urban-rural migration paralleled with chain migration patterns. The embeddedness of individuals into extended family ties (*hemşehrilik*), formation of homogenous neighborhoods, mostly squatter regions, composed of people from same origins, and integration of newcomers to new residential areas through existing dwellers' resources often shaped the ways social capital studied in Turkey. In his seminal work, Karpat (1976, p.118) illustrated that migrants migrated to bigger cities from same origins has formed squatter regions (*gecekondular*) with dense network

structures. This chain migration pattern allowed migrants to exchange information and resources enabling them to integrate to the urban life. Moreover, they formed a kind of system of relations based on trust to protect themselves from moral degeneration. Following Karpat, further studies showed the role of networks among low-income groups in their integration to the social fabric (Tekşen 2003, Erman 1997, Güneş-Ayata 1996, Işık & Pınarcıoğlu 2001). The neighborhoods composed of *hemşehri* networks allowed residents to exercise social control within each other (Tekşen 2003, p. 71). Thus, being embedded into dense ties prevented them to be influenced by atomizing effects of the urban life. Studying the perceptions of squatter and apartment housing, Erman (1997) explored that the squatter dwellers often appreciated strong support networks among residents. The informal and close relations among neighbors indicated as a significant feature of the squatter communities where dwellers hold trust and solidarity toward each other (p. 96). Işık & Pınarcıoğlu (2001) also examined the social networks within the squatter regions as a buffer mechanism that prevents newcomers to experience long-term financial hardship. They coin the term “poverty-in-turn” to illustrate the process which newcomers cope with poverty thanks to older migrants’ resources in terms of employment and housing. Thus, the older settlers transfer the state of poverty to new settlers who need to adopt into the urban life. Once they make their living in the region the more recent migrants will experience the same process as they did.

The literature on the social networks among low-income groups analyzes the role of social networks among low-income people. In the labor market, the squatter dwellers are employed thanks to the dense social ties within the neighborhood. The *hemşehri* networks are viewed as the channels through which poor individuals get jobs in the workplaces of their kin. The state of poverty is considered as a temporary process that will be transferred to the newcomers. They used to live in homogenous neighborhoods with people from same origins. Thus, squatter regions are filled with dense extended family ties and *hemşehri* networks that help poor people to find job and housing. Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç (2002, p. 212) proposes “The Family Pool” as solidarity networks for coping with poverty. The model is based on

extended family ties that have reciprocal relationships within each other. It is a generational model which generations transfer economic, social and cultural resources to each other thereby creating a solidarity system. They also analyze the conditions that hinder the functioning of the family pool (p. 229). However, they conclude that considering solidarity networks to function forever would be a fallacy (p. 238). Due to diminishing resources in the work economy and the housing market impedes the sustainability of the solidarity networks. Therefore, the recent years have entailed changes in these realms. The changes in the labor market and the urban landscape alter the contextual forces which have effects on the social capital within low-income groups. Hence, we first need to understand the relevant social changes and then discuss how we can fill this gap.

Keyder (2005, p. 127) argues that in the absence of formal mechanism of integration, people mostly relied on kinship and neighborhood reciprocity that are, in turn, significantly altered because of recent changes in the economy. He states that the end of the era of successful developmentalism entailed shifts in the labor market due to globalization and neoliberal capitalism (p.127). The structural transformation of the labor market and employment opportunities, making it difficult for new migrants to integrate through wage employment, have paved the way for more service sector jobs rather than manufacturing jobs (p. 129). Thus, as the labor market becomes more complex and saturated, finding a way out of the state of poverty becomes more challenging. The transitory nature of poverty turns into a permanent experience due to the changing employment patterns. Buğra & Keyder (2003, p. 9) argues that the older assumption which the social protection is sustained by the family network as the poverty considered as transitory is now challenged. The family networks, which used to be a buffer mechanism, have begun to dissolve due to the decreasing opportunity of stable employment opportunities. Thus, according to Buğra & Keyder (2003, p. 19), a new social stratum, who cannot subsist on the pay they receive, has emerged. The extended family ties have shrunk because they are often in the same situation as well.

The second relevant change that compels us to revise our study of social capital is the commodification of land, urban transformation projects, and their reflection on neighborhood communities. Although I will briefly discuss these processes, the scope of my argument is based not on the political economy of urban renewals but on their effects on the communities and experiences of residents. The policies allowing migrants to occupy land and construct housing has been abandoned due to the conflicts of interest. The land has become a commodity from which profits can be extracted (Keyder 2005, p. 130). Therefore, land occupation and informal housing is no longer possible. In addition to this, the existing squatter regions, which are composed of homogenous groups settled through chain migration patterns, have undergone urban transformation projects. As the governance of urban land has shifted to a neo-liberal mode urban transformation projects are the main mechanisms through which land is commodified. Kuyucu & Ünsal (2010, p.1484) states that the squatter zones were the main targets of those projects. According to them (p. 1485), the reforms enabled a commodified urban regime creating opportunities for state agencies, private developers and credit agencies to implement renewal projects in *gecekondu* and inner-city slum areas. Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı (TOKİ – Housing Development Administration) has been the prime engine behind the urban transformation process in Turkey after 2000s. Backed by legal adjustments and regulations, TOKİ holds a monopoly on urban policies with large state funds (Gough & Gündoğdu 2009). In order to extract profit from inner-city regions, which were once squatter areas hosted migrant people, TOKİ designates those regions as urban renewal areas benefiting from the “criminal” stigma created by the public discourse and legal ambiguities on land (Kuyucu & Ünsal 2010).

In their later studies Işık & Pınarcıoğlu (2008) revisited Sultanbeyli and analyzed the changing dynamic of urban poverty in the region. According to the scholars (p. 1365), under the transformation of the housing and labor market, residents lost their active networks on trust and solidarity that was prevalent in the last two decades. They argue that (p. 1366) residents now lack hope and aspiration unlike earlier

periods. They conclude that (p. 1367) “the former system in which poverty could be escaped through networking along cultural and ethnic identities is a thing of the past now and the poverty trap is a vicious circle now.” Within this new generation of the urban poor, they (p. 1367) remark the youngsters with criminal networks engaging illicit activities as one consequence of this change.

These dynamics seriously altered the social fabric of the *gecekondü* communities. There are two reflections of this process on the social capital of low-income families. Firstly, the accessed networks through acquiring land and occupation where extended family members living are now blocked by the new nature of the land market. Thus, it is not possible for new migrants to access housing as it was in the earlier periods of urbanization. Keyder (2005, p. 131) states that in the absence of being situated in a socially constituted neighborhood the new migrants cannot count on “the information, the mutuality and generalized reciprocity enjoyed” in the earlier era. Secondly, after the projects, majority of the residents are displaced resulting to the loss of social ties. There is an extensive literature on the displacement of disadvantaged people due to gentrification processes (Grier & Grier 1978, Marcuse 1986, Atkinson 2004). Although my aim is not to review this significant literature I wish to provide a definition of displacement and discuss how it could be linked to the study of social capital within the scope of this thesis. Grier & Grier (1978, p. 8) defines displacement as emerging where

any household is forced to move from its residence by conditions which affect the dwelling or its immediate surroundings, and which: 1. are beyond the household’s reasonable ability to control or prevent; 2. occur despite the household’s having met all previously imposed conditions of occupancy; and 3. make continued occupancy by that household impossible, hazardous, or unaffordable.

In our case, some interviewees move to regions where the housing is more affordable. There are some informants who moved from inner-city regions of the city to Sincan. We will delve into the impact of this process in their social networks. In a nutshell, the formation of social ties in the neighborhood is a process. The



residential mobility causes low-income families to lose their existing social networks in their neighborhoods, which was mostly composed of people with same origins, and compels them to start from scratch. Thus, we need to ask how the social capital of low-income groups has changed if the social networks existed within *gecekondu* communities are diminished due to discussed processes.

Given the above relations we cannot speak of a single-type of low-income neighborhood like we used to discuss as the *gecekondu* neighborhoods. The changes in the conditions of the labor market and urban relations created new forms of regions and communities. They also changed the public discourse on the low-income neighborhoods framing them as *varoş*. The meaning of *gecekondu*, which used to be the rural other, has turned into threatening other who lives in *varoş* neighborhoods. In that sense *varoş* contains pejorative stigmatization imbued with meanings like illegality and criminality. However, Yücel (2016) argues that we need to think of multiple types of *varoş*. In his typology, he defines three types of *varoş* neighborhoods: inner, fragmented and integrated. He states that (p.55) *varoş* neighborhoods differ in terms of their distance to the city centers, the relations within actors living in the neighborhood, and variations of structures. The *integrated varoş* is where a neighborhood identity is developed within territorial boundaries. The *inner varoş* is where it is located at the city center with blurred borders. Finally, the *fragmented varoş* is where the neighborhood is fragmented in terms of physically and socially. If we employ this typology we can define Sincan as a fragmented neighborhood. I will discuss its feature in a more detailed way in later in this section. However, what Yücel reminds us is that low-income neighborhoods do not necessarily composed of homogenous groups with dense social networks. Once this is paralleled with changing work economy in those neighborhoods it becomes imperative to conduct new studies on the social capital of low-income groups.

## 1.1. Theoretical Orientation and Conceptual Tools

The theoretical stance of this study is derived from the premises of cultural sociology which focus on to understand the meaning-making processes of individuals, to account for different meanings, and to analyze their effects in social life (Spillman 2002, p. 4). In that sense, the symbolic aspect of social life is the central concern of cultural sociology. This perspective “contends that human action involves meaning, as agents interpret and evaluate their environment and actions through distinct filters.” (Daniel et. al 2011, p. 291). Daniel et. al (2011) argue that cultural sociology accomplishes three analytical goals: “reveal the meanings that operate in a situation, help us understand (*verstehen*) how these meanings contribute to social processes, and explain why situation lead to an observed outcome.” (p. 293). Therefore, it is useful for examining the mobilization of social capital which is enabled or constrained by the meanings created by individuals. My goal is to explore the meanings which are affective in low-income workers decision to mobilize their social capital as their meaning-making processes enable and constrain their action. In other words, I aim to approach the issue of social capital from the cultural sociology perspective thereby employing powerful theoretical tools to *explain the meaningful* process of social capital mobilization.

When we discuss issues like culture and low-income groups we might think of existing studies on class culture and/or identity of low-income groups in Turkey. To be clear, although the self-conception of workers is examined when relevant to understanding social capital, this is neither a study of class culture nor identity. *The purpose of cultural perspective is to employ its theoretical tools to explain a social process.* These tools are frames and symbolic boundaries to explain the process of social capital mobilization. In the next section, I will review social capital theories, illustrate why we need to incorporate frames and symbolic boundaries to our analysis, and discuss those concepts.

### **1.1.1. Social Capital**

Social capital has gained wide scholarly interest in the recent decades. The social capital theory argues that people are better off when connected to each other thanks to the inherent resources in social relationships. These resources include the sense of solidarity and trustworthiness towards each other, the information channels through which they share, the mutual obligations within actors (Lin 2001, Coleman 1988, Bourdieu 1986, Putnam 2000). The intellectual roots of social capital lie mostly on the works of Bourdieu, Lin and Coleman. I will provide a systematic literature review of the theory of social capital based on these scholars in order not to complicate matters and to go beyond the scope of this thesis. I will also review the work of Putnam in order to explore the link between micro social relations and macro level outcomes. Therefore, in this section, I will discuss multiple definitions of social capital given by these scholars, and come up with a conceptualization of social capital that will be used in this thesis.

Coleman (1988) introduces different forms of social capital and its structural conditions. He defines social capital in three aspects: obligations and trustworthiness, information channels and norms. He considers the conception of social capital rooted in the idea that social actors are rational. Coleman viewed social capital as resources obtained through social relations within the social structure to achieve a desired end. He explains two elements in different entities of social capital: “They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors within the structure” (p. 98). Social relations can result in obligations, expectations and trustworthiness, information channels through which actors being informed, and establishing effective sanctions and norms.

The first of these resources is explained by Coleman (p. 102): “If A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B.” Thus, trustworthiness that B holds towards creates an obligation which A can employ in the future. The second form of social

capital, norms and sanctions, is more viewed at the community level: “A prescriptive norm within a collectivity that constitutes an especially important form of social capital is the norm that one should forgo self-interest and act in the interests of the collectivity” (p. 104). The social norms of people are regulated by the social norms of others within the network. They can either provide effective rewards or sanctions within the community. The third resource of social capital is the information channels through which actors acquire knowledge from an actor is connected (p. 104). They provide actors with information to be flowed between actors. Coleman (p. 104) views it important in providing basis for action. This form is relevant for this study in a certain way. for example, a friend of an unemployed person can inform him about the job opening and arrange the work by talking to his/her employer. In the Turkish context, we know that social networks have utmost importance in finding job. Thus, this is an example of the ways information channels are crucial factors in job-finding process in the labor market. However, the information does not flow equally for every actor. Firstly, the embeddedness of individuals into social networks facilitates the flow of information affect the likelihood of access to job opportunities. Those who are not embedded enough are in disadvantaged position in accessing information channels. Secondly, following Coleman’s framework we can consider the first form of social capital, which is trustworthiness, as a condition of flowing information. Friends and family members who hold a normative expectation about work will provide work-related social capital to individuals. To sum up, social norms, information channels and obligations and trustworthiness represents the resources of forms of social capital in Coleman’s theory.

As part of the meso-level dimension of social capital, Sampson & Groves (1989) links the theory of social capital to the Chicago School’s social disorganization theory. The social disorganization theory, proposed by Shaw & McKay (1942) suggests that low-income status, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential stability cause community disorganization which produce high rates of delinquency. These structural factors disrupt the community organization (Sampson & Groves 1989, p.

775). Defining community as “a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and ongoing socialization processes” (p. 777), Sampson & Groves analyzes the level of social organization based on above structural factors. From a social capital perspective, they define social organization in three dimensions: community’s ability to supervise and control teenage peer groups, local friendship networks, and local participation in voluntary organizations (p. 779). Therefore, by relating structural factors of social disorganization theory to the dimensions of social capital, they aim to analyze intermediary conditions of the formation of social capital. I will also use this approach when analyzing the nature of social networks of the informants in the next chapter. We will explore the effects of those structural factors on social ties.

Putnam (2000), from political science perspective, argues that there is a relation between micro social relations and civic life in the American community. He initiates his analysis from a simple but essential observation that although the number of individuals goes to bowling increases the number of bowling clubs declines in recent decades. In other words, people bowl alone. He problematizes this fact through the concept of social capital and discuss this is a general trend in the American community where the social capital drops in the American life. He defines (p. 19) social capital as “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.” He links the concept to “civic virtue” and comes up with how social capital can be useful to make democracy works. He identifies five major areas where social capital matters (p. 288). First, social capital helps individuals to solve problems in a more collective resulting into safer neighborhoods. Second, it enables individuals to trust each other making everyday business and social transactions less costly. As a result, economic growth is achieved. Third, it creates an awareness of common fate that trusting and active individuals develop “character traits that are good for the rest of society” (p. 88). This makes people more tolerant and empathetic improving the quality of democratic institutions. Fourth, social capital helps the flow of information among individuals to achieve their goals (p. 289). Finally, social capital improves

individuals' mental and physical health by providing collective coping mechanism with health issues.

Lin (2001, p. 29) defines as “resources embedded in a social structure that are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive actions.” He argues that four types of resources are information, influence on the agents, social credentials that ties provide, and the personal reinforcement providing emotional support and public acknowledgement (p. 20). He separates social capital into three analytical parts: the resources, being embedded in a social structure, and action. Lin (p. 29) states that a theory of social capital should accomplish three tasks:

First it should explain how resources take on values and how the valued resources are distributed in society – the structural embeddedness of resources. Second, it should show how individual actors, through interactions and social networks, become differentially accessible to such structurally embedded resources - the opportunity structure. Third, it should explain how access to such social resources can be mobilized for gains – the process of activation.

One of the major contributions of Lin's conception is that it separates the accessed social capital and the mobilized social capital. Considering mobilization as an action, he allows us to problematize the social action of mobilizing social capital. While the accessed social capital model is defined as the extent of resources a person accessed in his/her general social ties the mobilized social capital means “the use of social contacts and resources provided by the contact in the job-search process” (p. 82).

Recent studies on social capital generally focus on social networks and their effects on the individual attainment process as they include social resources. Lin and Dumin (1986, p. 365) states that:

Consequently, social resources can be viewed as being embedded in one's social network. The theory posits that access to and use of social resources affect the success of instrumental action. The theory also predicts that individuals with certain structural and personal characteristics have greater

access to social resources and, therefore, have greater success in their use of social resources for instrumental purposes.

Structural characteristic of the individual and his/her resource network affects the use and access to social resources (p. 366). Over the decades, researcher examines various types of social resources and status outcomes. Granovetter's classic study (1973) on "the strength of weak ties" argues that those who are embedded in low-density network structures are better off in receiving latest information than those who are included in high-density network structures because infrequent weak-casual ties functions as bridge across which diverse information is exchanged between actors. He asked his informants how frequent they see their personal contacts who helped them to find a job and found out that only 16,7% of respondents express that they see their contacts often while more than 80% say they found their jobs through ties they see occasionally or rarely. Granovetter (1973) concludes that weak ties are much more effective than strong ties in job finding.

Lin, Ensel, and Vaughn (1981), on the other hand, examines the contact resources (e.g. the contact's wealth, status, or power) to explore the effect of it in occupational attainment. The contact's status had positive impact on the mobilization of social capital. In other words, the higher the occupational status of the contact the higher the likelihood of occupational attainment. Thus, according to Lin and Erickson (2008, p. 20), mobilizing embedded resources in the labor market holds significance.

Bourdieu (1986, p. 51) defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition." He believes that individuals possess varieties forms of capital including cultural, economic and social in varying degrees. Cultural capital refers to the embodiment of the knowledge of taste whereas economic capital is the possession of financial resources (Bourdieu 1986). He argues that social capital provides access to resources not only as profit, through conversion of capitals, but also as processes of

maintenance of social connections. The volume of social capital which agents have access to “depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural, or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those whom he is connected” (p. 51).

To understand the theoretical argument of this study we need to discuss the components of Bourdieu's theory from which this thesis derives its theoretical inquiry. The journey of Bourdieu begins with questioning how stratified social systems of domination and hierarchy resist and are reproduced within generations. He conducts a *relational class analysis*, analyzing how different class positions relate each other and that is fluid and shifting perspective instead of a rigid one. The understanding of social class is not shaped by a realist, substantialist, and empiricist mode of thinking but is rather a social space which includes reciprocal externality of the objects it keeps (Bourdieu 1987). His social world is a multi-dimensional universe that can be empirically established by discovering four major power factors or *forms of capital* affecting the social life. Levels of possession of these capitals devise the logic of differentiation that, the root of the feeling of distinction which individuals, seek for. The empirical investigations of Bourdieu led him to these fundamental social powers, *economic capital*, *cultural capital*, *social capital* which is highly correlated with the fourth one, *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu 1987).

Economic capital refers to financial resources and economic situation of an individual which might be derived from different kinds of economic practices. It is regarded as a fact of life representing material wealth that brings monetary return to its owner and allows for further accumulation (Goldthorpe 2007). Cultural capital represents individual dispositions and competences obtained through cultural traces that reflects a certain perspective of life which values are transferred within generations. Education reserve an important role since educational qualifications provide returns to their holders. Bourdieu pays special attention to culture capital and analyzes in a deeper context in his works, particularly in his taste map analysis. Social capital is the potential resources attributed to a social network which provides



a solid support in terms of credentials. It is transferred through generations as well and an important factor in social capital is the ability to make use of it. It may expand by time providing an access to a larger social connection that might be useful for an individual since social capital is a powerful tool for economic capital. Symbolic capital includes different types of capital which are perceived as legitimation of power factors. It works like an umbrella under which incorporates other forms of capital.

Starting from these capitals, Bourdieu takes a structuralist approach and divides society into different fields where every agent has its own position and required practices under rules of organization (Bourdieu 1987). However, it is not the structure defines the agent but rather it is a dialectical relationship between the agent and the position in which within the organization, agents not only have fundamental rules to accept but also have their own motivations and interpretation which give them a space for relative autonomy. The improvisation of agency during the application of required practices establish its position taking. The relation between position and position taking is the disposition of agency. From the beginning of this process the four capitals of Bourdieu are effective in shaping the agent. Therefore the distribution of four capital undergird the aggregation of individuals in certain dispositions which is eventually called *habitus* (Bourdieu 1987). Habitus refers to a system of dispositions shaped by experiences of agents in particular positions in the social structure. Hence similar amount of each capital is a habitus. Plenty of habitus is prevalent in a social structure. Since it indicates a social group occupying akin to social positions in the social space where the improvisations of agency are affected by four capitals, occupation still preserves a significant role in the link between employment and habitus.

The concept of *conversion*, transforming capitals into one another, represents a significant mechanism in the reproduction of existing conditions of individuals. Bourdieu states that (1986, p. 47)

...capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital.

Given the scope of this thesis, this thesis aims to explore those *conditions* which enable or block the conversion of social capital into economic capital. However, once we discuss the functioning of social capital in Bourdieu's theory then we might ask questions about how it can be turned into economic capital, what are the conditions of it, and how we can study this process empirically.

Bourdieu (1986, p. 52) finds social capital essential in securing financial and symbolic profits. Individuals transform "contingent relations, such as those of neighborhood, the workplace, or even kinship, into relationships that are necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.)" (p. 52). What Bourdieu indicates is that the creation of the network of relationships is done through "the symbolic constitution" that "presupposes and produces mutual knowledge and recognition" (p. 52). This symbolic dimension which entails reciprocal recognition among individuals is a condition that paves the way for exchange relations. Thus, following Bourdieu, we can neither reduce social capital into pure economism nor neglect the symbolic dimension through which individuals recognize each other to sustain those relations. We need to reconcile these two aspects in order to analyze the conditions through which individuals recognize each other, and mobilize their social capital.

We could link Lin's conceptualization of mobilized social capital with Bourdieu's discussion on the conversion of social capital into economic capital. Both arguments enable us to problematize the action of social capital mobilization. Bourdieu's formulation, which captures the symbolic aspect of social exchanges, leads us to study the conditions of mobilization process by analyzing the symbolic process through which actors perceive and recognize each other to sustain those exchanges.

The “subjectively felt” notions like friendship and respect, as Bourdieu mentions, leads us to think of novel conceptual tools which could enable us to understand how people evaluate other people and perceive them as one of our kind, or their “friend” as Bourdieu puts it, to capture those symbolic processes. Thus, I employ the concepts of frames, the lenses through which individuals perceive the world to understand their definitions of work, success, and worth (Goffman 1974), and symbolic boundaries, the lines that people draw against other people whom do not hold similar frames – between worthy and unworthy individuals- (Lamont & Molnar 2002), to explore those symbolic processes creating recognition as the conditions of conversion of social capital into economic capital, or in other words, of mobilization social capital in the labor market. That is why I aim to combine the cultural sociology and the (mobilized) social capital theory: *to explore the meaning-making process that enables and/or constrains the mobilization of social capital*. We need to explore the different frames of success and worth among low-income individuals, illustrate how these frames turn into symbolic boundaries to whom people evaluated as unworthy based on those frames, and show how those symbolic boundaries have impact on the mobilization of social capital.

In this study, I will define social capital as *the social networks of low-income workers have, the trust they have toward each other in the neighborhood, and the information channels through which information passed between social actors*. Following Lin (2001, p.82) I will define the mobilized social capital as *the use of social contacts and resources provided by the contact in the job-search process*. In what follows, I will define the concepts of frames and symbolic boundaries.

### **1.1.2. Frames**

Erving Goffman’s (1974) explorations provide us means to improve our efforts for expanding the cultural terrain of meaning-making. The concept of frame challenges the idea that the culture of the low-income group as an internally consistent, and coherent entity thereby opening a space on understanding the diversity among

individuals. Frame is a mental scheme which allows individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label events, people, and circumstances that compose daily experiences (Goffman 1974, p. 21). According to Young (2010, p. 55), they “provide individuals with the cognitive material by which to imagine, plan, and rationalize to themselves patterns of social action that may (or may not) be pursued.”

There are two properties of frames that contribute to our analysis. First, based on their prior experiences, understandings, and their environment, individuals can perceive same events differently (Lamont & Small 2008, p. 81). This premise allows us not to assume that people living under similar structural conditions will have identical worldviews or “culture” that is shared universally. It enables us to capture heterogeneity in individuals’ understandings that live in the same neighborhood. Second, the concept of frame contributes to the relation between culture and behavior. Rather than a Parsonian idea of values which automatically assumes cause-and-effect relation between values and action (Swidler 1986), the frame perspective posits a constraint-and-possibility relationship (Lamont & Small 2008, p. 81). Frames make certain actions more or less likely by constraining the behaviors that actors conceive of (Daniel et. al 2011, p. 300).

In our study we will employ the concept of frame to understand interviewees involvement in the world of work and their meanings of work, success and worth. The informants of low-income neighborhoods hold distinct frames about work and work opportunity thereby committing to income-strategies in differential degrees. Thus we will explore the elaboration of low-income workers of good (or bad) job, and success to understand their decisions about how to earn income. The concept of frame will also allow us not only to explore internal variations among the informants but also to capture generational differences in meanings of work and success. More important, we will link these frames with the action in that world as their frames define what is possible. The primary issue at here is that the definitions of work, success and worth define provide tools for informants to make sense of their lives. These standards are employed to define who they are, and who they are

not. Therefore, they bring us to the concept of boundary work that people draw lines against people who do not hold similar frames.

### **1.1.3. Symbolic Boundaries**

The concept of symbolic boundaries, which is an integral part of cultural processes, helps to analyze “the types of lines that individuals draw when they categorize people” (Lamont 2002, p. 98). The main issue at here is that the nature of criteria that people use “to define and discriminate between worthy and less worthy persons, i.e., between ‘their sort of folks’ and ‘the sort they don’t much like.’” (p. 98). We will apply this framework to understand the criteria of evaluation of low-income workers to mobilize their social capital in the labor market exploring the effects of symbolic boundaries in this process.

Lamont & Molnar (2002) analytically separates symbolic boundaries from social boundaries and provide a framework by giving insights about the relationship between the two types of boundaries. According to them (2002, p. 168), “symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality.” This notion of classification -as the lines that separate people, groups and things- creates and maintains social ordering through conceptual means. Organized into persistent categories, symbolic boundaries allow us to grasp the dynamic dimensions of social relations. As they classify groups and provide a sense of organization of social life, symbolic boundaries “also separate people into groups and generate feelings of similarity and group membership” (Lamont & Molnar 2002, p. 168).

Social boundaries, on the other hand, are more durable and institutionalized social differences manifested in unequal distribution of or access to resources (material and non-material) and social opportunity. The objectification of symbolic classifications is salient in a pattern of social interaction when they are widely agreed upon. Therefore, symbolic boundaries are necessary but insufficient

condition for the existence of social boundaries such as spatial segregation, labor market segregation, and patterns of intermarriage (Lamont & Molnar 2002, p. 169). Once institutionalized social boundaries take a constraining character and translate into patterns of social exclusion (Lamont & Molnar 2002, p. 169). Understanding subjective boundaries that only potentially can lead to the drawing of objective boundaries is an important task to comprehend essential medium through which individuals gain social advantage, often in reference to superior cultural traits. Hence, documenting differences in symbolic boundaries across groups means documenting structures of potential social inequality and exclusion. These social consequences show importance of paying attention to the boundaries that members of various groups create, the criteria used to draw and justify them, and the groups they exclude or stigmatize. Therefore, the framework I present here aims to scrutinize the types of lines that individuals draw when they categorize people.

This study aims to contribute to social capital theory by combining it with the concept of symbolic boundaries. While Bourdieu provides us some knowledge about the dynamics of exchange relations, I aim develop on his concept of conversion, transforming of social capital into economic capital, using the concept of symbolic boundaries (Lamont & Molnar 2002). Informants often evaluate others through their lenses of morality and make a distinction between decent and vagabond type of people. The internal symbolic boundaries have reflections on their decision of social capital mobilization in the labor market. Therefore, symbolic boundaries often play a mediating role as the condition of the exchange relations within actors.

## **1.2. The Scope and Argument of the Thesis**

While we have a clearer idea of *whether* social networks are effective among low-income groups, we do not depict *how* they do so. I aim to understand the mobilization process of the social capital. I take job-finding assistance among low-income workers in the labor market in Sincan as my case to explore the process

through which whether they give hand to their connection or not. According to Fourcade and Healey (2017, p. 21) markets are never free of moral judgments to support the discourses of the market. They propose to consider the moral order and the market as interacting forces thereby legitimating the functioning of the market. (p. 15). Markets define categories of worth by playing a moralizing role, and create moral boundaries between persons (p.17). Parallel to this argument, Granovetter (1985, p. 168) stresses the importance of personal relations in generating trust in economic life that reliable information mostly comes from one who have past dealings with that person. Therefore, in the labor market where moral categories are affective the ways trustworthiness is created have paramount importance if we are to understand why some individuals are perceived as unworthy of giving hand in the labor market. Therefore, this study follows this approach to explore how those categories are created and turned into boundaries. Then it traces the effects of those boundaries in social capital mobilization in the labor market to discover how those categories of worth enable/constrain the action of job-finding assistance.

In a context where we cannot take homogenous neighborhoods, *hemşehri* ties, and transitory nature of poverty for granted we need novel theoretical tools to explain this process. The existing literature falls short on two aspects. Firstly, it does not depict the differentiation among low-income groups living in the same neighborhood. To explore how low-income workers mobilize their social capital we first need to understand the fragmentation among them. In other words, on what grounds they differ from each other in terms of the meaning of work and success. We need to understand the heterogeneity among the informants in order to explore on what grounds they distance themselves from other residents creating boundaries. Understanding the symbolic differentiation among individuals is necessary as the neighborhood is not composed of homogenous people.

Secondly, we do not know the criteria of evaluation of low-income workers when they mobilize their social capital. The existing literature do not distinguish accessed social capital from mobilized social capital except Kalaycioğlu and Rittersberger-

Tılıç (2002) who explored the conditions under which family pools do not function. Thus it is better to assume to have access to social network will not automatically allow low-income groups to achieve social resources. Therefore, by taking the job-finding assistance as my case, I aim to explore how the low-income workers decide whether to mobilize their social capital in the labor market.

This study is an attempt at filling this gap. The main research question of this thesis is how do low-income workers mobilize their social capital in the labor market? The sub-questions are what is the role of social capital in the labor market? How do low-income workers differ in terms of their meaning of definition of work, success and worth? How and whether those definitions sustain the repertoire of boundary work? What are the sources of symbolic boundaries? How do they categorize others by drawing boundaries? How those symbolic boundaries have effects on the mobilization of social capital? Because I separate accessed and mobilized social capital another sub-question is what are the conditions which affect the social networks of the informants? The significance of this thesis is to explore how symbolic processes can feed social inequality in a routine way by enabling/blocking the likelihood of social capital mobilization in the labor market. In other words, we could argue that although the categorization systems we produce are symbolic they have social effects thereby perpetuating the living conditions of certain individuals.

This study focuses on the criteria of evaluation in the mobilization of social capital. Under evaluation processes, it explores the content of categorization of connections, and its effect on mobilizing social capital. Thus, I argue that symbolic boundaries that low-income workers create have effects on the mobilization of social capital. Therefore, this study is composed of three analytical parts: the mechanism which produces symbolic distinctions by analyzing the frames of work, success and worth, the content of symbolic boundaries and their effects on the social capital mobilization.



To construct socially meaningful distinctions, individuals derive from observable behaviors and practices (Jackson 2001, p.4). In our case the informants make a distinction within decent and vagabond (*düzgün vs çakal çukal*) type of people. They label certain people as vagabond who do not work regularly and engage in drugs and violence. However I take this one step further and explore why people differ in their labor market orientations and in their degree of attachment to labor market. This mechanism creates the internal boundaries in the neighborhood along the decent and vagabond line. Turning into a social implication, this distinction also has effects on the social capital mobilization. In the labor market, where active social network to provide inside track of jobs is imperative, low-income workers hide information from those who are deemed unworthy of helping. Their decision-making articulations overlap with the internal boundaries they create between decent and vagabond people. They require the job-seeker to be *decent* in order to mobilize their social capital. Thus, this thesis argues that social capital mobilization is not automatic but conditional upon symbolic boundaries as mediating factors.

I will employ three analytical tools to construct my empirical object: *frames*, *symbolic boundaries* and *social capital*. *Frames* will help me to explore web of meanings of work, success and worth. They provide individuals with cognitive materials by which they perceive work and rationalize themselves about how to earn income (Young 2010, p. 55). They also provide the symbolic tools to create distinction between “us” and “them” by providing definitions of success and worth. (Lamont 2012). However, individual frames are not sufficient to understand the meanings of work. Given the neo-liberal transformation of the labor market (Harvey 2005, Bourdieu 1989), I will complement this with an analysis of structural conditions which, especially young people, affect their labor market orientations. This includes job features, structural market conditions, differential labor market experiences and definitions of good jobs. Then, once I understand varieties of frames of work and success, I will show how they provide the repertoire to sustain internal symbolic boundaries. Those who are excluded from work, especially young people, are more prone to street-related activities which are the backbone of

discourse of symbolic boundaries. The moral standards which certain low-income informants hold define who they are, and who they are not. Hence, they draw lines toward “people not like us” who do not share the same frames as them. Thus, *symbolic boundaries* will allow me to explore the content of internal distinctions within the neighborhood showing the distinction between “one of our kind” and others (Lamont & Molnar 2002). Finally, I will employ *social capital* to analyze how it is used in the labor market by low-income workers. Following Lin (2001), I will distinguish accessed social capital from mobilized social capital to understand the effects of symbolic boundaries on the mobilization process.

### **1.3. Methodology**

My approach to the study of framing and categorization was largely inductive. Insisting on not imposing or taking for granted the categories through which individuals categorize, I employed semi-structured in-depth interview technique to tap how they draw lines and what criteria they use to draw them. This allowed me to document the relative salience of different contents of boundaries. As the collection of data about frames and boundary work, which involves understanding meaning-making processes, cannot be obtained without talking to people, the research design of this thesis is based on qualitative design.

To capture the heterogeneity among informants and the boundaries they create, I employed Chicago School style typologies which are evident in some urban ethnographies (Gans 1962, Whyte 1955). The social types allow us not to fall into homogenizing the informants but to explore internal variations among them. Simmel’s social types like the stranger, the poor and the mediator are examples of this approach along with Gans’ “routine-seeker” vs “action-seeker” and Whyte’s “corner boy vs street boy”. Simmel’s elaboration of the stranger gives us a hint on how to approach social types. He argues that a social type “is a specific form of interaction.” (1971, p.143). There is a relational connotation indicating that the social types take their form through interacting with others in social settings.

Therefore, while I use typologies to capture variations among the informants this relational nature will allow me to explore the lines of differentiation.

### **1.3.1. The Research Design**

Given the theoretical lens and direction of social inquiry, I deployed semi-structured in-depth interviewing technique to probe categorization systems and their effects on the social capital mobilization. In order to capture the interactional dynamics in natural settings, in other words, to tap the situation effects of different contexts in which people draw different sorts of boundaries, I asked them to describe in concrete terms whom they feel close to and distant from, similar to and different from, at work and in their neighborhoods and communities. I asked whether there are groups which break the order in the neighborhood. Thus, my aim was to evoke variety of social contexts, with a special focus on the workplace and neighborhood, in order to explore whether and how boundaries are produced. Later, I asked how do they decide whether they will help to their connections in job-finding assistance to discover the effects of the boundaries they create. In other words, I aimed to tap the content of “worthy” individuals who are provided information and assistance was explored.

Following the definition of social capital used in this study, I asked individuals to map their closest family members and friends and asked follow-up questions in order to understand its composition and functions. Among the parameters of the social capital, kinship and neighborhood ties are taken into consideration. Therefore, when asking informants to evaluate these ties I aimed to explore the nature of changes in these parameters. Education and residential mobility are included as structural factors affecting social capital mobilization. I also asked them to evaluate their relationships between their neighbors and relatives to explore the feeling of trust within them. For the information channels I asked informants whether they share information with their ties about job opportunities. Finally, as distinguishing

the accessed from the mobilized, I asked them how they decide whether they will help to their ties in job-finding and become referral in their workplaces.

I was also able to conduct participant observation in a wedding saloon where informants used to work as dishwashers and waiters. I had chance to spend time with young people in their neighborhood. One of my interviewees took me to his friendship circles enabling me to hang around with them in their region. Later, I visited them couple of times, and spend time in parks. I hang around with a former gang member who currently work as a car park attendee (*otoparkçı*). I learnt about his illicit activities as well as the circulation of drugs in Ankara thanks to other informants. This allowed me to explore the interactions between different realms of their life like work and neighborhood.

Before I begin the field research, I conducted pilot study in three different regions in Ankara in order to determine the study site. Finally, I choose Sincan for reasons which I will explain in the next section. I deployed purposive and snowball sampling method to find informants. In order to be a part of the sample, participants had to (1) have at most high-school degree, (2) show full-time participation in the labor force in last two years,<sup>1</sup> (3) receive minimum wage<sup>2</sup> (4) live in the neighborhood for at least one year, (5) be between the ages 18-65. As recent studies show signs of age-related changes within workers (Nichols et. al 2003), I tried to pursue a quota sampling strategy as well, making sure that nearly half of workers are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, to explore cohort differences in meanings of work and experiences in the labor market.

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<sup>1</sup> By participation to the labor force I also include informal work experiences as well. Especially given the young people's experiences in the informal market, we need to incorporate the unstable, temporary, and informal jobs as part of their work experiences. However, the dynamics of the informal labor market is out of the scope of this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> The minimum wage is 1.603,12 TL (Retrieved 29.07.2018, from <https://www.csgeb.gov.tr/home/Contents/Istatistikler/AsgariUcret>)

### 1.3.2. Why Sincan?

Sincan is a relatively new *banlieu* planned as a result of squatter prevention policies after 1980s.<sup>3</sup> In recent years it has become a destination for people who migrate to Ankara. Moreover, due to the urban transformation projects in the city center many people moved to Sincan, especially those who are displaced from the inner-city squatter regions like Dikmen and Altındağ. The population of Sincan reflects this change as well. Between 2009 and 2016 its population rose from 445.000 to around 517.000 people.<sup>4</sup> The first reason I choose Sincan as the study site is that it is a kind of a break from the older type of low-income neighborhoods which are formed by *gecekondus* and homogenous type of people. Thus, it allows us to focus on a diverse neighborhood where we can capture heterogeneity among low-income individuals.

In her study of Sincan, Zengin (2014) traces its historical formation and current social relation within the region by interviewing its residents. Once formed as a small village, the city development plan (Metropolitan Alan Nazim İmar Planı) passed in 24.02.1982 marked Sincan as a squatter prevention region with mass housing resulting to the expansion of the city towards the west axis (p. 376). According to her, many Sincan dwellers express that they are “forced” to move to the region due to economic, job, or family related reasons (p. 371). She states that similar reasons were also experienced by people who arrived Sincan from the Çiçin neighborhood (p. 371).<sup>5</sup>

The saturation of poor inner-city regions like Altındağ and their designation as gentrification areas affected Sincan’s features. For instance, in their study in

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<sup>3</sup> In fact, Sincan is often perceived as conservative and islamic-oriented. The district is viewed as the home of islamic identity in Ankara (Zengin 2014). However these notions are not within the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, we might conclude that the majority of its residents are poor conservative people.

<sup>4</sup> Ankara Kalkınma Ajansı (2017). İstatistiklerle Ankara 2017. Retrieved 02.07.2018, from [http://www.ankaraka.org.tr/tr/istatistiklerle-ankara-2017\\_4028.html](http://www.ankaraka.org.tr/tr/istatistiklerle-ankara-2017_4028.html)

<sup>5</sup> The Çiçin neighborhood used to be a stigmatized squatter neighborhood in the inner-city region in Ankara. Its public image as a “dangerous” place hosting criminals and drug dealers paved the way for its gentrification process (Erdem et. al. 2011).

Altındağ, Erdem et. al (2011, p. 212) found out that displacing people from the inner-city squatter regions, which are marked by criminal reputation, does not prevent illegal activities. As one of the police officer states criminality changes place and moves to regions like Sincan (p. 212). My interviewees also confirm this fact by stating that drug-users, theft, kidnapping and violence gradually increased in recent years. They express that police patrols and raids for drug operations are more common than it was in the past. For example, Saraycık neighborhood where the squatter population of Altındağ migrated to is a well-known area that received much attention in recent years. In their study on the Saraycık neighborhood, Aksoy & Güzey Kocataş state that those who were displaced by the gentrification processes in Çiğir moved to this neighborhood thereby entering into a vicious cycle of crime due to dis-embedded social and economic character of urban regeneration policies (2017, p.287). Later, Saraycık is designated as an urban renewal area as well compelling the people who came from the squatter regions of Altındağ to be displaced again (p. 289). Given the proximity of Saraycık to my study site, the informants are aware of the reputation of the region and its population. However, they imply this change in a more general way expressing that Sincan as a whole transformed due to in-migration from inner-city regions of Ankara that have undergone urban transformation projects. Moreover, in addition to the in-migration of poor people, there is an out-migration of people who becomes wealthier from Sincan to Eryaman (Zengin 2014, p. 281). This perpetuates Sincan's relatively poor public image that disadvantaged families are left behind. Therefore, in the formation of the Sincan population and its communities, these processes play crucial role.

Besides conditions that make Sincan a region where a relatively new form of low-income neighborhoods at the structural and community level exist, its integration to the work economy and urban structure is the second reason I choose it as my study site. Once a small village distant to the city center, Sincan was integrated to the other parts of the city thanks to transportation networks allowing young people to move in the service sector in more affluent parts of the city. Among the interviewees there are some young people who work as store clerks, cleaners,

waiters, and coiffeurs. Moreover, the industrial site provides manufacturing jobs for residents. Thus, its work economy attracts low-income workers with minimum wage. Zengin (2014, p. 383) argues that while the notions of starvation and extreme poverty are not very salient, discourses like living at the minimum wage is more dominant among resident. Hence, we can define them as the working poor who subsist at the minimum wage.<sup>6</sup> This dynamic will enable me to capture the complexities of the labor market as well and will help me not to conduct a study on absolute poverty but relations between work and poverty.



Figure 1. The Study Site (source: google/maps.com)

The study site, as show in the map, composed of three neighborhoods, Mareşel Çakmak, Andiçen and Pınarbaşı neighborhoods. These were the three

<sup>6</sup> According to TÜRK-İŞ (Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions) the poverty line for four member family is 5. 662 TL. (Retrieved 29.07.2018, from <http://www.turkis.org.tr/TEMMUZ-2018-ACLIK-ve-YOKSULLUK-SINIRI-d75742>)

neighborhoods that I had access to most number of informants. Moreover, after I conduct the pilot study regarding the composition and income-level of neighborhoods they were also applicable to the criteria which are described above. Especially the Pınarbaşı neighborhood, given its proximity to Saraycık, was an area which has high residential instability and experienced an increase in criminal activities. Although there are some squatter regions in Sincan the study site is not composed of squatters. Rather they are multistorey buildings with four-five floors. Although most of the interviewees are homeowners, according to the interviews there are tenants as well who migrated in recent years.

### **1.3.3. The Field Research**

I initiated the sampling through my social contacts and then proceed via snowball sampling to reach a satisfying number of interviewees and develop a typology. Between November 2017 and March 2018 I conducted twenty-seven interviews with people whose ages range between eighteen and fifty-five in designated neighborhoods. Four interviewees are women. I began my sampling through a multiple-entry approach. I began in a wedding salon where informants work as waiters and dishwashers. However I had already two other contacts. One of them works as a security guard and the other as a satellite assembler. I initiated the snowball sampling through these contacts. For young people, again I had two contacts. One was a cleaner at the wedding salon and the other used to work at a coiffeur. Again, through these contacts I aimed to build a snowball sampling of both employed and unemployed young people. Finally, thanks to these relations, I also had the chance to speak to youth who engage in drugs and criminal activities. However, a discussion of drugs and crime is out of the scope of this thesis.

The pilot study allowed me to break with the pre-conception that young people have similar experiences and form a homogenous worldview. Thus, to explore varieties within the neighborhood in terms of the attachment to the labor market and



frames of work I interviewed both employed and unemployed young people.<sup>7</sup> My purpose was to understand why some young people withdraw, or excluded, from the labor market while others not.

I paid attention not to follow one contact and his/her friends in order not to fall into a homogenous group. Thus, I had three different people who live in the close neighborhoods that could help me to find informants. However, given the social inquiry of this thesis I choose a site where low-income families live after talking to mukhtars of the neighborhoods. I conducted interviews in their houses and workplaces. I met with young people in parks and cafes. Each interview was recorded and transcribed afterwards. The duration of the interviews was approximately one hour. Below is the list of interviewees, which provides a general overview of the people talked to using some selected socio-demographic, educational and occupation/job related criteria:

Table 1. The List of Interviewees

Name	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Secondary Job	Father's Occupation	Mother's Occupation
Akm	30	Male	Divorced	High School Dropout	Waiter	Waiter	Driver	Housewife
Rufat	38	Male	Married	High School	Health care worker	Waiter	Farmer	Housewife
Hüseyin	45	Male	Married	High School Dropout	Municipality worker	Dishwasher	Farmer	Housewife
Barış	26	Male	Single	Secondary School Dropout	Car park attendant	-	Construction worker	Housewife
Çetin	22	Male	Single	Secondary School Dropout	Coiffeur	-	Construction worker	Housewife
Erman	23	Male	Single	High School Dropout	Coiffeur	-	Electrician	Housewife
Fatma	28	Female	Married	High School	Security Guard	-	Factory worker	Housewife
Kartal	50	Male	Married	Secondary School Dropout	Retired	Dishwasher	Painter	Housewife
Furkan	20	Male	Single	High School	Waiter	-	Factory worker	Housewife
Özkan	40	Male	Married	Secondary School Dropout	Cleaner	Dishwasher	Farmer	Housewife
Lale	36	Female	Married	Secondary School Dropout	Housewife	Dishwasher	Factory worker	Housewife

<sup>7</sup> According to TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) the youth unemployment rate is %20,2 on May 2018 (Retrieved 29.07.2018, from [http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt\\_id=1007](http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1007)). In Ankara the youth unemployment rate is 17,7% (Ankara Kalkınma Ajansı (2017). İstatistiklerle Ankara 2017. Retrieved 02.07.2018, from [http://www.ankaraka.org.tr/tr/istatistiklerle-ankara-2017\\_4028.html](http://www.ankaraka.org.tr/tr/istatistiklerle-ankara-2017_4028.html))

Table 1. (continued)

Name	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Secondary Job	Father's Occupation	Mother's Occupation
Firat	42	Male	Married	High School	Cleaner	-	Technician	Housewife
Polat	30	Male	Single	High School	Waiter	-	Plumber	Housewife
Koray	26	Male	Single	High School Dropout	Cleaner	-	Driver	Housewife
Emel	30	Female	Married	High School Dropout	Domestic worker	-	Window assembler	Domestic worker
Raşit	47	Male	Married	High School	Construction gueard	-	Mine worker	Housewife
Selçuk	27	Male	Single	High School	Security Guard	-	Butcher	Housewife
Sezgin	43	Male	Married	Secondary School	Kitchen worker	-	Gas station foreman	Housewife
Burak	19	Male	Single	High School	Unemployed	-	Cleaner	Housewife
Tekin	19	Male	Single	High School Dropout	Unemployed	-	Car repairer	Housewife
Yılmaz	21	Male	Single	High School Dropout	Waiter	-	Warehouse worker	Housewife
Murat	19	Male	Single	High School	Waiter	Waiter	Cleaner	Housewife
Cemil	18	Male	Single	High School	Waiter	-	Cargo driver	Housewife
Bekir	40	Male	Married	Secondary School	Satellite Assembler	-	Truck driver	Housewife
Sibel	44	Female	Married	High School	Cashier	-	Security guard	Housewife
Kudret	23	Male	Single	High School	Store Clerk	-	Factory worker	Housewife
Fuat	20	Male	Single	High School Dropout	Unemployed	-	Factory worker	Housewife

#### 1.3.4. Limitations of the Thesis

This study does not focus on how people make social ties. While the mechanism through which individuals make social ties holds significance to understand the origins of network inequality, this study lacks such an inquiry. The social capital scholars often viewed the concept as an investment which actors employ for purposive actions. However, we could also problematize it that whether accumulating social ties could be an unconscious process under certain conditions. The existing literature marks a relation between social capital and status attainment but lacks questions considering processes through which contributes to the network inequality. This thesis does not explore such problematizations. It focuses more on the mechanisms that perpetuates the existing network inequality in terms of work-related ties by exploring the process through which social capital is mobilized in the labor market. It analyzes on the symbolic processes behind the mobilization of social capital among low-income workers.

This study also does not compare different communities and their potential contextual factors that might have different effects on the mobilization processes. There are some justifications for choosing Sincan. However, it would be interesting to analyze the social capital within different communities conducting a comparative study. This thesis focuses on a community that is believed to be a point of break with older type of communities thereby revising our understanding of social capital in the Turkish context.

Finally, this study does not focus on gendered processes of network structures. Although some observations in this thesis indicate that low-income women are in disadvantaged position in terms of social capital due to not being employed, this is not the main focus of this thesis. A social norm that precludes women to work is evident in the interviews. Women interviewees indicate that their female neighbors are not allowed to work by their husbands. They also expressed that the neighbor relations among women has declined. Thus, what I believe is that a detailed study of social capital from a gendered perspective would be valuable. However, although there are some female interviewees, this study does not primarily focus on gendered social capital.

The structure of this thesis is as follows: the following chapter of the body delineates a picture of available jobs to low-income workers in Sincan to give a broad sense of the labor market and work experiences. It also describes their educational experiences to depict their backgrounds. After discussing the ways low-income workers get a job, it explores the network structures of low-income workers and conditions affecting them. The third chapter explores distinct frames that low-income workers hold about work and success. I will show the variety among them, especially within cohorts. I will also discuss the differences within young people by illustrating distinct frames which young people possess. Here we will listen to both employed and unemployed young people to understand whether and how do they differ in terms of frames of work and success. In the fourth chapter, I will first show how those frames, lenses through which low-income workers perceive their

environment, turn into symbolic boundaries within their neighborhood. Finally, I will show how those boundaries overlap with their justifications of decision in mobilizing their social capital.

## CHAPTER 2

### STRUCTURAL FACTORS BEHIND SOCIAL CAPITAL MOBILIZATION

#### 2.1. Transformation of Work and Job Opportunities

The low-income workers whom I interviewed have little choice but to work in jobs which are generally of low quality in terms working hours, wages, and working conditions. Some typical jobs which they have experience consist of waiter, dishwasher, cleaner, store clerk, bus boy, security guard, construction worker. Among the informants, some worked in organized industrial zone including welder, assembly of white appliances and food packaging. These positions in the industrial zones are found in small non-union manufacturing workshops. Representative jobs for women include domestic worker, dishwasher, and cashier. In most cases these jobs tended to pay poorly, not more than the minimum wage, to have irregular wage payment schedule and hours of work. The construction and small workshop manufacturing jobs in the industrial zone tended to be temporary as the former is based on season and the latter is based on sub-contracting. Many of these jobs fail to provide stable work and source of income over the year. Thus, one fourth of the interviewees hold a secondary job to earn extra income. These secondary jobs provide extra income as the primary jobs do not provide sufficient resources especially for families with one working parent. The structural conditions of the jobs are important features to understand the background of the low-income workers before we delve into individual experiences.

Although if you walk around the industrial zone, restaurants and small stores, you would observe the “Help Wanted” sign, giving the impression that the quantity of jobs is not scarce, the condition of those jobs is significant aspect if we are to understand the labor market. For low-income individuals it is challenging to find a

job which would provide sufficient amount of wage to support housing rent, child care, transportation expenses and family needs. The secondary jobs they hold tend to be casual service sector jobs like waiter and dishwasher in wedding saloons or restaurants. Therefore, it is necessary to illustrate the ways in which secondary income-generating strategies integrate into the lives of the informants.

On a Saturday afternoon, Hüseyin and couple of other dishwashers came to the wedding saloon to get cutlery ready for the wedding.<sup>8</sup> Hüseyin has a job in a sub-contracting firm which works for the municipality in Ulus. His work task is to distribute water bills and he receives minimum wage. He holds a second job as a dishwasher in order to make ends meet. He needs to take care of three children, two of them in the primary school and one in the high school. They live in a rental house and his wife doesn't work. They moved to Ankara in 1999 after he was unable to find work in his hometown, Çankırı. Since then they live in Sincan. This forty-five years-old high school dropout man had many different jobs all of which was low-paid, irregular and temporary. He worked as a construction worker, boot polisher, and cleaner. On a typical week day, he leaves his home at 6am and comes back around 9pm as he needs to travel for more than one hour to go to Ulus from Sincan. On Saturdays, he goes to a wedding saloon right after his work where he washes the cutlery for the wedding. He washes the dishes for about four hours until the wedding ends around 1am. On Sundays he comes back to the saloon and does the same routine before he goes to his regular work on Monday. Almost half of the interviewees have a similar routine as Hüseyin. He represents a low-income person with limited job opportunities which are low-paid. As a single working parent, he works in a second job for nearly ten years in order to sustain his family's living. However, he illustrates the cost of living with respect to his secondary wage he

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<sup>8</sup> The names of the informants are pseudonyms.

received by saying “At the end of each night we receive 60 TL. By the time I arrive home I am left with 20 TL.”<sup>9</sup>

It is not uncommon for people living in Sincan to work in more affluent parts of the city like Ümitköy, Eryaman. For them the jobs available in these regions are less limited and relatively better in terms of conditions. However, a coiffeur worker Erman who works in Ümitköy argues that “Jobs are limited. It is even more limited in Sincan. Especially young people come to Ümitköy to work in shopping malls. They pay you 1000TL and you need spend your money for travel expenses.”<sup>10</sup> The quality of jobs available to informants is related to features of the labor market. On the other hand, they believe that their lack of education restricted the job opportunities and their access to better jobs. The benefits of schooling were explained not only in terms receiving a formal education which would provide required credentials and knowledge in finding better jobs by specialization but also in terms of manners which education gives to the person. However for the interviewees the value of education in general had a broader understanding that is not only limited to formal education but also had other meanings such as life-oriented training which includes life lessons and occupational apprenticeship that is not necessarily received at school. I will delve into this topic in greater detail in the next section.

Finally, it is not common for women to work due to the gender roles that stress it is inappropriate for women to work. When I ask working women whether their neighbors or neighbor’s daughters are willing to work, they reply that for the neighbors and their husbands women should not work. In the case of Lale who works as a dishwasher on weekends, she was compelled to work after a severe financial hit which her family took, even though her husband did not want her to work. She worked as a domestic worker for couple of times. However her husband

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<sup>9</sup> Burda her akşam sonunda 60 TL alıyoruz. Eve gidene kadar 20 TL kalıyor.

<sup>10</sup> İş kısıtlı. Sincan’da daha da kısıtlı. Özellikle gençler part-time alışveriş merkezlerinde çalışmak için Ümitköye geliyorlar. Adam sana 1000 TL veriyor git gel zaten para bitiyor.

was not happy about Lale's work schedule as she was coming home at late hours. However, eventually her husband needed to agree with the situation as the financial urgencies were pushing hard. She says, "For example my husband came to see here. He sends me here trustfully but not somewhere else. I went for cleaning to couple of places. He did not let me as I was coming back late. But he sends me here. He trusts my colleagues."<sup>11</sup> Women work mostly regarded as a secondary support for the family. When I asked if he received financial support from anyone, Bekir, the forty years-old man working in a small store as a satellite assembler, explains that "After my second child my wife started to work. Normally she was not working. She took care of my kids. That's the biggest help."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Fatma, a security guard in a private resident, says "Although my family doesn't approve I need to support my husband. We took bank loan for the house. I need to go through this just for my child."<sup>13</sup> Unless families have financial urgencies or necessities women's role are bound to homemaking. For those who are married the notion that the male should be the principal provider is generally accepted.

The employment structure represents a form of economic order marked by casual and flexible jobs with low-wage and tough working conditions. The secondary jobs which the informants hold are temporary jobs without insurance mostly found in the service sector on a daily basis. In that sense, the labor market into which the informants are embedded symbolizes the transition to neoliberal form of work. As Bourdieu puts it (1998), "the precarious arrangement that produce insecurity" is an important feature that informants need to cope with. They articulate the toughness of living conditions and the constant threat of unemployment and of financial hardships compel them to endure such circumstances. Moreover, in a labor market

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<sup>11</sup> Mesela eşim geldi burayı da gördü. Güvenerek gönderiyor mesela. Ama başka yere göndermiyor. Öyle bir şey var. Birkaç yere temizliğe gittim. Çok geç geliyorsun diye göndermedi. Ama buraya güvenerek gönderiyor. Arkadaşlarıma da güveniyor.

<sup>12</sup> İkinci çocuğumdan sonra eşim çalışmaya başladı. Normalde çalışmıyordu. Çocuklarıma baktı. En büyük yardım.

<sup>13</sup> Ailem pek onay vermese de eşime destek olmam lazım. Sırf çocuğum için yani katlanıyorum.



where making ends to meet requires multiple sources of income for some interviewees, we observe that formal and informal works are intertwined. On the day time they work in formal jobs while at nights they work as waiters and dishwashers to receive extra income. These secondary jobs never include contract or security, and are always temporary.

While neoliberalism has various dimensions, I want to focus on its components on the labor market to trace its reflections in the experiences of the informants. Harvey (2005, p. 75) argues that flexibility is an essential element of the neoliberal discourse. According to him (p. 76), the general consequence of flexible means of accumulations is “lower wages, increasing job security, and in many instances loss of benefits and of job protections.” The casualization of the labor force with temporary contracts is also paralleled with individualization of the wage relationship (Bourdieu 1998). Some interviewees have work experiences on temporary basis in the industrial zone working for couple of months before being laid off. They are hired for fixed terms without any security and contract. This is more evident in service sector jobs which have no job protection. Nevertheless those who hold formal jobs have health security benefits.

We can trace how this neoliberalization process reflects upon the transformation of work in the Turkish context. Buğra (2007) explores the shifts in the market economy from state-centered to neoliberal policies. She argues that (p. 47) the market logic has become dominant in the policymaking after 1980s. The employment opportunities in state-owned enterprises have declined and the modern competitive private sector shaped the newly emerging employment structure in the work economy. Because the state regulations have shrunk the self-regulating market economy resulted in more insecure labor opportunities. The transformation of work marked by a neoliberal turn in the labor market entailed the emergence of new forms of poverty. In her analysis of changing welfare regime, Eder (2009, p. 165) argues that Turkey’s welfare regime faces a serious challenge as one in five working individuals who cannot subsist on the amount they receive. They are below the risk-

of-poverty line and Eder defines them as ‘the working poor’. While the informants of this study can be conceptualized in a similar way, I use the term ‘low-income workers’. However my intention is to capture the dynamics of work and poverty, understanding the lives of employed individuals living at the edge of poverty. In a similar line, Erdoğan (2007) explores the worlds of the poor by delving into the daily lives of poor individuals. He explores how individuals cope with social inequalities caused by structural processes. However, his analysis also includes symbolic dimensions of (re)production of class inequalities. Thus, the transformation of work entails working individuals to experience financial difficulties, as it has become more of a challenge to subsist on the wage they receive. In that sense, informal and precarious jobs are typical for individuals trying to earn extra income to sustain their livings. In this context, some informants are compelled to hold informal jobs to compensate their low wages.

Informal jobs hold significance for the informants.<sup>14</sup> These are daily jobs which the workers receive their daily income at the end of the work.<sup>15</sup> Among the interviewees a health care worker is a waiter for ten years while a cleaner is a dishwasher every night on weekends. It is completely deregulated and unstable to be involved in the informal market. If the person is an informal worker he/she may not be called in the next day to work. Usually it is considered as an extra source of income. However for the young people things are a little different.

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<sup>14</sup> According to the International Labour Office (ILO) informal employment comprises employees hold informal jobs “if their employment relationship is, in law or in practice, not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, paid annual or sick leave, etc.) for reasons such as: nondeclaration of the jobs or the employees; casual jobs or jobs of a limited short duration; jobs with hours of work or wages below a specified threshold (e.g. for social security contributions) ; or jobs, for which labour regulations are not applied, not enforced, or not complied with for any other reason.” (Husmanns, R. (2004). Defining informal employment and methodologies for its measurement. Bureau of Statistics. International Labour Office.) (Retrieved 31/07/2018 from <http://ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/papers/def.pdf>).

<sup>15</sup> The rate of informal employment in Turkey is 33,97% in 2017. In terms of sectors, the construction sector is 35,76%, the service sector is 20,35% and the industrial sector is 20,2%. In Ankara the rate of informal employment in 2017 is 18,38%. (Retrieved 31/7/2017 from [http://www.sgk.gov.tr/wps/portal/sgk/tr/calisan/kayitdisi\\_istihdam/kayitdisi\\_istihdam\\_oranlari/kayitdisi\\_istihdam\\_orani](http://www.sgk.gov.tr/wps/portal/sgk/tr/calisan/kayitdisi_istihdam/kayitdisi_istihdam_oranlari/kayitdisi_istihdam_orani))

Finding a decent job for young people is a challenge. They are more exposed to flexible and casual jobs with low-wages than older interviewees. Moreover, they are also more involved in the informal economy. The periods of unemployment for young people are not uncommon. Among the informants there are young people who have work experiences as store clerks and waiters. They work for couple of months receiving little wage, sometimes less than the minimum wage, and then are laid off, or leave the job for several reasons. Thus, precarity is an essential condition of their labor market experiences. Standing (2011, p. 10) argues that the precariat lacks seven forms of labor-related security which include

*Labour market security* – Adequate income-earning opportunities; through a commitment to ‘full employment’ by government.

*Employment security* – Protection against arbitrary dismissal, regulations on hiring and firing.

*Job security* – Ability and opportunity to retain a niche in employment, plus barriers to skill dilution, and opportunities for ‘upward’ mobility in terms of status and income.

*Work security* – Protection against accidents and illness at work, limits on working time, unsociable hours, night work for women, as well as compensation for mishaps.

*Skill reproduction security* – Opportunity to gain skills, through apprenticeships, employment training and so on.

*Income security* – Assurance of an adequate stable income, comprehensive social security, progressive taxation.

*Representation security* – Possessing a collective voice in the labor market.

In that sense, the young people lack some of these aspects in the labor market. Periods of unemployment are not uncommon for young people. Especially some of the informants have experiences of enduring long periods of being unemployed. The future of their employment often dependent on the decisions of their bosses. A little discussion between their employers, mostly happens about the wages, might cause their dismissal indicating low employment security. Although some young

informants possess positive future expectations, some do not find any future in the existing labor market saying it is impossible to subsist under these conditions. In terms of work security, I did not confront with any history of work accidents. Nevertheless, the working group works around twelve hours in their regular jobs. In case they hold a secondary job, the working hour rises to almost eighteen hours per day causing what Standing (p. 10) describes as unsociable hours. Although the notion of apprenticeship is appreciated in older informants' articulation about education and young people, they do not mention vocational schools as an important source of skill accumulation. Rather it legitimizes the necessity to self-sacrifice at the practical level if the young people wish to be competent at work. In that sense, we can argue that while apprenticeship is evident, however, it is combined with low labor market, employment and work security. Then it becomes a source of legitimation for young people to endure insecure and flexible conditions. Those who hold formal jobs have social security however stability of income is conditioned upon their employment security. Finally, no one mentioned about collective act in terms on unions or any kind of representational voice. While it is significant that we discuss the structural conditions of the labor market, we need to have a picture on youth unemployment which is a significant dynamic of the labor market.

In her study, Çelik (2008) analyzes youth unemployment experiences under weak protective state mechanisms. She finds out that in a context where the state is incapable of providing welfare for unemployed young people they mostly rely on their families (p. 433). Family resources are significant conditions in shaping this experience that are composed of material dependence, social dependence, and moral dependence, (p. 433). The first dimension represents the families' material resources in providing economic needs of the unemployed young people whereas the third dimension is dependency on the values of the family on definitions of work, good work, and job-related decisions (Çelik 2008). The second dimension, social dependency, holds particular significance for this thesis as well. It is the social resources embedded in the family's social networks. Family members inform their networks to the job search process for their child (p. 436). In other words, they

mobilize their social capital to assist their child to find a work. Therefore, the youth unemployment is mediated through these factors which are heterogeneously found across different social positions. Hence, we cannot think of youth unemployment experiences as a single phenomenon but as heterogeneous across diverse social conditions (Çelik 2008, p. 429).

## **2.2. Education**

Many of the informants value the importance of education even though most of them experienced failure. When I asked them whether education is an important way to get ahead, all interviewees regarded education as a significant way for upward mobility. Those who have children stressed the importance of their children to receive education to become decent individuals. Polat, the thirty years-old waiter who still lives with his family, expresses his sorrow about the fact that he did not continue after high school and his support for younger sister to get educated unlike him, “My biggest sadness is that I couldn’t continue. I try to encourage people to get educated including my sister. You can see the difference between a person who is educated and not very clearly.”<sup>16</sup> In that sense, interviewees attached to mainstream notion that education is an important way to get ahead. However education by itself is not enough for them to be successful in life.

Although they hold aspirations for their children or sisters to receive education, practical life lessons and specific hands-on occupational training bring another aspect on the concept of education. Thus they not only celebrate the significance of formal education but also stress the value of practical experiences. Koray, who is a twenty-five years-old cleaner in a wedding saloon, says “Of course the school will have some gains and show you many things but lived experience is a different thing.

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<sup>16</sup> Benim şu an en büyük üzüntüm liseden sonra okuyamamam. Kendi kız kardeşim dahil çevremdeki herkesi eğitim konusunda destekliyorum. Okumayan insanla okumuş insan arasındaki farkı net şekilde görüyorum.

There are some situations where education stops.”<sup>17</sup> This lived experience has two aspects, one is life-oriented and the other is occupational experience. The former is explained by Bekir “Rather than education s/he should receive education from life. S/he should do the same mistakes as did his/her mother and father or take lessons from them. Education is not just in school.”<sup>18</sup> For them education has different meanings than the middle-class counterparts (Karademir Hazır 2013). While for middle class individuals education is mostly defined by the level of formal education received at school, low-income workers frame it with practical life experiences that is not only bound to school.

Hands-on occupational experience is another dimension about their understanding of education. They extend the celebration of practical experience to the realm of work by stressing the importance of occupational apprenticeship.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, they hold expectations from younger individuals to be patient when they start to work. Again Bekir explains “No one’s job is ready. Even if you get educated you are not qualified. A person should be educated at work as well.”<sup>20</sup> This tension paves the way for a cohort disjuncture between younger and older generation on concepts like good job and success that I will discuss in a more detailed way in later sections.

The most significant feature of the relationship between low-income workers and education is that many who started formal education did not complete it. The highest educational achievement among the interviewees is a high school degree.

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<sup>17</sup> Tabi okuduğun okul sana getirisi de çok olacak. Sana birçok şey gösterecek ama yaşayarak görmek de bambaşka oluyor. Bazen eğitimin kaldığı yerler de oluyor.

<sup>18</sup> Eğitimden ziyade hayattan da eğitim alması lazım. Anasının babasının yaptığı hataları yapması lazım ya da ders alması lazım. Eğitim sadece okulda değil ki.

<sup>19</sup> While vocational schools hold significant place in the Turkish education system, the interviewees do not mention them as important mechanism through which young people could receive occupational experience.

<sup>20</sup> Kimsenin işi hazır değil. Sen okusan bile kalifiye değilsin ki. İnsan işte de eğitilmeli.

School dropouts, both in primary and high school, are not uncommon.<sup>21</sup> In search of more income, families required them to work at early ages to provide extra income to the household. This resulted in early dropout or termination of schooling for all interviewees. Nevertheless, we can still observe a hierarchy within the informants considering school dropout and occupational status. While we may argue that the interviewees are employed individuals who subsist on a minimum wage, those who are school dropouts are relatively more disadvantaged than those who have a high school degree. This pattern is more striking among young informants. Therefore, it gives us a hint about a hierarchy within poor segments of the society marked by educational credentials. However, the search for extra income is not the only reason of school dropouts. Lale says:

We were seven siblings in a small town of Tokat, Zile. You know in every family there is a victim. Victim like not getting educated. I was a very successful girl and my family did not educate me. They mostly prioritized boys. Although they tried to educate younger ones as much as they could they did not continue. They were unsuccessful. Some left at primary school some before high school. I was an eight years-old child and I dealt with everything. My older brother told me you won't get educated. That was their view. I finished primary school and received scholarship for boarding school. My family did not allow me to go because I was a girl. They were very conservative. I grew up in a small town. I took care of my little sisters in highlands. Since I was eight I always helped to my family. I helped to everyone. Finally I met with my husband. It was a prearranged marriage. I don't know if I was naïve. Then I came to Ankara.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The rate of school dropouts in Turkey is the highest among European countries with %32,5. While among young men school dropout rate is 31% it is 32,5% among young women. The relation between leaving school and labor status is as follows: the 15,5% of the early leavers are employed, the 4,5% would like to work and 12,6% do not want to work. The gender difference is striking in labor status after school dropout. The 8,9% of the male early leavers are not employed whereas the 25,2% of the female early leavers are not employed. (Retrieved 29.07.2018, from [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Early\\_leavers\\_from\\_education\\_and\\_training#Analysis\\_by\\_labour\\_status](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Early_leavers_from_education_and_training#Analysis_by_labour_status)).

<sup>22</sup> Biz yedi kardeşlik. Ben küçük bir Tokat Zile ilçesindeydim. Hep ailede bir kurban olur ya. Yani işte okutulmaz. Ben çok başarılı bir kızdım ve beni ailem okutmadı. En çok erkeklerin üzerinde durdular. Gerçi küçük olanları elinden geldiğine okutmaya çalıştılar ama onlar da okumadılar. Başarısız oldular. Kimisi ortaokul üçten kimisi daha liseye gitmeden bıraktı. Yani ailenin şeyiydim. Sekiz yaşında bir çocuktum her şeye koşardım. Abim bana okumayacaksın derdi. Onların görüşleri öyleydi. Ben ortaokulu bitirdim yatılı burs kazanmışım ailem göndermedi. Kız çocuğu falan diye. Böyle çok tutucular. Ben öyle küçük bir kasabada büyüdüm. Yaylada kardeşlerime baktım. Sekiz

Gendered categorization of education impeded Lale's schooling path by constraining her aspirations and behavior. The roles given to her in terms of socialization compelled Lale to terminate her education in primary school. Cultural narratives, in her case family devotion, play crucial role as she was restricted by norms which suggest that she should help her family and not receive education. Although I cannot come up with broad conclusions about the relationship between gender and education, which also not within the scope of this thesis, Lale's story is worth noting to provide some empirical evidence on the importance of cultural forces which might affect education. Moreover, the statistics show that young women are not employed after leaving school (see footnote 14). When I asked Lale to map her social network she wrote her sister, husband and daughter as her closest ties. Unlike other employed informants who indicated as their colleagues as their closest friends Lale did not have any friends to whom she feels close to. She only wrote family members. This shows us that women who left school not only lose educational qualifications but also, because they are not employed after leaving school, they have difficulties to build social network, especially work-related networks. Therefore, the relationship between education and social capital mediated by the labor status after terminating the education. While individuals might terminate their education if they are unemployed they fall into a disadvantageous position in terms of building social networks.

### **2.3. The Role of Social Networks in Finding a Job**

The employers to whom I talked often confessed that they rarely review the formal job applications filled by job-seekers, even if they are hiring.<sup>23</sup> Most of the time they employ the networks of the workers to find new employees. Employers often ask

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yaşından beri bugüne kadar hep böyle birileriyle. Aileme yardımcı olayım sürekli. Herkese yardımcı oldum. Bugüne kadar hep öyle geçti. Yani en son işte eşimle tanıştım. Görücü usülü evlendim. Saf mıydım bilmiyorum. Sonra işte Ankara'ya geldim.

<sup>23</sup> I also interviewed employers to understand the hiring process. However, given the scope of this thesis I did not include these interviews into the study as that would require a more systematic review from the employer perspective.



the workers whether they can find trustworthy individuals for work. This is because the jobs in the market does not require high set of technical skills or education credentials. Thus, what employers need when making a hiring decision is a reliable information and most of the time that comes from their current workers.

From the perspective of job-seekers this indicates the importance of their social networks while searching for a job. When I asked their ways to find a job all of the interviewees expressed that they find jobs through friends or acquaintances. The role of connections in getting ahead was considered by almost half of the interviewees as a very important way while the others think that it is somewhat significant. Koray, for instance, found his first job through his father in a haberdashery store. Polat, after finding a job in a restaurant as a waiter through a friend of him from his previous workplace, helped his brother to work in the same workplace as a secondary job. Stressing the importance of networks, Bekir says:

Social network is very important. The most important one. If you have connections, you let people know through your acquaintances. You put a bug in their ears. If it doesn't happen now it might happen one month later. If you are not a civil servant and if you will work under a boss it is very important. Your brother is important, your sister is important, your neighbor is important.<sup>24</sup>

In this section, I will illustrate the importance of social networks of low-income informants in finding a job. I will also show the three clusters of their social capital - family members, friends, and ex-colleagues- all of which have key roles in their search of work. Finally, we will see how differential access to social networks shape the likelihood of young people to land in relatively good jobs with good boss and regular wage payment.

For the interviewees, poorly paying, unstable jobs exemplified by the casual worker in the industrial site or constructions could be find easily but are not desirable. The

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<sup>24</sup> Çevre çok önemli. En önemli. Çevren varsa eşinle dostunla haber gönderirsin. Kulağına kar suyu kaçırırısın. Şimdi olmazsa bir ay sonra olur. Memur değilsen patronla çalışacaksan çok önemli. Abin önemli, ablan önemli, komşun önemli.

working conditions of these jobs make them reluctant to accept them. Many of the interviewees have such experiences in these kind of jobs in Sincan or in cities they previously lived. Therefore, although the jobs they hold are low quality jobs with minimum wages and long working hours, they make a distinction between those jobs in terms of working conditions. Finding jobs with relatively more dignified working conditions, regular payment schedule, and stability is a priority in their criteria of job evaluation. However finding better jobs depends on the resources including social networks and information assistance coming from them. Therefore, those who are placed in a relatively weak position in terms of social capital are more open to unstable jobs with exhausting working conditions. Bekir says “If you are not educated, if you don’t have a specific occupation and if you don’t have connections you cannot find decent jobs. Either you work in the industrial site or in constructions.”<sup>25</sup> Moreover, members of families in which older people are working have advantage than others as the connections are already formed through them. Working parents can support their children’s participation to the workforce. The following patterns will illustrate the three clusters of social networks which are family members and relatives, friends, and ex-colleagues, in searching for a job.

All of the interviewees, when they are old enough to work in the private sector, their parents or siblings often serve as intermediaries in initiating their first job. Emel, the thirty years-old domestic worker with twin babies, often find work through his mother. Her mother spent her life working as a domestic as well. After Emel left high school and decided to get married with his boyfriend her mother arranged Emel similar jobs in her previous workplaces mostly in affluent regions of the city like Ümitköy and İncek. While working in same places as her mother Emel builds her social network in those jobs. When her best friend and neighbor required to work due to financial urgencies, Emel arranged some daily work for her through networks. Although her neighbor’s husband did not allow her friend to work we can see the ways social capital functions through contacts in finding a job. The

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<sup>25</sup> Eğer okumadıysan, belli bi mesleğin yoksa, çevren de yoksa zaten düzgün iş bulamazsın. Ya gidersen organize de çalışırsın ya da inşaatlarda çalışırsın.

information channel flowed from Emel's mother to Emel and to her friend provide a job opportunity. Thus, social networks are important information sources among ties for job opportunities.

Rařit came to Ankara in 1999 due to the effects of the earthquake to the construction sector.<sup>26</sup> Before going to İstanbul to work in constructions he studied in his hometown Zonguldak in a vocational school. His father was a retired construction worker while his mother was a housewife. He has two brothers, one of which was a truck driver who passed away. Unlike Rařit, his other brother moved to Ankara when decided to leave his hometown. After the stagnation in the construction sector in İstanbul due to the earthquake, Rařit's brother helped him to move Ankara and arranged some jobs in constructions. He settled in Mamak where the urban transformations projects were just about to begin. While his brother later quit the construction sector Rařit continued to work in construction related jobs in his whole life. Currently he works as a construction guard which he watches the site in daytime and some nights. When I ask how he found his current job he says:

It is through the accumulation of acquaintances. Let me say it like that. If you stay in a region for twenty years people know you in the construction sector through time. Because they know you when they see that you are available they immediately ask would you work with us.<sup>27</sup>

Because the construction sector is very seasonal and project-based, the construction workers rely heavily on their connections. Rařit says "It's always through connections and acquaintances. People ask 'we need this type of worker is there anyone you can be referred?'. For instance the season is closed but you need to

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<sup>26</sup> The earthquake occurred in 17 August 1999 in the Marmara region caused a serious decline in the construction sector in İstanbul.

<sup>27</sup> Bu çevrenin birikiminden dolayı yani. Şöyle söyleyim sana. Bi bölgede 20 yıl kaldıktan sonra zamanla inşaat sektöründe herkes seni tanır. Tanıdıkları için bildikleri için senin boş kaldığını gördükleri an gel benle çalışır mısın diyenler olur.

work for some reason. People ask whether there is a ten, fifteen, twenty days job.”<sup>28</sup> When I asked whether they help other people in arranging them a work, all of the interviewees had some experience in finding their acquaintances a job. Akın, the thirty years-old waiter, for instance, says “There were times I brought my relatives to the cleaning works. I brought my uncle for example.”<sup>29</sup>

The job-seeker who successfully secured a job becomes an important resource in the friendship network. Thus, the connections in finding jobs are not bound to relatives or the extended family. The friendship network is often composed of neighborhood and school friends. The job finding patterns among friends is illustrated in case of Selçuk who is a security guard in a gated community. He explains “I am close with my school friends. Usually I used to work when I was a student. Because I was working they were asking for a job from me. One of my army friend also asked.”<sup>30</sup> Polat often relies on his friends when searching for a job. He says “When I am unemployed or one of my friends is unemployed we call each other. He is my close connection. He could be reference to me just like I could be reference to him.”<sup>31</sup> As individuals start working their social capital begins to ramify in terms of co-workers whom gets integrated into their friendship circles. Many working interviewees considered their colleagues as their friends. Thus we can make a distinction between two clusters of friends, one is friends from neighborhood and school in early life, and the other is friends from work. The latter is also a valuable source in finding a job for the interviewees. As they begin to gain some experience in a specific sector their friendship circles build accordingly. For instance, those who work as a waiter

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<sup>28</sup> Eleman konusu tanıdık yoluyla, çevre yoluyla halloluyor. Şu şu eleman lazım kefil olacağın eleman var mı diye soruyorlar. Mesela sezon kapanmıştır, bir şekilde çalışmak zorundasındır. 10-15-20 günlük bir işin var mı diye soranlar oluyor.

<sup>29</sup> Akrabalarımı falan götürmüşlüğüm vardır temizlik işine. Amcamı götürdüm mesela.

<sup>30</sup> Okul arkadaşlarımla ben çok sıkı fikiyim. Genelde öğrencilik dönemlerimde ben çalışıyordum. Çalıştığım in de onlar iş istiyordu. Askerden bir arkadaşım da istemişti bi kere.

<sup>31</sup> İşsiz kaldığımda veya bir arkadaşım işsiz kaldığında birbirimizi arayabiliyoruz. Yakın çevrem o benim. Siz ona referans olabiliyorsunuz o da size referans olabiliyor.

in restaurants accumulate friends as waiters shaping their future jobs in the same line since s/he might rely on his ex-colleagues while looking for a job. When I ask if there were acquaintances requesting help from him to find a work, the twenty-three years old Erman working in a coiffeur, replies “Our connections are quite obvious. Always from the coiffure sector. Those who left their jobs from my previous workplaces ask usually.”<sup>32</sup> Therefore, those who are equipped with working relatives and friends are often better positioned in terms of social capital. While connections play significant role in finding a job the access to valuable social capital is conditioned to certain factors, which will be explored in the next sections.

Distinguishing unstable, poorly paying jobs with irregular payment schedule from good jobs with relatively stable, better and regularly paid jobs, low-income workers desire to work in good jobs. Finding one is conditioned on personal resources. Çelik (2008) stresses the importance of social networks for young people who depend on the connections of their family in finding job. In a similar line, those who are positioned in a disadvantageous position in terms of access to social network are worse off in terms of finding relatively good jobs. The young informants who have stable jobs landed those jobs because they have access to social networks and information channels. The young informants who are unemployed, work in the informal market, or in very unstable and flexible jobs do not have access to connections who could arrange relatively better jobs as Bekir mentioned earlier. The volume of social capital (Bourdieu 1987) is significant resource for individuals to find jobs in the labor market. The social network inequality, having access to networks with low social resources (Lin 2001), entails individuals to have access to relatively undesirable jobs like in the industrial site or construction. Although the young people who are currently unemployed, or work in flexible and casual jobs, find their jobs through social networks like everyone else, they land in those jobs because resources embedded in their networks are lower than others hindering their chances to find good jobs. For example, Barış, the twenty-four years old who

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<sup>32</sup> Bizim çevre belli. Hep kuaför sektöründen. Daha önce çalıştığım yerlerde ayrılanlar soruyor genelde.

currently works in a car park (*otoparkçı*), worked in a textile workshop and in constructions. He has been laid off frequently and unemployed for long periods of time. In his past work experiences there were moments he couldn't receive his wage from his employers. Koray, on the other hand, works as a cleaner in a wedding saloon and is relatively content about his job because his boss treats him well and gives his wage regularly. They are both primary school dropouts. The difference between their jobs stem from their differential access to social networks with different social resources. The volume of their social capital significantly shapes their labor market experiences which we will explore in a more detailed way in the next chapter.

Working individuals often give hand their connections to help them getting hired. However there are moments when low-wage workers are cautious in deciding who to be referred, that not every person who asked to find a job was helped because getting employed through an acquaintance has certain reflections to the workplace. The request of employers for reliable information for potential workers is shaped by their assumption that once the potential worker will be referred by the current worker this situation will bind both of them. Akın explains:

You become reference when someone is looking for a job. They ask you when something happens. 'Do you guarantee?', 'How much you can trust?' In that case if something wrong happens it can be on your head. Then they talk to you like 'The man you bring is all that'<sup>33</sup>

Because the labor market is saturated and unemployment is an on-going threat for low-income workers they share information about job openings only to those whom they trust. They do not want to degrade their status in the workplace by bringing a friend or an acquaintance who cannot realize the work task or may misbehave. This kind of a situation, as Akın explains, creates a negative image for the worker who brought his friend and risk losing his reputation at the workplace. Therefore, low-

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<sup>33</sup> İş ararken sonuçta referans oluyorsun. Hani bir şey olduğu zaman soruyorlar 'Sen kefil misin?', 'Ne kadar güvenebilirsin?'. o şekilde olduğunda da ters bir durumda senin başına patlıyor. Sonrasında da sana laf geliyor senin getirdiğin adam bu kadar olur diye.

income workers often conduct a mental process which they evaluate the acquaintance who asks for a job. When I ask whether there were times they were reluctant to share information, many interviewees had some experience of hiding information or not taking an action to help their acquaintance. They evaluate the trustworthiness of the individual according to their judgments that they have about that person. I will illustrate in detail those judgments in a more detailed way in the third chapter. These judgments overlap with the symbolic boundaries that they construct. In other words, the symbolic boundaries, the categorization systems which individuals create (Lamont & Molnar 2002) of low-income workers have concrete effects on social capital mobilization. The second chapter will explore the sources of those judgments. I will first understand the roots of differentiating behaviors of informants in terms of income strategies and then show how such behavioral differences create a system of boundaries among them which is effective in activating social capital in finding a job.

Information channels are important dimension of social capital (Lin 2001, Coleman 1988). Social ties provide information to flow between individuals transferring knowledge about job opportunities. Informants often rely on social networks and information channels when they seek for a job. The work-related ties are beneficial for interviewees to learn about job opportunities. Thus, the more the person has work-related network the more efficient his/her social ties to provide information about jobs. The unemployed people are in disadvantageous position in terms of those information channels because they gradually lose ties composed of ex-colleagues. This is evident in their social network maps. There is a difference between employed and unemployed people in terms of their working contacts. Once a person gains experience in a sector he/she also builds social ties including people from similar sectors that open up opportunities for new workplaces. Hence, information channels as part of their social capital provide important social resources, as Bourdieu (1986) puts it, for the informants. These resources are, in our case, job opportunities which help people to turn their social capital into economic capital (Bourdieu 1986). From Lin's perspective they mobilize their social capital

by using their social contacts to find jobs. This is done by not only (extended) family ties but also friendship circles. However, as I said, this is only a part of the story. We will explore the complexities of the mobilization process in the next chapters. The remaining of this chapter will discuss the conditions shaping the access to social capital. I will first explore the nature of support structures, the relation between residential mobility and social capital, and work's effect on the composition of the social capital.

#### **2.4. The Past and Present of Support Structures**

In the literature the extended family of relatives and hometown fellows often regarded as a buffer mechanism in alleviating poverty. In their study, Pınarcıoğlu and Işık (2001) found out that hometown solidarity networks (*hemşehrilik*) often prevented newcomers to fall into underclass.<sup>34</sup> Those who settled earlier often provided informal networks to newcomers in finding accommodation and job. Kalaycıoğlu & Rittersberger-Tılıç (2002) proposes the family pool to explain the coping strategies of low-income people with poverty. The economic and social resources embedded in family networks within and between generations accumulated in the family pool providing members with resources to deal with financial difficulties. Some studies argue that familial support mechanisms are not sufficient for poor individuals to overcome financial hardships (Buğra & Keyder 2003, p. 9). Buğra and Keyder (2003, p.9) found out that poverty is no longer considered as transitory due to lack of individual resources and the decreasing opportunity of stable employment. Thus, in a context where poverty is not transitory, we could ask to what extent extended family resources function as a protective mechanism. It has become imperative to explore the current nature of

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<sup>34</sup> The concept of underclass is mainly developed in the American literature implying that the socio-structural changes in the economy and the urban space triggers the process of ghettoization causing economic and spatial exclusion of poor inner-city residents who form an “underclass” (Wacquant & Wilson 1989). The application of the concept to the Turkish context has been critically discussed. Discussing its implications in the Historical Peninsula of İstanbul, Erkilet (2011, p. 145) argues that patterns of underclass do not occur in the region because poverty coexists with buffer mechanisms like solidarity networks.



support structures given the restructuring of the labor market in which individuals hold extra jobs to make ends meet. Hence, I asked individuals whether their relationships with their relatives and extended families have changed in recent years. I also asked from whom they received any form of help in order to make ends meet when they experience material hardships. This allowed me to delineate concrete cases of how they deal with financial difficulties.

I argue that such buffer mechanisms consist of extended family members shrink as the labor and housing market has been very saturated. The chain migration, which was an important feature of the urban social fabric in explaining homogenous neighborhoods with people from same rural backgrounds, has lost its effects on aiding individuals in search of both accommodation and job. Although Sincan received vast amount of migration from certain cities of Anatolia we cannot speak of its neighborhoods as a closed, homogenous communities consist of extended families and people with common origins. Therefore, I asked individuals about their relationships with neighbors, questioning whether they have strong ties with their neighbors. Finally, I also asked informants to write their closest ties, both family members and friends, aiming to picture their social networks.

We encountered Lale, who works as a dishwasher on weekends, in the previous section. She has seven siblings among which only her little sister lives in Ankara while others live in Adana, İstanbul, İzmir and Muğla. She feels closer to her two little sisters because she took care of them when they were young. She says: “I talk frequently to my two sisters. I have a different kind of bond with them. But I don’t talk to others very often.”<sup>35</sup> She thinks familial bonds have weakened over the last years. When I ask whether there are responsibilities which family members have towards each other she replies:

Not so much. Everyone is by himself/herself. No one takes responsibilities...  
It was better in the past. It was healthier. It is weaker now. Some might have

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<sup>35</sup> İki kız kardeşimle konuşurum sık sık. Onlarla aramda başka bir bağım vardır. Ama diğerleriyle fazla sık konuşmam.

strong ties but I think it is weak now. In the past we had big gatherings. Now people spend their days lonelier in each day. So I think it's weak.<sup>36</sup>

All interviewees think that extended family ties are weaker than it was in the past. They often attribute this situation to tough living conditions that separate life trajectories of other family members. Koray explains:

Indeed it has changed. Selfishness started. Everyone turned into their own life struggle. No one cares about each other. There are some people you see from funeral to funeral. They used to be always at your home. Time. It is tough. The people you grow with. You understand it's not like in the past when your relatives move. You understand it has changed. There is nothing like kinship. I believe that's the case for everyone.<sup>37</sup>

In Koray's articulation about the evolution of kinship network there are two reasons which damage the strength of the networks. The first cause is struggling for life. Like Lale, who says that family members are most of the time is for themselves, Koray also indicates that because extended family members struggle for life to make ends meet in their lives they allocate less time for their relatives. Koray further details this situation:

Because everyone involved in a life struggle. You know how it's like? People think like 'Let me save myself and the rest I don't care'. It was not like that in the past. When your acquaintances were in trouble you would gather and help. Even if it wasn't you your neighbor would help. That time has passed.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Pek deęillendir ya. Herkes kendi kendinedir. Öyle soumluluk kimse almaz. Almazlar. Öyle bir şey yok... geçmişte daha iyiydi. Sağlıklıydı. Şu anda daha zayıf. Bazıları çok kuvvetlidir ama bence zayıf yani. Eskiden düşünsene annelerle babalarla buluşmalar olurdu. Her geçengünü daha yalnız geçiriyor insanlar. Zayıf bence yani.

<sup>37</sup> Valla deęiştı. Bencillik başladı. Herkes kendi yaşam kavgasına yöneldi. Kimse kimseyi umursamıyor. Cenazeden cenzeye gördüğün insanlar oluyor. Önceden evinden çıkmayan insanlar. Zaman. Zor oluyor açıkçası. Büyüdüğün insanlar. Akrabaların yerini deęiştirdiği zaman eskisi gibi olmadığını anlıyorsun. O anki duruma göre deęiştğini anlıyorsun. Akrabalık hiç kalmadı. Herkeste de öyledir diye düşünüyorum.

<sup>38</sup> Çünkü herkes bi yaşam kavgasına girdiği için. Nasıl oluyor biliyor musun? O diyor ki ben kendimi kurtarayım da millet ne olursa olsun. Önceden öyle deęildi mesela. Bir eşin dostun sıkıntıya girdiği zaman toplaşıp yardımcı olurdu. Hani sen olmasan bile komşun olurdu. O devir geçti yani.

Polat also makes a similar point regarding his relatives in Kırşehir which is his hometown. He says “I think it has weakened. Because here struggle for life is more. I can’t even go to my hometown to visit my relatives. Because our problems grow. The bigger the sea the bigger its waves”<sup>39</sup> The second reason that is salient is residential fragmentation. In the literature, people from common origins and backgrounds used to settle into same regions. Most of the time they used to be squatter regions where newcomers were integrated under existing residents’ resources. However, residential instability, moving from older neighborhoods due to several reasons, caused the social networks to be weakened. Moreover, along with this fragmentation, long working hours and lack of time hinders frequent interactions among family members. Bekir illustrates:

There was migration, and the people from your hometown used to come with you. Usually same neighborhoods were selected. Your wife’s acquaintances were also there so that she isn’t lonely or might need help. There was no problem because everyone was in the same place. Now we are all scattered.<sup>40</sup>

These factors affect not only extended family ties but also the social capital in the neighborhood. He defines Sincan as a migration-receiving area resulting a sort of circulation within residents that prevents the formation of bonds among neighbors. He says:

People are always in a state of migration... It is difficult to adapt here when you move here afterwards. I came here when I was 26. How could I adapt? You can’t. There is a lot of circulation. You settle in a building, after one month two of your neighbors have changed. There is always a movement.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Bence zayıfladı. Çünkü burda hayat mücadelesi daha fazla. O yüzden akrabalara memlekete bile gidemiyorum. Çünkü sorunlarımız artmaya başladı. Deniz büyüdükçe dalgası büyüyor.

<sup>40</sup> Göç vardı ve memleketinde yaşadığın insanlar da seninle geliyordu. Genellikle aynı mahalleler seçiliyordu. Çünkü eşin yalnız kalmasın, yardıma ihtiyacı olur falan onun akarabaları da oluyordu. Hepsi aynı yerde olduğu için sıkıntı olmuyordu. Şimdi hepsi dağıldık.

<sup>41</sup> İnsanlar hep göç halinde. Buraya sonradan gelince adapte olmak zor. 16 yaşında gelmişim ben buraya kime adapte olabilirsin. Olamazsın yani. Değişkenlik çok. Bi binaya giriyorsun bütün komşular aynıysa bir ay sonra iki tanesi değişmiş oluyor. Sürekli git gel.

Bekir spent his early ages in Dikmen after they migrated to Ankara when he was five years-old. I will illustrate how interviewees compare their old neighborhoods and current neighborhoods in detail in the next section. However, so far, it is important to note that the informants feel that the social capital among neighbors is not as strong as it was in the past. All of the interviewees express that the solidarity among neighbors has deteriorated. This is also reflected in their attachment to their neighborhood. When I ask to what extent he feels attached to his neighborhood, Rifat, who holds two jobs as a health care worker and waiter, says “People don’t see each other. I say hi to only two or three of my neighbors. It’s not like in the past. This is not a village place. People are not obliged to know each other. You don’t know people from your neighborhood.”<sup>42</sup> Thus, Rifat indicates that human relations have been altered. He comments on this change:

In the past people at least used to say hello to each other. But it’s not like that now. Only when the guy recognizes you directly he asks how you are and so on. But was it like that in the past? We were in squatter-like regions. Everyone used to know each other, ask how you are. Or friends used to play football. But that’s over now. Maybe because we got married, had children. We took a burden on our shoulders. Maybe that’s why it happened like that. But everyone is for itself. From home to work, work to home.<sup>43</sup>

The Chicago School scholars examined the conditions upon which social (dis)organization of the neighborhood is predicated (Shaw and McKay 1942). In their study of juvenile delinquency in urban areas, Shaw and McKay (1942, p. 185) assert that factors hindering consistent social organization composed of the community’s poverty level, the wide diversity of cultural backgrounds, and the

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<sup>42</sup> İnsanlar birbirleriyle görüşmüyor. Sadece iki üç komşuyla selamlaşırım bırakırım. Yani eskisi gibi değil. Köy yeri değil ki buralar. Herkes birbirini tanımak mecburiyetinde değil. Mahallenden insanı tanımıyorsun.

<sup>43</sup> Eskiden yine insanlar birbirlerini gördüğü zaman hiç olmazsa merhabalaşırlardı yani. Ama şimdi öyle değil. Ancak birebir görürse tanırsa adamla muhabbet edersen insan sana halini hatrını soruyor. Ama önceden öyle miydi? Gecekondu tarzı yerlerdeydik. Herkes birbirini tanırdı. Hal hatır sorardı. Veya arkadaşlar birbirleriyle top oynardı. Ama şimdi bitti. Belki evlendik, çoluk çocuk sahibi olduk. Bir yük aldık omuzlarımıza. Belki ondan dolayı olmuş olabilir. Ama herkes kendi halinde. Evden işe işten eve.

frequency of residential mobility in the area. This theory represents a contextual condition upon which the strength of social ties among neighbors depends. The social organization theory extends these structural factors to the maintenance of effective social controls that facilitate cooperation. However, for the purpose of our discussion, I wish to illustrate how these factors in my study site can be considered as contextual conditions which shape the network relations among residents.

Firstly, the informants speak of tough living conditions in which one needs to struggle hard in order not to experience severe financial disasters. Although we cannot speak of informants as severely poor people, they receive minimum wages and some work in two jobs in order to make ends meet. This struggle for life is often articulated as a reason of weakening kinship ties by expressing individualistic accounts like “everyone is for itself now.” Therefore, fighting not to fall to the poverty line diminishes extended family interactions as Raşit says “As financial hardships increase visits to acquaintances and relatives diminishes.”<sup>44</sup> Secondly, the amount of in-migration to their neighborhood, as expressed by the interviewees, is high. They speak of the high circulation within buildings that their neighbors change after couple of months. Sincan is not a region where it is marked by generational chain migrations. On the contrary, it is a region where people come from places where they were chain migrated to like Mamak and Altındağ.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, families which were displaced by the urban transformation projects often settle in Sincan. This also perpetuates its relatively disadvantaged conditions. Thus, we may speak of it as a culturally, and ethnically, diverse place. Bekir defines Sincan as “Little İstanbul. Very diverse.” This makes Sincan both diverse and residentially mobile place. Hence, the factors of social disorganization theory - the poverty level, cultural diversity and residential mobility - have effects on the strength of the social ties within the connections of the low-income workers. However, we might ask if those relations have weakened to whom low-income resident rely on when they

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<sup>44</sup> Geçim sıkıntısı arttıkça eş dost ziyareti akraba ziyareti azalıyor.

<sup>45</sup> These regions were located in the inner parts of Ankara where early migrants were settled during the initial phases of the urbanization in Ankara.

experience financial hardships. Therefore the next to section will first explore their strategies to deal with financial difficulties and then illustrate two cases on how residential mobility has effects on social capital.

#### **2.4.1. The Income Pool and External Supports**

I also asked who they rely on when they experience difficulties to make ends meet. As discussed above the family pool (Kalaycıoğlu & Rittersberger-Tılıç 2002) provides insightful knowledge about how individuals cope with poverty through resources embedded within extended family networks. While these networks include extended family members, who do not necessarily be located in the same place, my findings suggest a shrinkage within this family pool as the informants believe that their relationship with relatives and extended family members have weakened. However, we still observe patterns of relying to closest family ties in dealing with financial hardships. Thus, in this section, I will first discuss the household structures of the informants and the income pool as a way of managing their income. I will then illustrate from whom they receive help when they are in financial hardship.

Like this is not a neighborhood where extended family members live together, the household structure of families mostly composed of nuclear members of the family. Firstly, it is not uncommon for some unmarried male workers at the age of thirty living with their parents. Like Polat, the thirty-years old waiter, lives with his parents, one brother, and one sister. Similarly, Koray, the twenty-five years old cleaner, lives with his parents, grandmother, two brothers one of whom is divorced, and one sister. His brothers are also at the working age. Kartal's sons, for instance, who are above their twenty-fives still live with their parents, and they do not work. Secondly, although they got married, siblings might continue to live with their parents. Akin's family, for example, was composed of his brother with his wife, his parents, and Akin's wife from whom he got divorced not so long ago. Finally, another typical family is a simple nuclear family composed of parents and children.

The families of Bekir and Hüseyin, including their wives and children, exemplify this type.

Kalaycıoğlu & Rittersberger-Tılıç (2000) stresses the importance of intergenerational solidarity networks through which families accumulate income and property within the family pool. They illustrate the transfer of material resources within generations, especially from older generations to younger generations (p. 540). They state that “This practice may continue both among generations in the same family and also among a larger network of family members, whether living in the same area or elsewhere. Hence, uncles, aunts, and in-laws, may enter this network of mutual solidarity” (p. 528). My findings supports the intergenerational support structures within the same family who lives in the same household. However, given the changes in the nature of relations within relatives and extended family members, no informants mention their extended family networks as part of their coping mechanisms with financial difficulties. The income pool is often considered as way to deal with financial difficulties. As the living costs including housing rent, food and travel expenses are high for low-income workers, married or unmarried, the working age children continue to live with their parents. The more the working people in a household the more they accumulate money in their income pool. Akın explains this strategy as a way to deal with material hardships. When I ask whether there were people helping him to make ends meet, he says:

Let me put it like that. We lived three families in the same apartment for several years. My brother and I were married. We all lived in the same place. Our wages used to accumulate in one place. I lived with my parents while married for seven years.<sup>46</sup>

The young working males also put their wages to the income pool along with their parents’ pensions or wages, and keep certain amount for themselves. In case the children at working age do not work, the working father provides financial

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<sup>46</sup> Şöyle söyleyim ben biz birkaç sene üç aile aynı evde oturduk. Abim evliydi ben de evliydim. Üçü aile aynı evde oturduk. Aldığımız maaş bi yerde toplanıyordu. Ben yedi sene oturdum evliyken.

resources for them. Kartal, for example, is the fifty years-old retired worker who is still working to sustain his family's living. Because they need to pay rent Kartal continues to work as a dishwasher. All of his three children, two male and one female, are unemployed although they are at the working age. They work in very unstable jobs that last three months on average. Moreover, one of his son is married. Kartal combines his retirement pension and extra income he received from dishwashing, and from time to time, he lends money to his sons. However, he is not content of the situation as he believes they need to persist to work. I will illustrate this tension in the later chapters. However, for this part of the discussion, we should note that Kartal provides money to his unemployed children. Thus, if the children do work they put some portion of their wage to the income pool. However, in case they do not work, the working father provides the financial support to them.

The financial support also comes from the closest core family members like sisters, brothers, and parents. None of the informants indicated that they received financial support to make ends meet from their extended family members like uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews etc. Rifat says "My sister. No one else. I have my sisters but when I'm in material hardship it's my sister who runs for help."<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Kartal's brother is the person who supports him financially to make ends meet. Hüseyin's mother-in-law and Lale's brother-in-law exemplifies this pattern as well as persons who provide support. While most interviewees indicate that some core family members helped them to overcome difficulties, only four informants indicate that they received financial help from their friends. Finally, there is one informant who never received financial support from anyone. Sezgin, the forty-two years-old man working at the kitchen of a restaurant, believes that family members have responsibility to each other in terms of supporting each other. However, according

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<sup>47</sup> Ablam. Başka kimse yok. Yani bacılarım da var ama. Darda olduğum zaman yardıma koşan kişi ablamdır.



to him, that does not exist anymore. He says “To support maybe. But there is no support now relatives are not like in the past.”<sup>48</sup>

The social networks which individuals are embedded into have social resources (Lin 2001). Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as aggregate of individuals within networks structures. Therefore, the social networks of individuals provide individuals to cope with difficult times through the resources accumulated within relations. In that sense, the family ties have been a valuable network structure in providing material resources in coping with poverty. These resources include not only material resources but also cultural resources (Kalaycıoğlu & Rittersberger-Tılıç 2002). The support structures of informants have mostly shrunk into closest family members rather than incorporating extended family members as they believe that relations with kin ties and relatives have weaken in recent years. The material resources within the social networks also emerge through friendship ties who can lend money to informants in their difficult times.

## **2.5. Residential Mobility and Social Capital**

All the interviewees come from poor family backgrounds. Their fathers' occupations included truck driver, construction worker, painter, farmer. Mothers' were mostly housewives except one interviewee whose mother was a domestic worker. The participation of individuals to the workforce goes back to childhood years. The financial situation of their families compelled them to search for extra income for the household. Therefore at early ages they discontinued their education due to needs of their families and to bring money. Sometimes this was accompanied by relocation of the family in search of work to other parts of the city, or even to another city, in our case Ankara. However the search of work was not the only reason for families to move. Urban transformation necessitated them to leave their neighborhoods as well and settle to new places as well. Some of the informants used to line in inner-city squatter regions thanks to older generations who settled in those

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<sup>48</sup> Destek olmak olabilir. Gerçi destek de yok şimdi akrabalar eskisi gibi değil yani.

areas. However, the restructuring of cities under neo-liberal urban policies initiated urban transformation projects targeting those regions (Kuyucu & Ünsal 2010). TOKİ (Housing Development Administration) was the prime actor employing legal adjustments and designating squatter areas for gentrification entailing displacing of residents.

These contextual processes, as part of their social background, have profound effects on social capital. While the termination of school in search of income hampers the education, interviewees begin to build social capital in the labor market that provides them access in term of information sharing about jobs. On the other hand, by re-settling into new places due to urban transformation or job search, they begin to lose their social ties in their former neighborhoods. Moreover, this relocation into a new neighborhood entails difficulties in forming new ties in the new neighborhood as it requires a process to build trust among neighbors. I will illustrate these conditions of access to social capital on an individual level in a more detailed way in the next chapter. However, this section will show how familial necessities, the search of work and residential relocation, have effects on the social capital. The following cases will illustrate these patterns.

Koray lives with his parents, little sister, grandmother and two older brothers – one of them was married. After the first year he left the high school and started to work at the age of fourteen. His father is a retired truck driver and his mother is a housewife. Along with his father's retirement pension, the only person who contributed to the household income was one of his older brothers as his other brother had drug issues and did not have a regular income. Therefore, the major motivation of Koray's participation to the workforce at an early age was to contribute to the familial income.

Their neighborhood, at that time a squatter region in Dikmen, was identified as an urban transformation area. Their house was built by his grandfather who had migrated to Ankara in 1962 from Çorum. They agreed with the municipality and the

contractor for the transformation project and gave their house.<sup>49</sup> Their house was demolished in 2008, when Koray was seventeen years-old. They could afford buying a house in Sincan, where the housing was relatively affordable, with the money they received from the project. Thus, Koray and his family moved to Sincan in 2009. However, this residential relocation was not a positive change for Koray. He yearns for his old neighborhood:

I really miss Öveçler. Since I was born there if you ask me if I am used to here no I didn't. I didn't because I was born and raised there, and I come here everything is different. People are different. I miss the streets, the people, the neighborhood. All my friends are over there. My relatives are over there. Our everything is over there. If I had a possibility I would like to go back. My all childhood was there. Even the nature is different over there.<sup>50</sup>

Residential mobility is an important feature of the social fabric which has profound effects on social capital. Koray's residential mobility, leaving his old neighborhood where he spent his childhood years, went to school and learnt many things, broke his social ties in his old neighborhood. On the other side, his early participation to the workforce due to his family's financial hardship hindered his education. These two familial necessities shaped Koray's social capital.

I wish to add one more case to the effect of urban transformation on the social capital. Sezgin used to live in Mamak with his family.<sup>51</sup> The region they live was also marked as an urban renewal area. He describes his old neighborhood:

Our old neighborhood was beautiful. Our circle of friends was nice. Everyone used to stand together. No one foreigner could pass through the

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<sup>49</sup> The legal process of gentrification is based on an option to purchase the newly built flat in exchange of the demolish value of their existing units and state subsidized bank loans (Kuyucu & Ünsal 2010).

<sup>50</sup> Ben Öveçleri çok özleyorum. Orada doğup büyüdüğüm için buraya alıştırın mı desen alışamadım. Alışamadım çünkü orada doğup büyümüşüm. Buraya geliyorum her şey farklı. İnsanlar farklı. Sokakları, insanları, mahalleyi özleyorum. Arkadaşlarımın hepsi orda. Akrabalarım orda. Her şeyimiz orda. İmkanım olursa eski oturduğum yere gitmeyi isterim. Çocukluğum geçti orda. Oranın doğası bile başka.

<sup>51</sup> The region of Mamak includes inner city areas within its borders.

neighborhood. We used to interrogate if someone molest a girl. We ask ‘Who are you? Where you come from?’ We had solidarity. We were more attached to the neighborhood.<sup>52</sup>

When I ask what happened to his friends, he explains:

They are scattered. It’s like you know America entered Iraq. They did the same thing to us. Like America conquered, they did to us just like that. They came to the neighborhood, and everyone scattered after they raise buildings. We were surprised about what’s happening. Then the friends were dispersed. All neighbors and so on.<sup>53</sup>

Sezgin’s analogy of conquer and urban transformation resulting to dispersion of individuals to various parts of the city resembles what Smith (1996, p. 260) discusses as the frontier and the restructuring of urban space in his analysis of gentrification processes. He associates Fredrick Jackson Turner’s motivation to tame the existence of Native Americans as savage wilderness with the contemporary discourse of gentrification that is imbued with the urban frontier (p. 261). According to Smith (p. 266), one of the most salient reasons in the restructuring of the urban space is the rent gap. As the suburbanization occur with the emergence of new constructions, the price of inner city falls (p. 266). This result in a *rent gap* “in the inner city between the actual ground rent capitalized from the present (depressed) land use and the potential rent that could be capitalized from the ‘highest and best’ use given the central location” (Smith 1996 p. 266). Sezgin perceives these relations as if they are in a battlefield where the gentrifying forces conquer his neighborhood and transform his peer groups and solidarity within the neighborhood. What I wish to focus on is not the political economy of gentrification and urban restricting, that although it holds great importance it is not within the scope of this thesis, but how these factors have effects on the social capital of individuals living in those

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<sup>52</sup> Bizim eski mahallemiz çok güzeldi. Arkadaşlık çevremiz iyiydi. Herkes birbirine dayanırdı. Mahalleden bir tane yabancı adam geçmezdi yani. Kıza birisi sarkıntılık etse hemen çeviriyorduk. Kimsin necisin diye sorardık. Dayanışmamız vardı. Mahalleye daha bağlıydık yani.

<sup>53</sup> Dağıldılar. Aynı ne diyim sana Amerika nasıl Irak’a girdi bize de aynısını yaptılar. Amerika nasıl işgal etti bize de aynı böyle yaptılar. Mahalleye bir girdiler. Bina yapınca herkes dağıldı yani. Ne olduğunu şaşırдық. Ondan sonra arkadaşlık dağıldı iyice. Komşu falan kimse kalmadı.

neighborhoods. The solidarity structures composed of social networks were eliminated after the residents were displaced by the urban transformation process. Although there are families who remain to live in the transformed neighborhoods, many families decide to leave the region and settle in different neighborhoods. This deteriorated the support structures in the neighborhood.

By asking informants to compare their old and new neighborhoods after they move due to urban transformations, I aimed to explore how their social capital is affected by this process. Trust is a crucial dimension of social capital (Coleman 1988, Putnam 2000). The trustworthiness between neighbors in the same neighborhood helps them to facilitate action within neighbors (Coleman 1988). We observe that the long-formed social ties among neighbors have deteriorated by residential instability caused by urban transformation projects. They articulate about the strong ties they had in their old neighborhoods marked by solidarity and trustworthiness. However, when they are displaced by the gentrification processes, they lose those ties. Once they settle into a new neighborhood, it becomes much more difficult to form new ties, especially if they are at working age.

The transformations that the central regions of the city have undergone also affect the employment structure. After the diminishing job opportunities for unskilled workers in the city center after urban transformations, Sincan provided employment chances for low-income people with its industrial site which was opened in 2000. Thus, the search for work has also compelled low-income families to move as well. Kartal is a fifty years-old retired man who lives in Sincan since 2005. However he works as a dishwasher on weekends for extra income. His two sons are twenty-seven and twenty-five while his daughter is twenty-four years-old. His older son who is married lives with his family. None of Kartal's children work that is the main reason he continues to work although he is retired. In the past, he was living in Gülveren neighborhood which is also known as Çinçin. His parents were first generation migrants who settled in Gülveren. They did not have any formal education and were illiterate. His father who used to work in constructions never

had a regular job. Their household included Kartal's maternal grandparents and one sister. Because his father did not have a stable income and the household included non-earning members Kartal terminated his education while he was in primary school and started to work in various service sector jobs at the city center to contribute to the household income. After the economic crisis in 2001 he was not able to find a job around Kızılay as many shops went bankrupt at that time. He also had some work experience in small workshops in Siteler. Again jobs in the labor market were very scarce and the number of unemployed people was abundant. Finally, thanks to a friend of him he found a job in a dye factory in Sincan. He moved from his neighborhood in order to reduce the travel expenses while going to work. The necessity to move for work detached him from his neighborhood and entailed him to start a new life in Sincan. However, like Koray, he compares his new place of living to Gülveren with missing:

I live in Sincan for fifteen years and I still couldn't get used to it. There isn't any squatter solidarity that we had in Gülveren. No squatter culture. It was totally different at that time. You could walk through the houses and everyone would recognize you. I really miss those days. The old socialness doesn't exist anymore.<sup>54</sup>

Leaving school at early ages for the search of income is very evident among interviewees. Young people from large families with non-earning dependents experienced greater necessity to earn income. Most of the interviewees express their frustration about the fact that they couldn't receive education due to financial necessities. Once the young people come to an age that she or he could work and bring money to the household families often choose not to delay this potential income. The urgent rewards of working in a job often outweighed the rewards of education. This situation could be triggered earlier than expected in case of the mature male income-earner passes away or falls sick.

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<sup>54</sup> 15 yıldır Sincan'da yaşıyorum hala alışamadım. Eski Gülveren'deki gecekondü dayanışması yok. Gecekondü kültürü yok. Oralar çok farklıydı o zaman. Evlerin arasında dolaşırdım herkes seni tanırdı. O günleri çok özleyorum. Eski sosyallikler yok artık.

Besides, low-income families are often subjected to residential move due to the search of work and urban transformation. Especially, in recent years, the urban transformation projects have displaced many families. Those who were living in squatter regions were compelled to move to other parts of the city. Even though most interviewees were the proprietor of the squatters thanks to older generations, they preferred to move to more affordable regions of the city as their older neighborhood starts to get expensive after gentrifications. Residential stability is an important condition of building social capital among neighbors based on trust (Shaw & McKay 1942). Lin (2001) argues that we should study both accessed and mobilized social capital in order to see the transition from access to action. In other words, while understanding the access to social networks, and its conditions like residential mobility, we should complement it with the conversion of social capital into economic capital (Bourdieu 1986). Therefore it is important to explore how residential mobility caused by urban transformation projects and job search have effects on the access to networks, and on trust among residents. This contextual process which is common background of most interviewees has community level effects damaging the social capital in the neighborhood. The next section will analyze another condition, that is work, and its reflections on social capital.

## **2.6. Work and Social Capital**

In the interviews I plumbed into the social networks of the informants to analyze composition and diversity of their social capital, and to come up with a pattern. When I ask interviewees about their closest friends there is a pattern based on their employment status. Especially for young people, those who are employed indicate that their closest friends are from their workplaces. The unemployed youth, on the other hand, has close friends from their neighborhood. This indicates that work has effects on the composition of the social capital. While the unemployed people have more networks within their neighbor including their neighborhood friends, the employed ones prefer to indicate their colleagues, or ex-colleagues, as their closest friends. The cases of Barış and Çetin illustrate this pattern. Barış is the twenty-four

years old young male who has very unstable work experiences. Most of the time he is unemployed. We will see his work-related experiences in the next chapter. However, his conditions shape his access to social capital. When I asked him to write his closest friend, he wrote couple of friends to which he feels close from the neighborhood. On the other hand, Çetin, the twenty-two years-old who works in a coiffeur, did not write any friends from his neighborhood. His closest friends are from his current and previous workplaces. This pattern holds for employed and unemployed young people, and indicates that work is a condition for access to diverse social capital. When we think of how friends from workplaces are beneficial in finding job, as illustrated in the previous sections, it gives us a hint of the importance of access to social capital through work. Therefore, work has a double effect. Firstly, it leaves no time for neighborhood socialization and extended family interactions resulting into weaker social capital within the neighborhood and relatives. Secondly, it opens up new spaces for access to diverse social capital through workplace interactions providing potentially beneficial connections in the labor market. In the next section, I will further detail how work dynamics have effects on the social capital.

### **2.6.1. No Time**

One of the most important features of the jobs hold by the low-income workers is that they entail a shortage of time. In favor of earning an income those who hold a secondary job, for instance, work up to fourteen hours in a day. Working hours take majority of the time leaving no room for neighborhood socialization or visits of relatives. Especially for those with children the evaporation of time is much more evident because whatever they have in terms of energy or time they spend to take care of their children.

Rifat holds a second job as waiter in a wedding saloon for almost eight years. He was known as a well football player among his friends when he was young. Today, football days are left in the past. The works are tiring and leaves no time:



We were young at that time. Now because of financial situation it is not possible. Of course one would like to live well, to be better in terms of financial situation but impossibilities. I am in this sector for eight years. I don't have Saturdays or Sundays. I have never stayed home on Saturday or Sunday. On Saturdays I am at work. On Sundays I am here as a waiter. Yesterday I left at three o'clock. I went home, changed my clothes and came here. I go to work every day. From 7am in the morning till 8pm in the evening.<sup>55</sup>

This is a common case among interviewees who cannot keep up with their friends and relatives because of their tight schedules. Whenever they have free time they fulfill family obligations or take some rest to store energy for the next day. I can distinguish the effects of this process with respect to the age of the workers. For older workers having not enough time often causes minimal number of relative and neighbor visits. They cannot find time to visit their relatives or acquaintances as they prefer to rest in their only free day, if they have any. Bekir illustrates the relation between work, time and relative visits:

At this age we always consider time through work. maybe that's because we have one weekly day off. I cannot visit my brother for two months. You work you get tired maybe you want to leave that day to yourself. You have other needs. In the past we did not call each other prior to visit. Are we going to our uncle? Ok, let's go. But now? Uncle are you available? No son I am not. I cannot visit my uncle for a tea.<sup>56</sup>

They attribute the fact that they cannot find time to visit their relatives by claiming everyone struggles for his own living. This process causes a weakening in the strength of extended family ties through a kind of shrinkage of close family networks. Besides extended family ties, women workers emphasize that they cannot

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<sup>55</sup> Tabi o zamanlar gençtik. Şimdi tabi maddi durumdan mümkün değil. İnsan tabi iyi yaşamak istersin maddi olarak iyi yerlere gelmek istersin ama imkansızlıklar. Ben sekiz senedir bu sektördeyim. Benim cumartesi pazarım yok. Ben cumartesi pazar hayatta evde kalmış bir insan değilim. Cumartesileri ben işteyim. Pazar garson olarak burdayım. Dün üçte çıktım, eve gidip üstümü giyindim buraya geldim. İşe her gün gidiyorum. Sabah yedi akşam sekiz.

<sup>56</sup> Bu yaşta zamana hep çalışmakla bakıyoruz. Belki haftada bir gün izinli olduğumuz için. Ben abime belki iki aydır gitmiyorum. Çalışyorsun, yoruluyorsun. Belki bir günü kendine ayırmak istiyorsun. Başka ihtiyaçların oluyor. Eskiden arama sorma olmazdı ki. Kime gidiyon amcama gidiyom tamam gidelim. Şimdi? Dayı müsait misin? Müsait değilim oğlum. Ben dayıma çay içmeye gidemiyorum.

keep up with their neighbors like it was in the past. Sibel works at a supermarket as a cashier. Her husband works at the industrial site as a worker. Sibel lives in Sincan for almost twenty-five years, and she comments on the neighborhood relations: “No one knows each other in the building. For example no one helps when we are in financial difficulty”<sup>57</sup> However, when she describes her friends, she says “In the past when I didn’t have a job we used hung with my neighbors but now it’s just hello, good morning. I didn’t have many friends. But in my workplace, they are very nice. Everyone knows each other’s problems. Because we work here for twelve hours.”<sup>58</sup> What is salient in Sibel’s articulation about her friendship circles is that she does not sustain her relations with her neighbors as it was in the past when she was not working. Work entails a shift in the composition in the social capital by deteriorating ties within the neighborhood and extended family and creating new ties within the workplace. Rifat exemplifies this shift when explaining his closest circles:

Our circle is usually people who hold extra jobs. People going to one work from another. We see different type of people. The number of my close friends are no more than five. I mean very close. Like talking very frequently. You go to a work. For example, I work as a waiter. Then you have different friends.<sup>59</sup>

On the other hand, the younger workers, once they start to work full-time, begin to refrain from friendship circles. In case they have left school, the work entails a decrease of time they spend in the neighborhood. This has a hidden benefit. The more the young people spend their time with friends at their neighborhood the more

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<sup>57</sup> Binada kimse kimseyi tanımıyor doğru dürüst. Zor durumumuzda mesela kimse kimseye yardım etmiyor.

<sup>58</sup> Yani önceden belli bi süre çalışmadığım dönemde komşularıyla gezerdik ama şimdi onlarla sadece merhaba merhaba, günaydın günaydın. Çok fazla arkadaşım kalmadı. Ama bu iş yeri dersiniz çok iyiler. Herkes birbirinin derdini tasasını bilir. 12 saat burda çalıştığımız için.

<sup>59</sup> Bizim çevremiz genellikle ek işle uğraşan insanlar. Bi işten çıkıp başka bir işe giden. Değişik değişik insanlar görüyoruz. Samimi olduğum arkadaşlarım parmağınla saysan en fazla beştir. Çok samimi olduğum yani. Birbirini devamlı arayıp konuştuğum. İşte bir işe gidiyorsun. Misal ben garson olarak da çalışıyorum. Değişik arkadaşlar edinarsın.

they are prone to be influenced by them. In their neighborhoods where they have friends who use or sell drugs or get involved into fights, to have a job is a kind of secure place because they do not spend time with their buddies. Koray, for instance, after his last job as a store clerk he decided not to work. He explains:

I hung around for a while with my friends from the neighborhood. I did not have a regular job. Your friends might influence you. Then I figured that I was not in the right way. Then I found this job and stopped hanging around.<sup>60</sup>

Their withdrawal from nonworking friends from neighborhood often entails a shift in their circles in favor of fellow workers, mostly from the same workplace. The similarity of workers' backgrounds and work schedules creates a natural friendship circles. Thus, work's effect on the composition of the social capital has a double side. While it causes weakening in the homogenous social capital like relatives and neighbors it opens up new spaces for a more heterogeneous composition through work. These connections which low-income workers build in their workplaces are potentially beneficial as to have connections from the sector they work can be employed in job-finding in the future. Thus we see a distinction in terms of the composition of the social capital between the employed and unemployed people. The social capital of those who do not hold any job perpetuates itself by not adding new nodes through workplace.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

In this chapter I first explored the ways low-income workers find jobs in the labor market. All of the interviewees employ their social ties to have information about job opportunities and to get hired. The three clusters within this process that are beneficial for low-income workers are family members, friends, and ex-colleagues. Thus, in the remaining of this chapter, I explored the nature of these ties and conditions which affect their social capital. Separating accessed social capital from mobilized social capital (Lin 2001), this chapter aimed to explore what are the

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<sup>60</sup> Sonra bi süre mahalleden arkadaşlarla gezdim. Düzenli bir işim olmadı yani. Arkadaş çevresi seni etkileyebiliyor. Sonra baktım iyi yolda gitmiyorum. Sonra bu işi buldum. Sonra da gezmeyi bıraktım.

conditions of the accessed social capital. The informants believe that the strength of ties between relatives have weakened in recent years. The Chicago School's social (dis)organization theory provides us tools to explain this process (Shaw & McKay 1942). While we analyze the network structures of the informants we cannot overlook contextual processes like residential instability, low-income status and cultural heterogeneity in their neighborhoods. Thus while the extended family members used to live together in same neighborhoods now they are dispersed. They articulate the struggle for life, to make ends meet, in such challenging living circumstances as a factor causing deterioration of support structures. However this is not limited to extended family members. The informants extend this notion to explain the weakening relations within their neighborhood as well. They link residential instability and cultural heterogeneity, the high circulation of residents in the neighborhood, as parallel factors in explaining weak social ties among neighbors.

I gave a special importance to residential mobility because of structural factors like urban transformation which compels informants to move different areas thereby losing their social ties. Thus, what is the issue at here is that we cannot overlook the contextual forces which have effects on social capital. While Lin (2001) and Bourdieu (1986) consider social capital at an individual level of aggregated network relations, they are never dis-embedded from the context under which social capital operates. Therefore, I complement their insights with the social (dis)organization theory thereby analyzing the context.

Another factor which has effect on social capital is work. As social capital includes accumulation of connections (Bourdieu 1986) work is a mechanism which shapes the composition of connections. While work leaves no time for neighborhood or relative socialization it helps informants to build work-related connections that are beneficial in the labor market. It entails to have more diverse social capital. In other words, it helps informants to have access to more diverse connections.

However, having access to social capital does not guarantee the mobilization in the labor market that is conditioned upon certain factors. Given the importance of the meaning of work and success as the source of the symbolic boundaries which have effects on the mobilization of social capital, in the next chapter I will explore diverse meanings that low-income workers assign to work and success as the repertoire of symbolic boundaries. These meanings function to legitimate the symbolic boundaries which overlap with explanations whether to mobilize social capital or not.

## CHAPTER 3

### FRAMES OF WORK AND SUCCESS AS REPERTOIRE OF SYMBOLIC BOUNDARIES

In order to capture heterogeneity among informants, almost half of my interviewees are below twenty-five years-old. This allows me to understand cohort differences in terms of the meaning of work and success. Moreover, I also spoke to unemployed young people as well as the employed ones to understand what makes their experiences different in the labor market. Among the unemployed young people, I was also able to interview with youngsters who have engaged in certain illicit activities of drugs and gang memberships. Therefore, my aim is neither to provide a homogenous low-income neighborhood picture nor to represent a single-type of youth. I aim to capture differences both within the neighborhood in terms of generation and within the young people. By exploring the perspectives of multiple groups I aim to better understand the relations within them. Therefore this section will analyze the different frames of work and success which different groups hold. I will also show how those frames lead to action by shaping their attachment to the labor market. I will illustrate how they articulate their notion of good job and success which, in turn, shape their labor market orientations.

The members of two cohorts attach different meanings to work, and older generation tended to be less selective in the kinds of jobs that they would hold. For them, who arrived in Ankara from different parts of the country to earn income, getting paid to support their family is a very significant source of success and moral worth. They believe in the notion of working in order to stand on their feet (*kimseye muhtaç olmama*). The young people, on the other hand, have different conceptions of work. For them, having a good job through which they can achieve a good hourly wage, regular payment schedule and decent working hours shapes their notion of

success in the labor market. However, given the scarcity of such jobs, not all young people have access to jobs with such features. Those who have access to relatively better jobs often conceptualize work as a source of independence. Because they still live with their parents the money they receive is added to the income pool of the family. As they can keep certain amount of the money to themselves they feel financially independent of their parents, giving them a feeling of not being burden on their parents (*anne-babaya yük olmama*). They articulate the notion of standing on their own feet as well but in a different way (*kendi ayakları üzerinde durma*). On the other hand, not all young people are employed. In a labor market where the jobs are scarce and low quality this group experience durations of unemployment and idleness because they do not have access to social resources which could help them to land on relatively good jobs. They have unstable job experiences with long working hours and tough working conditions. Their long exposure to flexible and casual jobs are not matched with their demand of jobs with good hourly wage, decent working conditions and regular payment schedule. In short, as the nineteen years-old unemployed Tekin says “There should be jobs which you can receive the labor you give. Right now you work a lot and you are paid very little.”<sup>61</sup> This lowers their attachment to the labor market, and creates a possibility of periods of unemployment, high turnover, and street-related time. This is not to say that the unemployed young people should be condemned because of their perspectives. Thus, having showed the features of the labor market by discussing the properties of the available jobs, I aim to explore differences at the individual level. Therefore, this section will illustrate the three different conceptions of work and of success, all of which shapes the actions of groups accordingly. In the last section of this chapter, I will show how these groups view each other through those frames and construct a system of boundaries which has social effects by influencing the social capital mobilization. Lamont & Molnar (2002) argues that the definitions of self-worth are crucial symbolic elements through which individuals define their sense of self. These definitions have reflections on who they are, and who they are not, because

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<sup>61</sup> Verilen emeğin karşılığını ücret olarak alabilmelisin. Şu anda çok çalışıp az para alıyorsun.

they extend on the interpretation of others through those lenses. In other words, individuals put distance to those who do not hold same values as they do and draw boundaries (Lamont 2000). Thus, I will first explore the frames of work, success and worth before analyzing their reflections on the boundaries they create.

### 3.1. “*Kimseye Muhtaç Olmama*”: Self-Reliance and Family

The father of two kids, Rifat and his family used to live with his parents until his father had passed away. Now the household includes two children at the age of twelve and six, his wife and his mother. He needs to pay his mortgage loan which he took eight years ago for his house. He is the only income-earner in the household as his wife does not work. His role of being the provider for the family is very important for him. More importantly, he considers it significant not to be dependent on another person. He says “I am not in need for someone. Thank God as long as I work I bring more or less some money to my home. I receive 1700 lira per month but thank God.”<sup>62</sup> Although for him a god job is a job that you dress a suite and receive a good wage he must endure his current job to support his family. When I ask his future aspirations he replies:

Well of course after all that time I wish to be better as much as I can but that seems impossible. Our life will continue like that. Maybe we will work at this job or that job until we die. What’s ours under such living conditions. To fill our stomach. Not being dependent on anyone.<sup>63</sup>

The relation between work and family is very evident among low-income workers who have families with children. They do not want to be depend on anyone and strive for sustaining their family life. As Raşit says “My biggest ideal is how can I sustain my family. How can I provide the best education to my son? This is my first

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<sup>62</sup> Kimseye muhtaç olmuyorum. Çalıştığım müddetçe evime para getiriyorum az çok Allah’a şükür. 1700 lira maaş alıyorum ama Allah’a şükür.

<sup>63</sup> Valla bu saatten sonra hedefim tabi ki iyi bir duruma gelmek gücüm yettiği kadar ama bu da imkansız gözüküyor. Bizim hayatımız böyle gidecek. Belki ölene kadar çalışacak o işte bu işte. Bizimki ne bu hayat şartlarında? Karın tokluğu, kimseye muhtaç olmamak.



thought. Work and family go together. If your work is not decent how can your family be?”<sup>64</sup> Because they are aware of the fact that the levels of economic insecurity is increasing in recent years they know that sustaining their families depend on their capacity to work. Thus, given the declining living standards that oblige workers to work more hours to receive sufficient income, some endure tough conditions with long working hours, some hold two jobs to provide for their families. Bekir says “Work work work. You cannot change the system... People work eighteen hours. We are in so need of money. You can’t do if you don’t earn... You need to struggle to make ends meet. There are people who have secondary jobs. There is always a struggle in life.”<sup>65</sup>

Akın is a thirty years-old man who has divorced two years ago. He takes care of his son, and they live with Akın’s parents who are elderly. Before getting divorced he took a mortgage loan and bought a house in Sincan. However after one year, he divorced from his wife and Akın started to live with his parents together with his five years-old son. He holds two jobs as a waiter in a municipal institution and in a wedding saloon where he works at nights. His realm of work is shaped by his overriding commitment to his son and his secure upbringing. Therefore Akın does not hesitate to work for almost sixteen hours a day, especially in the summer season which he has no day off. He says:

Well I don’t have any wish like to be promoted... My son goes to kindergarten and my wage is not sufficient. I bought a house with mortgage. I need to take care of my child. My only goal now is my son. I wish him to get ahead. He doesn’t have a sibling. In summer there are times I can’t see him. I leave the house at 6am and come back home at 2pm night and go back to work in the morning. You come home he is asleep, you go back in the morning he is asleep again. I had lots of disputes about that. ‘You don’t stay

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<sup>64</sup> Benim en büyük idealim ailemi nasıl geçindirebilirim. Oğluma en iyi şekilde nasıl eğitim verebilirim. Benim ilk düşüncem ailemdir. İş ile aile birbiri içindedir zaten. Senin için düzgün olmazsa ailen düzgün olur mu?

<sup>65</sup> Çalış çalış çalış. Değiştiremezsin bu düzeni. İnsanlar 18 saat çalışıyor. Öyle bir sıkıştık ki. Kazanmazsan olmuyor. İdame ettirmek için koşturmak zorundasın. Ek iş yapan insanlar var. Hayatta hep bir mücadele başladı.

at home, you don't take me to playgrounds.' I heard these many times. As I said my only goal is my son to make it. Not anything for myself.<sup>66</sup>

Although women's position for providing income to the family is seen as a supportive role, they also share the same views with male workers. Lale has a disabled daughter who is eleven years-old. She works as a dishwasher on weekends in a wedding saloon. To support her family with extra income is very important for her as their financial situation took a hard hit in last years because her husband couldn't find a job for a while in the industrial site. Moreover, they were swindled by their friends and left with severe financial hardships and bank loans to be paid. She says "I always think about impossibilities. For example I can't send my daughter to that school. I can't pay 3500 lira per month. That's impossible. I can't have a big house where she can play in the garden. I think that's impossible. But I still work. I try to save."<sup>67</sup> Therefore the notions of not being dependent on someone (*kimseye muhtaç olmama*) and providing the best for the family and the children are meanings that low-income workers attach to work.

The feeling of responsibility for the family brings the notion of hard work to meet those responsibilities. Hence they are less selective in jobs they hold and never hesitate to work in two jobs. Especially for men with minimum wage whose wives are not working holding a second job is an imperative to sustain their family life. Thus low-income workers value hardworking in order to survive in such material conditions, and, in their words, they suffer and deprive yourself (*cefa çekmek ve kendinden ödün vermek*). This results in an expectation from other people to endure tough working conditions and suffer in order to make ends meet and survive like

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<sup>66</sup> Valla benim yükselme gibi bir isteğim yok. Şu anda oğlumun kreşidir bunun gibi şeyler var maaşım yetmiyor. İşte ev aldım kredisi, çocuğa bakmam lazım. Benim şu anki hedefim oğlum. Oğlum bi yerlere gelsin. Kardeşi yok. Hani yazın göremediğim zamanlar oluyor. 6'da çıkıyorsun ordan gece 2'de geliyorsun sabah tekrar işe gidiyorsun. Gece geliyorsun uyuyor, sabah gidiyorsun yine uyuyor. Bu sebepten ben çok kavga ettim. 'İşte evde durmuyorsun. Beni parka götürmüyorsun.' Dediğim gibi tek hedefim oğlumun bi yerlere gelmesi. Kendim için değil artık.

<sup>67</sup> Hep imkansızlıkları düşünüyorum. Mesela kızımı o okula veremem ben. Aylık 3500 lira veremem. O okula gönderemem. İmkansız yani. Kızım için bahçesinde oynayabileceği büyük bir evim olamaz. Yani imkansız diye düşünüyorum. Ama yine de çalışıyorum. Biriktirmeye çalışıyorum. Belki yapabilirim diye.

themselves. Polat, for instance, works in the service sector since he is twelve. He arrived in Ankara with his family when he was ten years-old and they settled in Yenidoğan region. His family's past is marked by material hardships and Polat dropped out of high school to work in restaurants. He articulates his long history of hard work by saying "Rather than a good job you need to be self-sacrificing. I suffered a lot, I deprived myself a lot."<sup>68</sup> Like Polat, Bekir says "You should go bro. You do cleaning? You mop the floor, you carry goods. I did this for years. That's my bread. That's the way how we should look."<sup>69</sup>

The notions of hard work, patience (*sabır*) and persistence (*sebat*) is also evident in Tuğal's Sultanbeyli residents (2012, p.83). The construction workers in Sultanbeyli, which was his study site, often articulated such notions in order to overcome difficult times (Tuğal, 2012, p. 84). These qualities, in their view, made them superior to those who do not carry them, and Tuğal believes that the connotations of these notions receive their meaning from religious discourses like piety and piousness (p. 86). In my case, we could argue that these religious discourses are cultural resources which informants have access to. Lamont (2000) argues that individuals construct their sense of self from available cultural resources. Thus, identity is contextually bounded to cultural repertoire at the disposal of individuals. If we link this argument with Tuğal's (2012) analyzes on the religious explanations of notions like hard work, patience and persistence, we could argue that the cultural resources of these notions are backed by religious cultural resources at the disposal of the informants. Moreover, these conceptions which the low-income workers hold extend to other people creating an expectation that they should be patient, persistent and hardworking as well in the labor market. Therefore, unemployment often considered as a voluntary choice of being selective in jobs. When I ask if there are enough jobs for everyone Rıfat replies "Yes there are but there are many people

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<sup>68</sup> İyi bir işten ziyade kendiniz özverili olmalısınız. Ben çok cefalar çektim, kendimden çok ödünler verdim.

<sup>69</sup> Gideceksin abi. Temzlik mi yapacaksın? Paspas atacaksın, mal taşıyacaksın. Ben yıllarca bunu yaptım. Benim ekmeğim o. Öyle bakmak lazım.

who don't work. Many people do not like jobs. Many people do not like the minimum wage. Otherwise jobs are abundant. Most of my friends who I brought here for work run away because it's tough. There is bread for the ones who work."<sup>70</sup> Especially the young people often condemned as being picky and selective when it comes to work. Although older generation workers admit that the living conditions are expensive and the minimum wage is low that it is difficult to make ends meet, they believe people should accept the situation and persist. Bekir illustrates this point "The country is expensive now. You need to spend time to find a job with 1700 lira. It is difficult to make ends meet with that amount of money. It is difficult but you have to... That's the reality of the country."<sup>71</sup>

Lamont (2000) stresses the importance of the sense of self-worth as they translate into lenses through which individuals interpret differences between "us" and "them". The concept of frame (Goffman 1974) allow us to capture meaning-making process and explore inductively how they define success and self-worth. I employed frames to explore the mental constructs through which people attach meaning to work and define success. Thus, work is not only an economic action but imbued with cultural meanings attached by individual. Understanding frames of success and worth of informants enables us to explore their lenses through which they evaluate other people (Lamont 2012). It is important for low-income workers with families not to be dependent on someone and provide the best for their children. These notions form the meanings they attach to work as their ultimate motivation for work is shaped by them. Male workers who are the single income earner of the household often compelled to hold two jobs to sustain their families. Their feeling of responsibility and experiences of tough working conditions are articulated under the concepts of hard work and persistence.

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<sup>70</sup> Var ama çalışmayan insan çok. Beğenmeyen insan çok. Asgari ücreti bepenmeyen insanlar çok. Yoksa iş çok. Benim buraya getirdiğim arkadaşların çoğu kaçtı. Ağır olduğu için. Çalışana her yerde ekmeç var.

<sup>71</sup> Ülke pahalı olmaya başladı. 1700 lirayı bulcam diye zaman harcamak lazım. Zor geçiniliyor o parayla. Zorlanırsın ama yapmak zorundasın. Ülkenin bir gerçeği var.

These moral standards are the ultimate way to be a decent person. As Raşit says your job should be decent so that your family as well. They hold notions of responsibility and hard work to fulfill their families. These frames lead them to commit themselves to the existing jobs, especially in a restructuring labor market in which finding decent jobs has become a real challenge. In turn, they expect other people, especially the young people, to endure these conditions and degrade who are selective in jobs in terms of wage and working conditions. Therefore, these frames have reflections on sustaining the repertoire of the boundary work (Lamont & Molnar 2002). In the next section, I will first explore the two groups within young people who hold different frames of work.

### **3.2. Differences Within Young People**

My purpose is not to depict the youth as a single entity homogenizing their conditions, world views and actions. I aim to overcome the assumption that the low-income neighborhoods are relatively homogenous, especially the low-income youth. The recent *ghetto* debate, although acknowledged that the concept is too strong for the Turkish context (Erkilet 2011), has created pre-notions that the young people from poor backgrounds form a unified subculture or in some cases they cope with economic exclusion through illicit activities (Atmaca 2017, Yönücü 2008). I do not deny these social facts. Also this is not to say that jobs are abundant for young people and unemployment is rare. On the contrary, good jobs, which all young people seek, are very scarce, and they desire to have good jobs. However, as I illustrated in the previous section, this is predicated on their access to social capital. Thus, not all young people have access to decent jobs. Nevertheless, although almost all of them have labor market experiences in poorly paying, unstable jobs their degree of attachment to the labor market is different based on their labor market experiences. In other words, they have distinct frames about work that shape their attachment to the labor market. I can categorize these frames into two types. The first young group considers work as a way to not being burden to their families and standing on their own feet. Their degree of attachment is relatively higher than

the second group. On the other hand, the second group, who are excluded from relatively better jobs due to their limited access to social resources embedded in their networks as explained in the chapter one, actually demands for well-paid steady jobs with dignified conditions and their notion of success is relatively more defined with financial success. Thus they have a lower degree of attachment to the labor market, and they experience both high job turnovers and longer periods of labor market exclusion. The long periods of unemployment mean more time in the streets and that means openness to street related activities. However, what is more important is their view of each other as their categorization of each other shapes their social capital mobilization process in the labor market. The second group will be viewed by the older generations and the first group of young people in a way that the social capital between these groups will be less likely mobilized due to the boundaries which the former groups draw against the latter. Therefore, the next section will illustrate their frames of work while the last chapter of this study will explore the contents of those boundaries and their effects on the mobilization.

### **3.2.1. “Kendi Ayakları Üzerinde Durma”: Desire to be Independent**

Ten of my friends from the primary school are dead now. As we grow up some were inclined to bad habits. I tried to stay away from them... I never go out in the neighborhood.<sup>72</sup>

Furkan has worked at a restaurant in Sincan since he was fifteen, after his first job which was little menial tasks in the service sector. His family moved from Yozgat when he was five due to his father’s long periods of unemployment. He terminated his education in high school and began to work to contribute to the household income. His father has a retirement pension and his mother does not work. He found his first job through his neighbor who was a dishwasher in the same workplace.

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<sup>72</sup> Benim ilkokuldaki arkadaşlarımdan 10 tanesi ölü şu anda. Büyüdükçe kötü alışkanlıklara doğru kaymalar oldu birçoğunda. Ben de onlardan uzaklaştım... Mahallede hiç dışarı çıkmam.

In her study, Çelik (2006) analyzed the young people from poor families and their transition to employment. She argues that the poor youth who morally depends on their families in terms of employment experience quick adulthood by entering to the labor market at early ages due to financial urgencies in the household (p. 303). My findings also support the familial urgencies compelling young people to start working early entailing early adulthood. I also argue that some young people attach meanings of success to their work by framing it as standing on their own feet and not being burden to their parents.

One of the utmost motivations of Furkan for joining to the workforce was the familial urgencies along with his desire to be independent of his parents and not being burden on them. He says “I earn my own money. I don’t get burden on my mother and father.”<sup>73</sup> No less important, however, was his desire to remain out of street habits as having a job often considered as way out of this path. For in Furkan’s neighborhood, he expresses that the social setting in the neighborhood provides drug related threats and street violence. Therefore as he went through his teenage years, he wanted to find a way to stay out of trouble. He says “It was very easy to get involved into dirty stuff. But I didn’t. I looked for to work.”<sup>74</sup> Therefore, his experiences in the neighborhood showed him the results of not following the formal path of work.

The young people I spoke often articulate the existence of such social settings. The twenty-two years-old Çetin who works in a coiffeur says “All of my friends used it. It is very prevalent in the neighborhood. The brother of one of my friends died because of drugs. Then people retreat themselves a bit... If I didn’t work I would be

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<sup>73</sup> Kendi paramı kazanıyorum. Anneme babama yük olmuyorum.

<sup>74</sup> Pislik bela bakımından rahatlıkla bulaşılabilir şartlardı. Ben bulaşmadım. Çalışmaya baktım.

involved in such stuff.”<sup>75</sup> He sees himself different from the other young people who hang around in the streets and use drugs:

In the past I was very close to my neighborhood. Now I work. I don't have much time... After the brother of my friend died we, as the youth of the neighborhood, said we won't allow people to use it. We won't allow it to be sold. In fact they're afraid of me. I beat the kids when I see them using it.<sup>76</sup>

Now he considers himself someone who has his own income and stand on his own feet. He says “Now I know my money, I know my income. I can stand on my own feet.”<sup>77</sup> Murat and Cemil, two brothers who are nineteen and eighteen years-old respectively, work at the center of Sincan as waiter. They also make a distinction between themselves and other young people. Murat says:

Sincan is a dirty place. There are fights in the neighborhood all the time. Like they smoke drugs. Police busts many times like every week or many days in a row. At that time when I was in high school there were guys outside school smoking and using drugs. We didn't have such bad friends. Still we don't have<sup>78</sup>

However, their relatively high attachment to the labor market is not solely determined by their eagerness to earn income or to have an ordinary job. Therefore, although I argue that their way of seeing to work as not being burden on the family paves the way for relatively higher degree of attachment to the labor market, there are some features of jobs that they consider as a must for a job to be worth to work. The first feature is a good boss, which means a healthy work environment that they do not feel degraded. In that sense, a paternalist work environment based on

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<sup>75</sup> Bütün arkadaşlarım kullanmıştır. Mahallede uyuşturucu çok yaygın. Arkadaşın abisi öldü uyuşturucudan. Ondan sonra insanlar biraz geri çekti kendini... Çalışmasaydım ben de dalmıştım bu işlere.

<sup>76</sup> Eskiden sıkı mahalleliydim. Şimdi çalışıyorum. Öyle çok zamanım olmuyor. Arkadaşın abisi öldükten sonra mahallenin gençleri olarak biz bunu içirtmeyeceğiz, sattırmayacağız dedik. Zaten benden de korkarlar. Gödüğüm yerde dövüyorum çocukları içiyorlarsa.

<sup>77</sup> Şimdi param belli, gelirim belli. Kendi ayaklarımın üzerinde durabiliyorum.

<sup>78</sup> Sincan çok pis bir yer. Kavga falan oluyor sürekli. Uyuşturucu içen insanlar falan. Polisler baskın yapıyorlar sürekli. Her hafta ya da arka arkaya günler sürekli. Biz lisedeyken okul dışında sigara uyuşturucu falan kullanan tipler olurdu. Öyle kötü arkadaşlarımız yoktu bizim. Hala daha yok.



clientele relations embraces the young informants providing them a relatively desirable workplace. Koray explains “Peace. If there is peace in the workplace while working then that’s a good job.”<sup>79</sup> Like Koray, the twenty-one years old Yılmaz who is a waiter says “Your boss should be good. Sometimes you work and he doesn’t even give your money or he makes you work and lets you go.”<sup>80</sup> Yılmaz had that type of boss who was his relative:

In fact you shouldn’t work with a relative. As I said I worked at my uncle’s place. Something happens and he says ‘Aren’t you the relative?’ You ask for wage increase he says ‘If you do like that then what the other men do?’ When you leave he says ‘We gave that guy bread and he appeared to be breadless.’<sup>81</sup>

The second feature, which is linked to the first one, is regular wage payment. Many young people do not receive their income in a regular basis at their workplaces. When I ask Burak, who is currently unemployed, whether he was happy with his former job he says “No. The boss didn’t pay wages of the workers properly. He doesn’t pay regularly... My family thought the job was nice but that’s not the case inside.”<sup>82</sup> Therefore, for young people to consider to have a job as a way of being independent and not being burden to their parents, they need to be paid regularly and have a good boss who give their dignity. However, not every young person is lucky enough to find such a job in the labor market. As I previously showed this is predicated by their social networks, and most importantly the networks of their parents as they initiate the first jobs of their children. Thus, those who are in a disadvantageous position in terms of social capital are relatively more exposed to

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<sup>79</sup> Huzur. Bir iş yerinde çalışırken huzur varsa o iş iyi bir iştir.

<sup>80</sup> Patronun iyi olacak. Bazen çalışıyorsun adam senin maaşını bile vermiyor. Ya da bir ay çalıştırıyor gönderiyor.

<sup>81</sup> Akrabayla çalışmayacaksın aslında. Dedim ya ben amcamın yerinde çalışmışım. Bir şey oluyor ‘Sen akraba değil misin?’ diyor. Zam istiyorsun ‘Sen böyle yaparsan öbür adamlar ne yapar’ diyor. Çıktığın zaman ‘Biz adama ekmek verdik ekmezsiz çıktı’ diyor.

<sup>82</sup> Değildim. Patron çalışanlara maaşlarını tam olarak ödemiordu. Günü gününe düzenli olarak ödeiyor... Ailem işin güzel olduğunu düşünüyordu ama işin içine girince öyle değil.

low quality jobs which above two features are missing as well. Therefore, they believe they cannot receive the labor they give, and that decreases their attachment to the labor market. The following cases will illustrate these patterns.

### **3.2.2. “*Verilen Emegın Karşılığını Alamama*”: The Young Precarious Worker**

There are two levels of difference within young people. Firstly, the above group differs from the second one in terms of their relatively better social integration, to be more precise, their access to social capital. This helps them to find relatively decent jobs. However, not all young people have access to such networks and jobs. Thus, they work in jobs which lack any feature that would define a job as decent. Their jobs are unstable, poorly paid, and include tough working conditions. Moreover, they are not paid in a regular basis. These factors make them feel that jobs do not provide the financial returns in exchange for the labor they put (*verilen emegın karşılığını alamama*). Thus, the shortage of relatively better jobs excludes some young people who do not find jobs worth of working. Secondly, they have relatively more finance-oriented definitions of success. Their desire to earn good amount of money, and make a better living requires steady good jobs with chances of moving up to better positions that is not available in the labor market. In that sense, the formal labor market jobs offer limited opportunity for upward mobility or steady increase in the wage. Thus, their degree of participation depends to the extent that their expectations are matched with quality of jobs. While the previous groups, the older workers and the-early-adulthood young workers somewhat found success in those jobs, the young precarious workers did not hold any notion of success related to those jobs.

Burak is the nineteen years-old high school dropout who is currently unemployed. He has initially worked at a stationery in Kızılay as a store clerk right after he dropped out of school. Later, he worked at a textiles store for eight months until the

firm went bankrupt. Finally, he had a job in a supermarket as an aisle attendant in which his task was to arrange the aisles:

Then I entered in a market job. I worked there for a while. Then I saw that market job is not a proper job. It was difficult. You never sit and need stand all the time. For example, you become an aisle attendant. You always walk and arrange the aisles. You also work from 9am in the morning until 10pm in the evening. It is very tiring job. The money you get doesn't satisfy you. At that time the minimum wage wasn't even 1000 TL. It wasn't worth it. Then I started to hang around.<sup>83</sup>

He defines those jobs as "... not workable jobs. There is no guarantee that you will work. They don't care your wage."<sup>84</sup> Thus, in order to be a job to be workable Burak says "Any job that has a wage above 2.000 lira is a good job. That's the minimum right now."<sup>85</sup> As Burak could not find any sort of success in those jobs he stopped working and start to hang in the street. Tekin, who is also unemployed, says

The price of everything increases right now. The gas prices increase, the electricity prices increase. They make the minimum wage 1.600 lira. But then increase the price of electricity. It is very difficult. If you have a wage below 2.000 lira it is very difficult to make ends meet.<sup>86</sup>

Burak expresses his willingness to achieve a better living in terms of finances. He says "I would like to have a job with high wage. Because right now, no money no peace."<sup>87</sup> However the prospects of finding such a job for him are very difficult. When I ask his definition of success he tells me that "A person who has good job

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<sup>83</sup> Bu sefer market işine girdim. Bi süre de orda çalıştım. Sonra baktım market işi de iş değil. Zordu. Oturamıyorsun sürekli ayaktasın. Reyon sorumlusu yapıyor mesela sürekli geziyorsun, reyonları düzeltiyorsun. Oturamıyorsun. Zaten sabah 9'dan akşam 10'a kadar çalışıyorsun. Yoruca bi iş. Aldığın para zaten tatmin etmiyor. O zaman asgari ücret 1000 lira bile değildi. O kadar yıpranmana değmiyordu yani. Ondan sonra gezmeye başladım.

<sup>84</sup> Çalışılacak işler değildi. Çalışacağının garantisi yok. Maaşımı sallıyorlar.

<sup>85</sup> Geliri 2.000 liranın üzerinde olan bi iş iyi bir iştir. O da en düşük şu anda.

<sup>86</sup> Her şeye zam geliyor. Benzine zam geliyor, elektriğe zam geliyor. Asgari ücreti 1.600 lira yapıyorlar. Ama işte sonrasında elektriğe zam getiriyorlar. Çok zor yani. Eğer 2.000 liranın altında bi geçim şeyi varsa çok zor geçinmek.

<sup>87</sup> Yüksek maaşlı bir iş isterdim. Çünkü artık para yoksa huzur yok.

earning high income is a successful person.”<sup>88</sup> However Burak says “I cannot see the future. Of course I wish to have a good job with decent income. But I prefer not to dream because you really never know what is going to happen.”<sup>89</sup> The relationship between the young precarious worker and the jobs is a tenuous one. They change jobs more frequently than their counterparts. Economic considerations often play a crucial role in their decision to take any job. They have a sense of the potential return of the available jobs in the labor market. Their experiences in previous jobs include being laid off after a while, not receiving the wage regularly, tough working conditions which in turn they receive a small amount of money. Implications of these experiences, such as high turnover, periods of idleness, spending time in the streets, shapes the image of the don’t-want-to-work lazy young man in the neighborhood. Because the higher the wage the lower chance of finding it, the most important fact is that a young person who is willing to work cannot earn enough money to make ends meet, especially once he is married and has children. This is what happened to Raşit’s son:

He left Ankara. We arranged him a job in the industrial site. He said ‘I can’t make a living with paying travel expenses, rent. He moved. I said ‘Rent an apartment in Sincan. It is closer to your workplace, you won’t pay for travelling.’ He said ‘I calculated dad. Still the wage I receive is not enough.’<sup>90</sup>

Besides this precarious relationship as a result of objective conditions of available jobs in the labor market that lacks job and labor market security (Standing 2011), this group of young people has relatively more financially oriented definitions of success that further decreases their attachment to the labor market. Barış is the

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<sup>88</sup> İyi işi olan, ordan yüksek kazanç elde eden insan başarılıdır bence.

<sup>89</sup> Geleceği göremiyorum. Tabi ki iyi maaşlı iyi bir iş istiyorum. Ama şu anda hayal kurmamayı tercih ediyorum çünkü ne olacağı gerçekten belli olmuyor.

<sup>90</sup> Ankara’yı terk etti. Burda ona organize iş ayarladık. Burda dedi ben yol parası verip kira verip geçinemem dedi. Taşındı. Ben Sincan’da ev tut dedim. İş yerine daha yakın dedim, yol parası vermezsin dedim. Yine hesap ettim baba aldığım maaş sıkıntılı diyor.

twenty-four years-old who works in car parks.<sup>91</sup> He dropped out of primary school, and the reason was, in his own words, that he “couldn’t fit to the school.”<sup>92</sup> His father is a retired construction worker. Barış too worked in constructions for a while. His family moved from Dikmen to Sincan when Barış was 16 years-old because their neighborhood, which was a squatter region, demolished due to the urban transformation project. In Sincan he worked as an apprentice in the industrial site. Finally he worked as a store clerk, which he found through his father’s connection in their older neighborhood, in Kızılay before deciding to quit working. He says “I lost my inclination to work bro.”<sup>93</sup> When I ask why he replied:

At that time I was working in Kızılay. I was going to the store everyday. There were beautiful shoes, beautiful trousers in the store windows in Kızılay. I always wanted to have those shoes each time I pass through those windows. But it was impossible for me to buy them. Impossible with that wage bro. Then I quit working.<sup>94</sup>

After he stopped working he began to spend more time with his friends in the neighborhood. He says “I got involved in this kind of business with a friend of mine from the neighborhood. I started with him. I tried every type of drugs. Weed, candy, everything.”<sup>95</sup> Barış has a pretty tough story. He says “I was fed up with working bro. At that time there was the Dikmen gang I don’t know if you know. I was with them. I spent time for a while in jail. In a new year’s night I got stabbed from my chest. I stayed in hospital for months.”<sup>96</sup> After moving to Sincan Barış kept

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<sup>91</sup> Otoparkçı

<sup>92</sup> Okula uyuşamadım

<sup>93</sup> Çalışmaya meyilimi kaybettim kardeş.

<sup>94</sup> O zamanlar Kızılay’da çalışıyordum. Her gün mağazaya gidip geliyorum. Kızılay’da mağazaların vitrinlerinde güzel güzel ayakkabılar, güzel güzel pantolonlar. O mağazaların önünde her geçtiğimde o ayakkabıları almak istiyordum. Ama yani mümkün değil o maaşla onları alabilme. Mümkün değil o maaşla kardeş. Sonra da çalışmayı bıraktım.

<sup>95</sup> Bu işlere mahalleden bi arkadaşımınla bulaştım. Onunla başladım. Bütün uyuşturucuları denemişimdir. Ot, şeker hepsini.

<sup>96</sup> Çalışmaktan bıkmıştım kardeş. O zamanlar Dikmen çetesi vardı bilir misin? Onlarlaydım ben. Bi süre hapis yattım. Sonra bi yılbaşı gecesi göğsümden bıçaklandım. Aylarca hastanede yat

his friendship ties in his old neighborhood that made him involved in gang memberships. Not having a stable job causes spending more time in the streets, and that lead to street related activities. Thus, certain young people, the ones who do not have a relatively decent job, are more prone to drugs and violence as Barış's case illustrates. What Çetin said in the previous section that if he was not working he would be involved into such activities is exactly what happened to Barış. Moreover, Barış's desire to be a wealthy person, symbolized in his desire to dress well, decreases his attachment to the labor market as he thinks it is impossible to achieve such standards with available jobs in the labor market. Thus, at the individual level, the young people differentiate in terms of their measure of success. While the former group gives money a relatively weaker role than standing on their own feet in their definition of success the latter group defines it more with wealth. For the latter group, knowing the impossibility of achieving such desires with existing jobs declines their degree of attachment to the labor market and leads to higher job turnovers and idleness.

What Burak defines as hanging around after his last job in the supermarket illustrates this idleness and spending time in the streets. He explains what would mean to spend time in the streets:

You see when hang around in the streets. I have friends who use drugs. I have friends who sell drugs... It is very accessible. The guy calls his friend and he brings it. Like that it is very easy to access and everyone use it... Very common.<sup>97</sup>

Tekin, a friend of Burak, worked as a busboy and a waiter. He also worked as a repair apprentice at a workshop. Currently he is unemployed, and spends most of his time with small shop owners and his friends in the neighborhood. He says "I hang around with my friends and small shop owners... after the high school I couldn't go to the university. Now there is no a decent job in the market bro. I mean there are no

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<sup>97</sup> Sokaklarda takılınca görüyorsun. Çevremde uyuşturucu kullanan arkadaşlarım var. Bunun ticaretini yapan arkadaşlarım var... Çok kolay ulaşılabilir. Adam telefonla direkt istiyor arkadaş da getiriyor. Böyle ulaşımı çok kolay oldu ve herkesin elinde olan bir şey.

workable jobs. You work hard and receive very few.”<sup>98</sup> Erman says “There are different settings. The friendship setting can make you drop out school... There is no money, no job. People steal. What else they can do? They swindle each other.”<sup>99</sup> Although illicit activities like drugs take place among young people in Sincan its visibility is neither dominant nor managed in a systematic way. Erman explains “You can earn money very easily. The guy earns in half an hour what other people earn in 17 hours. It’s a more adventurous life. A life you can earn money easily.”<sup>100</sup> Burak also says “Its not like they buy in bulk. Like some powder or something, he distributes it and receives half of what he paid. That’s like that. Corner dealers earn 300 lira per bag.”<sup>101</sup>

### 3.3. Shifts Within Frames

Following the Chicago School tradition, the categorization of residents in urban ethnographies is widely evident (Gans 1962, Whyte 1955, Hannerz 1969). The typologies, or in other words, social types, depict variations among residents, and aim to transcend the stereotypes that are labeled upon low-income neighborhoods. In that sense, Whyte’s distinction between the “school boy” and “street boy” shows the heterogeneity within lower class residents in an Italian slum, so does Gans’ typology of “routine-seekers” and action-seekers”. My findings suggest three types of categories within the informants through which I aim to explore internal variations within the study site. However, human life is a process. It is a process which is subject to dynamic circumstances that, in turn, changes the behaviors of individuals. Individuals shift within frames, and thus, considering these typologies

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<sup>98</sup> Mahallede arkadaşlarımla esnafla takılıyorum... liseden sonra üniversite okuyamadım. Şimdi de düzgün iş yok piyasada be abi. Yani çalışılacak işler değil. Çok çalışıp az para alıyorsun.

<sup>99</sup> Değişik ortamlar var. Arkadaş ortamı okul bıraktırabilir. Para yok, iş yok. İnsanlar hırsızlık yapıyor. Ne yapınlar? İnsanlar birbirlerini dolandırıyor.

<sup>100</sup> Çok kolay para kazanılıyor. İnsanların 17 saatte çalıştığını adam yeri geliyor bir saatte yarım saatte kazanabiliyor. Daha maceralı bir hayat. Daha kolay para kazanabileceğin bir hayat.

<sup>101</sup> Satışını öyle toplu bir şekilde almıyor bunu. Mesela üç beş bi toz olur bi şey olur. Alır, paylaştırır, ona verir. Onun parasını çıkartır. Bu böyle yani. Torbacılar da torba başına 300 lira falan kazanıyor.

as fixed social types would be a fallacy. Thus, in this section I will illustrate the shifts within frames that individuals change their perceptions and behavior.

We met Akın who dedicated himself to the upbringing of his son as he is a single parent taking care of his child. He holds two jobs working almost eighteen hours a day, especially in summers. However, this was not the case all the time:

I had ignorance periods. You don't see your family right. You see yourself right. You have friends from the neighborhood. You go after them. You bully around. After you come from the military service you retreat yourself a bit. I mean you leave those ignorance periods. What you do? You say 'Let's have family, find a job'. Then you strive for these. You pull yourself back.<sup>102</sup>

He further says "There are times a person vagabonds. Times that he is aggressive. His attachment to his friends is higher. When there was a fight I used to go with them... we used to hang around in the streets. We involved into fights many times. Like as I told you, abusive, swearing stuff."<sup>103</sup> His parents used to "check the bathroom after me whether I was using drugs."<sup>104</sup>

His relation to the labor market and work experiences also indicates that his frame of work was different than now. He explains "Because I am a relaxed person I quit many jobs. I mean I couldn't do them. I worked at a sugar factory but I left."<sup>105</sup> In that sense, the periods Akın spent in the streets and his relatively low attachment to the labor market in the past were, in his words, his own mistakes when he considers

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<sup>102</sup> Benim de öyle cahillik dönemlerim oldu. Aileni haklı görmezsin. Kendini haklı görürsün. Mahalleden arkadaşların olur. Onarın peşinden gidersin. Kabadayılık yaparsın. Askere gidip geldikten sonra kendini çakıyorsun. Yani o cahillik dönemlerinden çıkıyorsun artık. Ha ne yapıyorsun. Aile kurayım diyorsun, iş bulatım diyorsun. Yani bunlar için çabalıyorsun. Elini ayağını çekiyorsun.

<sup>103</sup> İnsanın serserilik ettiği zamanlar oluyor. Kavgacı olduğu dönemler. Arkadaşlarına olan bağlılığı fazla oluyor. Bir kavga olduğu zaman arkadaşlarımla giderdim. Sokaklarda takılırdık. Kavga olaylarına çok girerdik. Şu an sana anlattıklarım hani ağzı bozuk, hakaret türü şeyler.

<sup>104</sup> Ailem mesela ben tuvalete girdikten sonra kontrol ederdi bu çocuk uyuşturucu mu kullanıyor diye.

<sup>105</sup> Ben biraz rahat bir insan olduğum için birçok işi bıraktım. Yani yapamadım. Şeker fabrikasında çalışmıştım ama bıraktım.



his current situation. He says “It is my mistake. That’s the consequence...Because I lived through these things I have regrets. Maybe if I didn’t follow them I could go to the university. If I didn’t follow the friendship setting I would be in a different place. But that’s the result right now.”<sup>106</sup> He attributes his inclinations when he was young to the way he was raised by his family. He explains “I was raised a little bit free. Like I told you I was raised more vagabond. Until I went to the army there was a distrust against me. Now my family coddles me. As if I will be like that again.”<sup>107</sup>

Akın is a high school dropout. He socialized with his peer groups when he was young, hanging around the street and involving into fights. He took several jobs when he was young for several periods of time. He did not value those jobs as they did not offer what he was expected from a job which is a desk-job (*masa başı*) with good amount of wage and less stressful conditions. He wanted a better job. In that sense, Akın used to resemble Barış, Burak and other young workers who endure a period of idleness rather than working at a job in which they couldn’t receive the labor they put. Akın, like these young workers, used to hang around in the streets as he did not work full-time, and involved in street-related activities. However, we cannot think of individuals as fixed within their lives. Thus, it is important to illustrate the dynamic process of shifts within the frames, or worldviews, which in turn shape their actions. Akın, who used to abstain from taking low quality jobs and had relatively lower attachment to the labor market, now has no time to spend in his neighborhood which he dislikes. He distances himself from the person who he was, and by making connections between his youth and the young people in his neighborhood, he also puts distance to the vagabondish people in his living place. This takes us to a further issue. So far I explored how individuals differ within themselves in terms of their meanings of work and attachment to the labor market.

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<sup>106</sup> Kendi hatam. Sonuç bu yani. Çünkü ben bu şeyleri gördüğüm için, bu şeyleri gördüğüm için pişmanlığım var. Belki o zamanlarda onlara uymasaydım, belki üniversite okurdum. Arkadaş ortamına uymasaydım belki bugün daha farklı bir yerde olurum. Ama şu anki sonuç bu.

<sup>107</sup> Ben biraz serbest yetiştim. Anlattım ya daha serseri yetiştim. O zamanlar bir süre güvensizlik oldu ben askere gidene kadar. Yani benim üzerime çok düşüyorlar şimdi. Sanki tekrar öyle olacaktım gibi.

Depending on the frames they hold, some young people, the ones who do not work and endure periods of idleness, spend more time in the streets and engage in street related activities. Because their money-oriented aspirations are not fulfilled by available opportunities they experience higher job turnovers, periods of idleness and unemployment. The labor market excludes them as it contains very few good jobs, and it is hard to find one. They hang around with their friends and small shop owners. The next section aims to explore how individuals interpret differences in others' behaviors and draw boundaries against each other in the neighborhood. To be more precise, how those who define themselves as "decent" people put distance to the "street" oriented people in the neighborhood?

### **3.4. Conclusion**

The young people often viewed as the victim of structural conditions of economic exclusion and marginalization creating a uniform subculture. Putting their agency at the center, Atmaca (2017) found that the low-income youth cope with this exclusion through illicit activities like drug dealing. Moreover, they make use of the stigma imposed on them by turning violence into a respectable symbol (p. 98). In her study of Zeytinburnu youth, Yönücü (2008) argues that the young people in Zeytinburnu, a group which do not fit to the normal society defined by consumerism, seek to be respectful members of the society. The impossibility of fulfillment of such desire make them not to invest themselves, and lead them to get involved into street related activities such as drugs and violence. However, although such empirical evidence supports my findings of certain group of young people they fail to capture variances among the low-income youth by depicting them as homogenous entities. My aim is not to represent the low-income neighborhoods as internally homogenous but to capture variances within the study site which is differentiated by cultural orientations. In that sense, I first aimed to explore cohort differences in the meaning of work and success. Although for each group frustration was common due to the limitations of the low-wage labor market, the notion of success and of they deserve

better were relatively different within them, leading to distinct frames of work and action.

The older workers often view their families as the ultimate source in finding meaning in work. Providing the best for the family was an important source of success and worth that nourishes the values of responsibility and hard work. These values are sources of their definitions of who they are, and their lenses through which they evaluate other people. Therefore, these moral standards extend to the ways they interpret differences between themselves and others (Lamont & Molnar 2002). To sustain their families, they do not hesitate a moment to work long hours and hold two jobs to make ends meet. This experience creates an expectation from other people to work hard and endure tough conditions. In other words, their frames of self-worth (Goffman 1974), articulated by providing for their family through hard work and persistence with patience shape the content of being a decent person. Goffman (1974) argues that frames are lenses through which we perceive the people and circumstances. They also rationalize our action. Thus, the frames of work and success which informants with families hold shapes their action in a way that they do not hesitate to hold two jobs and endure long working hours. Therefore, their frames of being a decent person entails them to act accordingly.

Then I analyzed how young people differ in their attachment to the labor market and frames of work and success. To understand why some young people, have relatively higher degree of attachment than others, I discovered the *conditions* which would explain the reasons of variation in degree of attachment. These conditions operate at two levels: one is at the more structural level in terms of job features which are regular wage payment and having a good boss who provides dignified working conditions. Finding such a job is predicated upon their social networks. The other is at the individual level of the measure of success and aspirations. I illustrated the ways these frames turn into, or impede, work-related action. The young informants find success in standing on their feet because they possess relatively better jobs in terms of dignified working conditions and regular wage payment. However, those

who are excluded from good jobs because they have limited access to social networks are exposed to jobs in very casual and flexible nature. Their precarious conditions cannot provide them notions of success like the first young group because they believe they cannot receive the labor they put in financial terms. Therefore, this makes them to change jobs more frequently and experience periods of idleness. Thus, while the first young group frames work and success as not being dependent on their parents and as being independent because they have relatively decent jobs to which they can assign those meanings, the latter group cannot find any form of success in the labor market. Thus, in their periods of idleness they hang in the street making them prone to street-related activities. In that case, we could argue the source of self-worth might shift to the street-related activities, however, this is out of the scope of this study. What is primarily issue at here is that while the former group's labor market experiences can provide them frames of success and worth thereby entailing them to be attached to the labor market, the latter group's experiences lower their attachment as they cannot find any source of self-worth in the labor market. The first young group's frames of success provide the repertoire of boundary-work (Lamont & Molnar 2002) that have reflections on how they interpret differences between themselves and others like the older generations even though the content of their frames are different.

The contribution of this chapter to the main research question lies in the understanding of how those frames are used by informants to interpret differences between themselves and others. Because, as Bourdieu implies that (1986, p.52), the contingent social relations turn into exchange relations through subjectively felt notions like friendship, then we should understand to whom individuals put distance to and consider themselves as not their friends. In that sense, the concept of symbolic boundaries is a beneficial conceptual tool to explore how individuals interpret "us" and "them". They are symbolic distinctions that we draw against people who are not like us (Lamont & Molnar 2002). Thus, we could employ this concept to understand the process of what Bourdieu calls (1986, p.52) the symbolic constitution of mutual recognition in order contingent relations to turn into

exchange relations. Lamont (2000, p.10) argues that in creation of symbolic boundaries, the definitions of self-worth and success have reflections as they provide the tools to put distance to people who do not hold the same frames of self-worth and success. Therefore, this chapter explored those definitions which sustain the repertoire of the boundary work while the next chapter will explore the reflections of those frames on symbolic boundaries.

## CHAPTER 4

### SYMBOLIC BOUNDARIES AND SOCIAL CAPITAL MOBILIZATION

#### 4.1. “*Düzgün vs Çakal Çukal*”: The Internal Boundaries in the Neighborhood

Selçuk is the twenty-seven years old single man living with his parents. He is a security guard in one of the gated communities in Eryaman.<sup>108</sup> His shifts vary according to the season, and by the time we conducted the interview he works in the day time. Thus he goes to work early in the morning until eight in the evening. He lives in Sincan for almost fifteen years after he arrived with his family from Mamak. In the neighborhood, he sees some sort of differences within the residents when I ask whether there are people who break the order:

It is crowded with vagabonds. I don't get into trouble a lot because I go home around 8pm but if I would hang around there around 8pm and 12pm I would definitely be in trouble... they are generally unemployed. I didn't see them working. Literally unemployed. They sell drugs and things like that. There are this kind of people in our place.<sup>109</sup>

He finds the neighborhood inappropriate for raising children and identifies it as a bad place: “In terms of people it is bad. Because of drugs and so on. It isn't a place to live with a child.”<sup>110</sup> Selçuk put distance to those who engage in street-related

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<sup>108</sup> Eryaman is a more affluent region close to Sincan.

<sup>109</sup> Bildiğin serseri kaynıyor yani. Çakal çukal dolu. Ben de akşam sekiz gibi eve döndüğüm için pek bir sıkıntı yaşamıyorum ama sabit hani 8 ila 12 arası ben de orda hep takılsam kesin bir sıkıntı yaşardım... genelde işsizler. Ben çok işle uğraştıklarını görmedim. Bildiğin işsizler. Uyuşturucu satıyorlar bilmem ne satıyorlar. Bizim orda o tarz insanlar var.

<sup>110</sup> Yani insan açısından kötü çünkü uyuşturucu vs. o bakımdan insanların çocuğuyla yaşayacağı bir yer değil.

activities in the neighborhood and, his own identity as a working man translates into a repertoire which creates boundaries between himself and the idle youth. This chapter will show the internal symbolic boundaries of the community based on the distinctions made by the informants. I will illustrate how the moral systems of the groups examined in the previous chapter sustain the boundary-work against those who are felt distant to themselves, which in our case the street-related people (*çakal çukal*).

“Little İstanbul. Very diverse. There are every kind of people.”<sup>111</sup> Bekir defines Sincan as little İstanbul indicating that it has a diverse population due to the high amount of in-migration it received in recent years. The region, which used to be a symbol of conservative neighborhood, has become very diverse in term its residents. The gentrification processes in the central regions of Ankara has “forced” people to move Sincan as it offered relatively more affordable housing (Zengin 2014, p.382). Moreover, families migrating from other Anatolian cities, especially after early 2000s, settle in Sincan as it represents the most convenient way to move in a big city after the gentrification of inner city regions. Zengin indicates (p. 384) one more process which contributes to the perpetuation of poverty in Sincan that is those residents who get wealthier leave Sincan moving to more affluent regions like Eryaman. Thus, while it receives poor families from both Ankara and other cities, relatively wealthier families leave the region leaving numbers of disadvantaged people in material hardships. As I illustrated in the previous section not all people, especially the youth, able to find work, and hence unemployment is prevalent among them. In the neighborhood, as the site of interaction, individuals create distinctions by interpreting differences between themselves and others. The main internal distinction created by the interviewees is sustained between decent (*düzgün*) and vagabond (*çakal çukal*) people.

My analysis will inductively document the building repertoires of boundaries that certain groups draw against certain people in their neighborhood: we will see that

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<sup>111</sup> Küçük İstanbul. Çok karışık. Her türden her telden insanlar mevcut.

they criticize groups for their idleness and street-related activities. Thus, by doing that, they position themselves as opposed to others within a relational dynamic. These boundaries are the criteria the informants use to evaluate people (Lamont & Molnar 2002). However the significant issue is that this criteria of evaluation is activated when they are asked for help or information concerning job search by another person. Those who are considered unworthy of help, based on this system of boundaries, which, as I will show, might include their friends, neighborhoods, relatives, and even children, are averted by the low-income worker. Therefore, the internal symbolic boundaries in the neighborhood have social effects in social capital mobilization.

To tap the internal distinctions in the neighborhood, I asked low-income workers to describe things that they do not like in their neighborhoods, whether there are groups breaking the order, and their friends in the neighborhood. I did not ask directly what do they think of people who use drugs or alcohol or whether there are people who have street-related activities in order not to take such distinctions taken for granted. Such distinctions appeared through the natural flow of conversations. Then I analyzed the relative salience of boundaries and their backbones which have a behavioral dimension when interpreting the differences among the residents. This chapter examines the content of boundaries, which are in line with street-related behaviors with moral connotations and work-related behaviors with idleness. To be more precise, we will see how the first two groups of workers we analyzed in the previous chapter draw boundaries against the third group we examined which is marked by street-related behaviors, high job turnovers and longer periods of idleness.

Many informants define their neighborhood as a bad place in terms of people involved in drugs, alcohol and violence. Fatma describes “People are untrustworthy. You can’t go out at night. Alcohol, heroin, there are many things like that. It is more



prevalent among young people.”<sup>112</sup> Koray, who goes back home from work late at nights, also articulates a similar view: “If you see you the young people you would understand. You hesitate because they are always a vagabond style. Especially as you go to the center lots of youth, lots of vagabonds actually. Naturally you hesitate. You understand them from the way they look.”<sup>113</sup> When I ask the difference between him and those people he says “Their look is like a horse thief as people say. The hair is brushed to the side with beard and so on.”<sup>114</sup> The justification of this difference is explained in terms of moral flaws which make those people more inclined to such activities. Polat recalls his own youth and explains:

First it is due to family. Second it is due to money. Also depends on moral values. We don't let ill-gotten things to enter our home. But some don't care about it... You need to be flexible. To make your family your children to eat ill-gotten things you need to be flexible. I work since I am twelve. Because we didn't have an eye on other stuff.<sup>115</sup>

Polat extends his argument to the causes of being a street-related person, and puts distance himself and others. His sense of self as a hardworking person contributes to his boundary-work by viewing them as people who are after easy money and lacking self-control to work formally. For Polat, as a person who knows his responsibilities, this kind of people is opposed to his disciplined self as they are “very flexible. They are people without concern about the future and family responsibility.”<sup>116</sup> The distinction between “decent” and “street” families is also evident in literature (Anderson 1999). In a poor black neighborhood, Anderson

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<sup>112</sup> İnsanlar güvenilir değil. Gece yarısı çıkamazsın. İçkidir, eroindir, o tarz şeyler çok oluyor. Gençler arasında daha çok.

<sup>113</sup> Genç kısmı görsen anlarsın zaten. Hep çakal tarzı oldukları için insan çekiniyor yani. Merkeze doğru özellikle çok genç var, çok çakal var açıkçası. İnsan çekiniyor haliyle. Bakışlarından falan anlıyorsun.

<sup>114</sup> Tipleri zaten at hırsız derler ya saçları yana taranmış sakallar falan.

<sup>115</sup> Birincisi aileden kaynaklı, ikincisi paradan kaynaklı. Biraz da ahlaki değerlere bakıyor tabi ki. Bizim evimize haram kesinlikle girmez. Ama bazıları buna takmıyor... Geniş olmanız lazım. Ailenize çocuğunuza haram yedirmek için midenizin geniş olması lazım. Bunlar bizim ailemize ters düşen şeylerdi. 12 yaşımdan beri çalışıyorum. Başka şeylerde gözümüz olmadığı için.

<sup>116</sup> Çok rahattırlar. Gelecek kaygısı olmayan, aile sorumluluğu olmayan insanlar

(1999, p. 256) found out that people make distinction between decent and street families, and my findings support that. Anderson (1999, p.257) argues that those who define themselves as decent put distance to others because they possess values like responsibility, work ethics and family life. This extends to the evaluation of other families by interpreting them as street-related families because they have disorganized family structures with children who use drugs and involve into violence. However, the content of this distinction, as it is shown by Polat's religious connotations, could be different than the American context as the available repertoire for the boundary-work is contextually bounded (Lamont 2000). Therefore when workers articulate the moral flaws of street-related people the meaning behind their justification has religious connotations like engaging ill-gotten (*haram*) activities. For instance, Sezgin, who is a forty-two years-old man working at the kitchen of a restaurant, says "There are weird people. Different types of people. Alcohol drinkers. I never drink alcohol. But that's not the case here."<sup>117</sup> Finally Akın, who used to be on the other side of this distinction when he was young, says he does not like his neighborhood because of "people. There is every kind of people. There are vagabond style people. Because of that you can't even go out. I don't recommend this neighborhood to anyone."<sup>118</sup> In fact, Akın draws boundary against street-related people which he was once. He used to define such behaviors as periodical naming it "the ignorance period" (*cahillik dönemleri*). However he makes a further argument about young people in the neighborhood:

The young people now take example of each other. Drugs are all over the place. In the parks they smoke weed. They hang around there. They attack people, swear to women... It is very prevalent in Sincan. Everyone is a bully now... I look at the current youth they are even further of the ignorance

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<sup>117</sup> Çok acayip insanlar var. Değişik değişik tipler. Alkol alan. Ben hiç alkol almam. Ama burda pek öyle değil.

<sup>118</sup> İnsanlar. Her türlü insan var. Serseri türü çok insan var. Onun için dışarıya bile çıkamıyorsun yani. Kimseye de önermem yani.

periods. For example, they are back from the military service at the age of 23 or 25, they still continue to behave like I said. That's how is Sincan now.<sup>119</sup>

The second dimension used in drawing boundaries is the idleness. Sezgin explains "There are idle people. He does nothing. They don't work. They are relaxed. They don't care. He finds a job and he doesn't go. Comfort. Especially the young people I don't see them working."<sup>120</sup> When I ask whether he feels superior to certain people in his neighborhood, Yılmaz says "The people who have no occupation. You know there is a saying like being idler, I feel superior to that kind of people."<sup>121</sup> This distinction is also salient when I ask low-income workers about their friends. They do not want to seem like they have idle or street-related friends. Raşit says:

Our friends are people who have work. We don't have any thing with idle person. If you hang around with an idle person you become idle. If you hang around with a drunk person you become drunk. That's the how it is. I don't have night life. It is out of our lifestyle.<sup>122</sup>

He also implies that hanging in the coffee houses indicates a kind of laziness that they do not search for work. He says "The lazy person shouldn't wait in the coffee houses for a job."<sup>123</sup> When I ask whether there are lazy people in his neighborhood, he replies "Yes there are. They are free riders."<sup>124</sup> Moreover, he adds that he does not have a habit of going to a coffee house. Therefore, the low-income workers

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<sup>119</sup> Gençlerde artık hani birbirlerinden örnek alıyorlar. Uyuşturucu aldı başını yürüdü. Parklarda şeylerde esrardır bilmem nedir. Oralarda takılıyorlar. İnsanlara çatıyorlar, kadınlara çatıyorlar. Yani gerçekten bu Sincan'da çok olan bir şey. Herkes ağır abi olmuş gidiyor... Şimdiki gençlere bakıyorum cahillik dönemlerini de geçmişler. Askerden gelmişler mesela ama hala sen 23 yaşındasın 25 yaşındasın ama hala benim bahsettiğim şekilde devam eden insanlar var. Sincan artık böyle bi yer.

<sup>120</sup> Boş gezenler var. Adamlar çalışmıyor. Rahatlar. Umursamıyorlar. İş buluyor gitmiyor mesela. Rahatlık. Gençler özellikle şu anda çalıştıklarını görmüyorum.

<sup>121</sup> Hiçbir uğraşı olmayan insanlar. Boş gezenin boş kalfası diye bi laf vardır ya o tür insanlardan üstün hissederim ben.

<sup>122</sup> Arkadaşlarımız içinde gücünde olan kişiler. Bizim boş insanla işimiz olmaz. Boş insanla gezersen boş olursun. Sarhoşla gezersen sarhoş olursun. Bu iş böyledir. Benim gece hayatım olmaz. Bizim yaşantımızın dışında yani.

<sup>123</sup> Tembel insan dediğin kahve köşesinde iş beklemeyecek.

<sup>124</sup> Var var. Onlar asalak insanlar.

strive to build connections, or friendships, along “decent” lines. Polat defines his friends: “They are family fathers. Some work in the industry some work in the real estate. But I don’t have much friends from the neighborhood.”<sup>125</sup> Like Polat, Bekir describes his friends as “decent people. Married people with children... Now they get on with work. One of them work in the industrial site. We see each other but not very often.”<sup>126</sup> Given the reputation of Sincan, they most of the time tell that they do not have much friends from the neighborhood as it would associate them with the reputation of their neighborhood. Thus, when they are asked to describe their friends, the low-income workers tell they have one or two close friends who are decent people with decent living with their families and work. Moreover, they do not say that they have many friends from the neighborhood as having friends from the neighborhood would indicate that they have free time, meaning not occupied with a job, to hang around with them. They manage with the stigma of the neighborhood by distancing themselves to those “stigmatized” people, and positions themselves into a different place than others. Sibel, the forty-four years-old cashier with two sons, says “Whoever you ask they say Sincan is a bad place. That’s also caused by the person itself. Depending on his/her lifestyle the neighborhood can change the person.”<sup>127</sup> In that sense, the low-income workers are aware of the newly emerging bad reputation of Sincan. In their highly diverse neighborhood, they strive not to be associated to such street-related people, and draws boundary against them in terms of street-related activities like drugs, alcohol and violence and of idleness to which they do not want to be related. However, although they draw internal distinctions in the neighborhood they inevitably have connections and interactions with street-related people. They have neighbors, school friends, relatives, or even children on the other side of this distinction. For example, the brother of Koray has

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<sup>125</sup> Onlar da neticede aile babaları. Kimisi sanayide çalışıyor kimisi emlakçıda çalışıyor. O tarz işler. Zaten mahallede pek arkadaşım yok

<sup>126</sup> Hepsi de düzgün insanlar. Evil barklı çoluk çocuk sahibi. Şimdi hepsi işinde gücünde. Görüşüyoruz ama çok sık değil.

<sup>127</sup> Sincanı kime sorsanız çok kötü diyorlar. O kişinin kendisinden de kaynaklanıyor. Yaşadığı mahalle insanı değiştirebiliyor da yaşantısına göre.

drug-related problems, Kartal's son has alcohol issues, the school friends of Selçuk were, in his term, vagabonds, or Yılmaz and Furkan had friends who use drugs when they were at school. Thus, while explaining categorizations we should not forget that "decent" people might have "street" connections. Hence, the next section will illustrate how these criteria of evaluation affect the social capital mobilization in the labor market.

## **4.2. Social Capital Mobilization**

In his anthropological study, Dubetsky (1976) examined the nature of social organization of the workplace in the Turkish setting. The majority of workers in small workshops, which was the focus of Dubetsky, were hired through personal relationships (Dubetsky, p. 437). He found out that the concept of trust has a crucial role in mediating labor relations in the economic order. The personalized organization of the workplace was based upon the trustworthiness (*dürüstlük*) of the worker and that was ensured by kinship networks of the owners. Although the anthropological study of Dubetsky indicates the significance of the notion of trust in recruitment decisions, as the labor market gets more complex and saturated, the labor relations are not only bound to kinship networks in hiring. While the concept of trustworthiness still holds a significant position, finding a job or receiving information are far more mediated through current workers.<sup>128</sup> Today, employers try to employ the ties of their workers who are not their kin to recruit trustworthy employees. If trust still has a significant role mediated through not only kinship networks of the owners but also workers themselves who are seen as reliable source of information, then we might ask how do the workers employ the criteria of evaluation when deciding who is a trustworthy worker to mobilize their social capital?

Lin (2001, p. 82) distinguishes the accessed social capital from the mobilized social capital in the process of status attainment. Therefore, access to social ties does not

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<sup>128</sup> Only one female interviewee mentioned İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency)

assure mobilization as it is predicated on certain conditions. This section aims to explore what are those conditions by analyzing the decision processes of low-income workers' in the mobilization of their social capital in job-assistance in the labor market. We will see that the symbolic boundaries, which I illustrated in the previous section, overlaps in their articulation of social capital mobilization, shaping the conditions under which they provide help to their connections. Thus, the categorization schemes of the informants have reflections on their decision to mobilize their social capital in the labor market.

Stressing the importance of economic embeddedness, Granovetter (1985, p. 167) argues that “the role of concrete personal relations and structures of such relations in generating trust and discouraging malfeasance” has paramount importance. For that purpose, individuals seek reliable information to grant trustworthiness, and according to Granovetter (p.167) that information is better when it is “from one’s own past dealings with that person.” That is why employers, when hiring someone, ask their employees whether they know someone whom they can trust and find reliable. They rely on workers’ information as they have past dealings with the potential employee. Thus, since Granovetter (p.168) argues that “social relations are mainly responsible for the production of trust in economic life”, I will explore the mental process through which workers decide to whom they can trust when they mobilize their social capital in the labor market. I asked them how do they decide whether they help to a person. I also asked concrete examples when they hide information from the person who seek help, and tried to explore their justification in not helping that person, to be more precise, their way of perceiving that person which made them to ward off.

#### **4.2.1. Street-Related Explanations**

Many low-income workers value being a decent person when helping to others in finding job. Their definition of decency opposes to the street-related people who are involved in drugs, violence, alcohol etc. as that would indicate a kind of moral flaw.

Therefore, the first explanation is based upon the criteria of not being a street-related person. Raşit says:

We need to trust him. When I send you a place, when you give my name it is like the guy which Raşit sent is ok. That guy doesn't gamble, don't drinks, goes to his home regularly with no gambling. We send people by guaranteeing this kind of things are not going to happen. Otherwise we won't send. I don't. I would say 'I don't have information' or 'Come back three days later'.<sup>129</sup>

Raşit processes the person who approached to him to ask for help based on his criteria of evaluation. In the previous chapter, when describing his friends as the indication of his symbolic boundaries, decency was salient in Raşit's discourse in terms of not having drunk or idle friends and night life. Here we see the way his definition of decency is affective when deciding to help a job-seeker. He emphasizes the importance of being a decent family man with no gambling and alcohol habits is a significant aspect in his social capital mobilization, or in other words generating trust and referring the job-seeker to an employer. Similarly, Kartal says:

I would look if that person has vagabond behaviors. I would interrogate in the neighborhood. I ask to the people: 'Does he smoke weed? Has he ever involved in theft?' If they have such behaviors then I won't help these people in finding a job."<sup>130</sup>

When I ask if there is a concrete example which he deliberately ward off to provide information to the job-seeker, Selçuk, who draws boundaries to vagabond people involved in drugs in his neighborhood, says:

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<sup>129</sup> Bizim ona güvenmemiz lazım. Şimdi ben seni bi yere gönderdiğim zaman, benim ismimi ver dediğim zaman nedir, Raşit'in gönderdiği kişiden bir sıkıntı gelmez, bir yanlış gelmez. Bu adam kumar oynamaz, içki içmez, evine ocağına düzgün giden gelen kumar oynamayan. Yani bu tür şeyleri olmayan birinin olacağını garantisini vererek yolluyoruz biz zaten. Öbür türlü göndermeyiz zaten. Göndermem zaten. Bilgim yok derim sallarım. Üç gün sonra gel derim ya da farklı birşeyler konuşurum.

<sup>130</sup> O kişinin çakal çukal hareketleri var mı ona bakarım. Mahallede soruştururum. İnsanlara sorarım: 'Esrar içer mi? Hırsızlık yapmış mı? Bu tarz harekerleri olan insanlara iş bulmaları konusunda yardımcı olmam.

Yes there is. I am very close to my school friends. Usually in my student life I used to work and because I was working they used to ask for job. I help to those which I like and know well but I don't help to some of them like the ones who lost themselves who drifted to the vagabond group.<sup>131</sup>

When I ask how he knows that they are drifted to vagabond groups he says "I know from the school and the neighborhood like from the old times."<sup>132</sup> He also adds that "If I see that person as decent I would try to help."<sup>133</sup> In some cases even family members are deemed unworthy of giving hand in finding a job. Koray, for example, after explaining how he decides to help or not by saying "I look at his/her lifestyle. I look whether he is willing to work or not"<sup>134</sup>, he says he would hesitate to help his brother: "Currently he is divorced. Because he is confused he is inclined to other stuff these days."<sup>135</sup> When talking about his friends who approached him Yılmaz says "In fact I didn't want them to go there with my name. There might be a problem in the future and because they were going to be there with my name I didn't want that."<sup>136</sup> He explains why he is not close to those guys "I don't trust everyone. I don't say 'come let's sit at my place'. Because you don't know what they are going to do... I can say they are my friends. We are cool but not close... Because they can harm me I don't get close with them and try to stay away."<sup>137</sup> Here Yılmaz emphasizes his friends who use drugs as people he does not get close with. Because he does not generate trust towards this sort of people he avoids being

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<sup>131</sup> Evet oldu. Okul arkadaşlarımla ben çok sıkı fıkıyım. Genelde öğrencilik dönemlerimde ben çalışıyordum. Çalıştığım için de onlar iş istiyordu. İstedikleri için de sevdiklerime ve iyi tanıdıklarına yardımcı olurum ama ani bazıları böyle biraz kendini kaybetmiş çakal çukal tayfasına doğru biraz daha yaklaşmışlara yardımcı olmuyorum.

<sup>132</sup> Okuldan ve mahalleden yani eskiden biliyordum.

<sup>133</sup> Yani düzgün biri olarak nitelendirmişsem yardımcı olmaya çalışırım.

<sup>134</sup> Hayat tarzına bakarım. O kişi çalışmaya istekli mi değil mi ona bakarım.

<sup>135</sup> Şu anda boşandı. Kafası karışık olduğundan öbür taraflara biraz yatkın bu aralar.

<sup>136</sup> Açıkçası çok benim adımla oraya gitmelerini stemedim. Çünkü ilerde bi sorun çıkardı ve benim adımla orda oldukları için istemedim.

<sup>137</sup> Ben öyle herkese güvenmiyorum. Gel bugün bizde oturalım demem. Çünkü ne yapacakları belli olmuyor... Diğerleri de arkadaşımıdır. İyidir, aram iyidir ama o kadar samimi değilimdir... Ben bunlarla o kadar samimi olmuyorum ve uzak duruyorum bana bi zarar gelebileceği için.



reference for them in the labor market. When I ask what he said to his friends in that particular case he says “I said ‘No they don’t need anyone.’”<sup>138</sup> Bekir also stresses the importance of moral values, and says the person should not be involved in “a disgraceful crime like theft, immorality”<sup>139</sup>

In the previous chapter, we saw the ways individuals differ in their frames of work and their respective attachment to the labor market. Certain features of jobs such as dignified conditions and regular wage payment were structural conditions of jobs for young people to consider them as good. However, at the individual level, the young people differed within themselves into two groups: one is perceiving work as a way of standing on their own feet and the other as a way of moving up. The first group had a relatively higher attachment to the labor market while the latter experience periods of unemployment and spend more time in the street, which make them prone to street-related activities. However, what makes them engage in drugs and violence requires a more detailed analysis including family formation in order not to remain at a superficial level saying the structural conditions shape their action. What is more significant in my analysis is that they are often perceived as *çakal çukal* people and drawn boundaries. The low-income workers’ internal distinction of *düzgün vs çakal çukal* has effects in helping to a job-seeker. Therefore, symbolic boundaries have social affects in the mobilization of social capital in the labor market. The stigmatized individuals, in terms of their street-related behaviors, are often avoided to give hand. Such behaviors include vagabond behaviors like smoking weed, violence, theft as they indicate some kind of moral flaw which make them unworthy of helping. Because the low-income workers have friends, neighbors, family members who are on the other side of distinction they deploy their criteria of evaluation when deciding whether to help or not. However, in addition to street-related explanations, this mental process has one more dimension, which is the work-related explanations.

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<sup>138</sup> Yok dedim elemana ihtiyaçları yok.

<sup>139</sup> Yüz kızartıcı suç yapmadığı sürece hırsızlık, ahlaksızlık gibi.

#### 4.2.2. Work-Related Explanations

In the previous chapter, we saw that for some workers family responsibility, hard work, and not being dependent on someone were essential meanings of work. Thus, they do not hesitate to hold two jobs and work overtime like eighteen hours per day to make ends meet. This creates an expectation that other people, especially the young people, should work hard and endure working conditions. They think that there is unemployment because people select jobs (*iş beğenmeme*). When I ask whether there are jobs for everyone in Turkey, Rifat says:

There are but many people don't work. There are many people who don't like jobs. Many people don't like the minimum wage. Otherwise there are many jobs. most of my friends which I brought here to work have run away. Because it is heavy. There is bread everywhere if you work... They are right in certain aspects. There are some difficulties. You go home at two at night. But there is nothing if you don't work.<sup>140</sup>

Rifat accepts the economic order in the labor market and expects other people to act like him, working at two jobs for more than fifteen hours per day and enduring the difficulties in working conditions. Otherwise, in this reality, there is no bread. Therefore, in their opinion, people who avoid jobs by evaluating according to financial returns, working conditions, and the labor they put, are people who select jobs (*iş beğenmeyen insanlar*). Similarly, Polat, who told us that he suffered a lot, also thinks that there are enough jobs in the labor market but, he says, “When I look at the current generation they immediately want to be on the top. First you deserve, then you get it. Therefore, there are jobs but the people don't want to make effort.”<sup>141</sup> Therefore, they expect other people to endure tough working conditions like they do. A person who has diverse job experiences with high turnovers and periods of idleness indicates that they are selective and that's the reason of their

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<sup>140</sup> Var ama çalışmayan insan çok. Beğenmeyen insanlar çok. Asgari ücreti beğenmeyen insanlar çok. Yoksa iş çok. Ben buraya getirdiğim arkadaşların çoğu kaçtı. Ağır olduğu için. Çalışana her yerde ekme var. Haklılıkları var tabi. Zorlukları var. Gece ikide eve gidiyorsun. Ama çalışmayana da bir şey yok.

<sup>141</sup> Ama şu an yetişen yeni nesle bakıyorum hemen zirvede yer almak istiyorlar. Önce bir hak et, sona alırsın. O yüzden ülkemizde iş var ama insanlar emek vermek istemiyorlar.

unemployment. Akın, the interviewee who experienced a shift in his frames of work, explains “There is unemployment because of being selective. Like I did in the past. There are jobs for people who are willing to work. The unemployment occurs because of being selective like I did.”<sup>142</sup>

We saw that certain young people, who are in relatively disadvantageous position in the labor market in accessing relatively better jobs experience high job turnovers and idleness. Those young people change jobs more frequently than others as they believe they need to receive the labor they put in financial terms. However, in the eyes of low-income workers this indicates that they are selective. They select jobs and do not persist (*sebat etmek*). Sibel, when speaking of her nephews, she says “My father arranged jobs to almost ten of my nephews in the industrial site but none of them persisted. Then you lose face. That embarrasses you. But if she/he persist in the workplace that’s important for me.”<sup>143</sup> That brings us the second form of justification when low-income workers mobilize their social capital that is the work-related explanations.

The low-income workers hold a kind of work ethic that people should persist in jobs if they want to make ends meet and subsist their family. This expectation of persistence translates into criteria of evaluation when helping to a job-seeker. Because high job turnovers and idleness indicate that the person does not persist in jobs, the low-income workers often consider the previous experiences of the person who asked for help. Kartal illustrates this point:

You can enter a job and have a dispute with the boss or a problem in the work environment. I can understand that. But if you change jobs for nothing then I can’t help that person. I would ask where did s/he worked? Why s/he left those jobs. For example my children are scapegrace. I put the elder one in a job he gets bored and leaves after three months. Thus I don’t help him

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<sup>142</sup> İşsizlik iş beğenmemezlikten var. Benim zamanında yaptığım gibi. Çalışmak isteyen insan için bence iş var. Benim gibi beğenmemezlikten oluyor genelde.

<sup>143</sup> Benim babam belki organize 10 tane yeğenimi işe yerleştirmiştir ama hiçbirisi sebat etmemeştir. Yüzü kalmıyor insanın. İnsanı mahçup ediyor. Ama çalıştığı yerde sebat ediyorsa bu benim için çok önemli.

anymore. He comes to me and say ‘Father is there any work?’ I say no and let him.<sup>144</sup>

Kartal avoids helping even to his son because he does not endure in jobs and keep working for a while. Similarly, Polat says “The guy I send works for ten days and leaves. I am careful about to whom I am referred to... I say ‘I will check it’ or ‘I will keep in mind’”<sup>145</sup> Therefore a person who worked in multiple places in a short period of time is potentially regarded as unworthy of helping due to his/her pervious job experiences. Especially the certain young people whom we discussed in the previous chapter that experience high job turnovers because of relatively worse jobs they hold and of their unmatched expectations in the labor market are greater disadvantaged when it comes to mobilize their social capital. When I ask how he decides to help a job-seeker, Bekir explains:

When it is a job which I have knowledge of course I try to help to the person in need. But because people are selective about jobs that affects the later person. When the guy works for one month and leave you can’t send the next one. You say ‘What if he does the same thing.’ I helped he worked for three five days. He is in need, he is unemployed. Then you worry when the next person comes. You feel uneasy about the other side.<sup>146</sup>

He also gives an example “The other day they called me for my ex-colleague. I said ‘He is a decent, hardworking boy.’ I try to do as much as I can. But that kind of

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<sup>144</sup> Sen bir işe girersin patronla anlaşamazsın veya iş ortamında sıkıntı yaşarsın çıkarsın. Bunu ben anlarım. Ama sürekli haybeye iş değiştiriyorsan ben o kişiye yardımcı olmam. Daha önce nerelerde çalışmış, önceki işlerinden neden ayrılmış onları sorarım. Mesela benim evlatlarım hayırsızdır. Büyük olanı bir işe koyuyorum üç ay sonra sıkılıp çıkıyor. O yüzden artık ona yardımcı olmuyorum. Bana geliyor ‘Baba iş var mı?’ yok diyorum gönderiyorum.

<sup>145</sup> Adamı gönderiyorum 10 gün çalışıp bırakıyor. Referans olduğum kişiler hakkında daha dikkatliyim... ‘Bakarım’ diyorum, ‘aklımda bulunsun’ diyorum

<sup>146</sup> Benim bildiğim bir iş olduğu zaman tabi ki ihtiyacı olana yardımcı olmaya çalışıyorum. Ama bizde iş beğenmeyen insanlar olduğu için ve bu bir sonraki insanı etkiliyor. Adam bir ay çalışıp bıraktığı zaman bir sonrakini gönderemiyorsun. Diyorsun ki ‘Lan bu da böyle yaparsa ne olacak.’ Ben yardımcı oldum adam üç beş gün çalıştı. İhtiyacı var, işsiz yapamam dedi. Şimdi biri daha gelse tedirgin oluyorsun. Karşı tarafa bi tedirginlik hissediyorsun.

things made me like that.”<sup>147</sup> The terms decent and hardworking is salient in Bekir’s decision making when giving hand to a person. His general frames of work and education, which I illustrated in the previous chapters, defined in a way that people should endure in their works to gain practical experience and move ahead. Although, like Rifat, he considers the employers and the economic order responsible for material hardships among low-income workers, he also expects other people to persist in the labor market. This expectation backed by his perspectives on work and education translates into evaluation criteria in mobilizing his social capital. When I ask whether he ever hesitates to help, he says “If you know that person. If you know the way s/he works. I would look whether s/he worked or not. What s/he did in the past? Did s/he leave two workplaces or ten workplaces? Then there would be a question mark.”<sup>148</sup> Considering high job turnovers as a sign of being selective about jobs is also evident in Fatma’s explanations. She says “I would ask ‘What kinds of work you did? Why did you leave?’ I would first learn the reasons of leave. If s/he says ‘I got bored and left’ then I won’t find her/him... If it’s a person I trust I find her/him. S/he got bored and left then I won’t find.”<sup>149</sup>

The main sociological argument behind explaining social capital mobilization is that it is affected by the way the person categorizes the job-seeker based on his/her criteria of evaluation. In other words, they conduct a mental process through which they define the person as worthy of giving hand. In that sense, their self-conception, which in our case being “decent” (*düzgün*), is a lens through which they evaluate the job-seeker and decide whether to mobilize their social capital or not? Thus, they mobilize their social capital for people who are like them, or in Goffman’s term who are “one of our kind.” Koray illustrates this pattern strikingly by saying “The

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<sup>147</sup> Geçen beraber çalıştığım birisi için aradılar beni. Söyledim düzgün çocuk, çalışkan çocuk. Elimden geldiğince yardımcı olmaya çalışırım. Ama böyle şeyler beni böyle yaptı.

<sup>148</sup> Tanıyorsan o insanı, çalışmasını biliyorsan. Açılıp çalışmadığına bakarız. Daha önce ne yapmış. İki yerden mi çıkmış on yerden mi çıkmış? Soru işaretini oluştur.

<sup>149</sup> Sorarım yani hangi işlerde çalıştın eden ayrıldın. Ayrılma sebeplerini falan bi öğrenirim ondan sonra. Kendim canım sıkıldı ayrıldım derse ben bulmam... Güvendiğim bildiğim insansa bulurum. Sıkıldı bıraktı ayrılmış ona bulmam.

coming person should be like you. S/he should be working. Of course you would hesitate when you call someone who put you in a difficult situation.”<sup>150</sup> He describes the person to whom he helps should be a like him. Thus, the type of people which Koray feels distant and draws boundaries, as I illustrated in the previous section, is less likely to mobilize their social capital. He gives an example which he recalls his past experiences with his friends who approached him to ask for job:

O course I had some friends which I hesitated... Because they won't work. I had some friends from my old neighborhood. I knew they were not going to work. I guess they were going to be relaxed. So I didn't call them. Their character make it possible. Because I knew they could work well for one or two days and then slack I didn't call them.<sup>151</sup>

Koray adds another dimension to the work-related explanations in social capital mobilization. He values to be a responsible person with work ethic to be worthy of providing help. Otherwise he hides information like he did in the above case: “I said there is no need for extra men that there are extra people.”<sup>152</sup>

Information about a job-seeker is very crucial in the labor market, especially when it comes from someone who has dealt with that person in the past. These past experiences are often meaningful interactions which actors engage in sites like workplace, neighborhood. As consequences of those interactions, categorizations in the minds of the low-income workers have effects on social capital mobilization. In this process the categorization is imbued with work-related explanations. A young person like Barış, whom we met in the previous chapter, change jobs more frequently than other because he is exposed to relatively lower quality of jobs which do not meet his expectations. Thus, he experiences high job turnovers and spend

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<sup>150</sup> Gelecek adamın senin gibi olması lazım. Çalışması lazım. Tabi ki çekinirsin yani seni sıkıntıya sokacak insanı çağırırken çekinirsin.

<sup>151</sup> Çalışmayacaklardı çünkü. Birkaç arkadaşım vardı eskiden mahalleden. Çalışmayacaklarını biliyordum. Rahat takılacaklarını tahmin ediyordum. O yüzden çağırmadım. Yapıları ona müsaitti yani. Bir gün iki gün iyi çalışıp ondan sonra işi savsaklayacaklarını bildiğim için çağırmadım.

<sup>152</sup> Esktra adam ihtiyaç olmadığını söyledim, fazla adam olduğunu söyledim.

more free time in the street. In the eyes of the other working groups he is categorized as a person who is selective in terms of jobs. Because he does not persist in low quality jobs they view Barış, and other young people who believe they do not receive the labor they put and change jobs in the labor market as I illustrated, as idle and selective. This process makes it less likely to mobilize their social capital and has effects on the perpetuation of their conditions. Although I explored the individual-level conditions affecting the social capital mobilization, we also need to understand the contextual factors, that is the insecure position of low-income workers in low status jobs, that have effects on the process of mobilization. In other words, their insecure position in the jobs makes them reluctant to mobilize their social capital in case their connection harms their reputation.

#### **4.2.3. The Reputation at the Workplace**

The discourse of the market is, according to Fourcade and Healy (2007, p. 21), “increasingly articulated in moral and civilizational terms, rather than simply in the traditional terms of self-interest and efficiency.” They argue that markets have a role of creating moral boundaries between persons (p. 16). Saturated with moral meaning, the market involves “more or less conscious efforts to categorize, normalize, and naturalize behaviors” (p. 16). Thus, they play a kind of moralizing role by defining categories of worth (p. 17). In the previous sections we saw the content of these categories in the labor market by exploring the criteria of evaluation of the low-income workers in social capital mobilization in job-finding assistance. They conduct a kind of mental process through which they decide the moral worth of the job-seeker that has effects on mobilizing their social capital. However, there are contextual factors that affect this process. Their precarious and insecure position at the workplace, which implies that their job statuses are highly depend on arbitrary decision of the employers who can take immediate decision whom to lay off, compels them to secure their reputation at the workplace according to categories of the moral market not to jeopardize their position at their workplace. Thus, this process makes them even more selective and reluctant in mobilizing their social

capital. To tap such contextual factors of the workplace and possible consequences of “risky” social capital mobilizations I asked interviewees the good and bad sides of helping to a job-seeker.

Like they distance themselves from the reputation of their neighborhood by stressing that they do not have friends from the neighborhood, the low-income workers strive also in the workplace to keep their reputation. They do not want to be embarrassed (*mahçup olmak*) by bringing a friend who could misbehave as that would associate them with undesirable reputation at the workplace. They believe that damaging their reputation might affect their position at the workplace. Koray explains:

The good side is that it extolls you. ‘They guy which Koray called works very well’. the bas side is that it makes you bad. ‘Look at they guy Koray called he doesn’t work. He doesn’t work decently. What kind of a person is that.’ That affects your position. If affects your place. So there are many negative sides.<sup>153</sup>

Koray emphasizes that bringing hardworking and decent person at the workplace extolls him. That’s because he wishes to be associated with a friend who possess moral values so that he could maintain his image at the workplace. He says that “You have a certain image in here.”<sup>154</sup> He does not want this image to be damaged. That’s a crucial reason why low-income workers do not want to mobilize their social capital for people who possess undesirable street and work-related features which I explored in the previous section. Moreover, being embarrassed and putting the work organization at risk by bringing someone who does not work “decently” might affect the position of the low-income worker. The employers might verbally degrade both workers as Koray said or, they might lay them off.

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<sup>153</sup> İyi yanı seni yüceltir. İşte Koray’ın çağırdığı adam ne güzel çalışıyor. Kötü yanı seni kötü eder. Koray’ın çağırdığı adama bak iş yapmıyor. Doğru düzgün çalışmıyor. Böyle adam mı olur. Senin konumunu da etkiliyor. Olduğun yeri de etkiliyor. Yani olumsuzlukları da çok.

<sup>154</sup> Yani şu an mesela senin burda belli bir kalıbın var.



We saw in the first chapter that employers ask their current worker to what extent they can trust their coming friend. This gives the burden to the worker who mobilize his/her social capital. Akın, for example never brings him connections to his own workplace. He also avoids to be direct reference and just mentions about the job rather than directly arranging it. However most of the time he hides it. He says “I talk to that person. I say ‘I talked to them but it’ not possible.’ S/he either understands me or doesn’t talk to me anymore. Either of them. S/he either believes me or not.”<sup>155</sup> He adds “I don’t be reference regarding job finding. Because I don’t trust. But I lead them to jobs. They either accept or not. That doesn’t bother me.”<sup>156</sup> Akın also emphasizes being embarrassed as bad sides of job-assistance but he is happy that so far he did not receive such feedbacks: “Thank God I didn’t experience any embarrassment. I never received an immoral feedback.”<sup>157</sup> Selçuk recalls a memory which he was embarrassed:

Especially an army friend of mine worked at a restaurant where I was working. But because he was a friend I got into trouble... Instead of wearing black trousers and white shirt he wore short-sleeve short with blue trousers even though I warned him. He thought that would be ok. I got into trouble when he came here like that... I was embarrassed. Everyone worked one man missing.<sup>158</sup>

Thus he concludes that such experiences make him reluctant to mobilize his social capital and evaluate the person in order not to damage his reputation and be embarrassed: “The good sides of finding a job is that if s/he won’t embarrass you, if s/he is hardworking and honest, if the workplace is happy about that I would support

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<sup>155</sup> Ben konuşuyorum kendisiyle. ‘Şöyle gittim olmadı.’ Bu şekilde ya beni anlıyor ya da küsüyor. İkisinden biri oluyor. Yani ya inandırıcı oluyorum ya da inanmıyor.

<sup>156</sup> İş bulma konusunda kefil olmuyorum abi. Güvenmiyorum çünkü. İş var mı diye yönlendiririm. O taraf kabul eder veya etmez. O beni ırgalamaz yani.

<sup>157</sup> Şükür öyle bir mahcubiyet yaşamadım. Ahlaksız bir dönüş olmadı yani.

<sup>158</sup> Özellikle askerden bir arkadaşım o zamanlar çalıştığım restoranda çalıştı. Ama arkadaş olduğu için sıkıntı yaşadım. Geldi beyaz gömlek siyah pantolon giymesi gerekirken bu arkadaşım kafasına göre kısa kollu gömlek mavi pantolon şeklinde giyip gelmiş uyarmama rağmen. Bir şey olmayacağını düşünmüş. O şekilde gelince ben de sıkıntı yaşadım. Mahçup duruma düştüm. Öyle olunca bir adam eksik çalışmak zorunda kaldı herkes.

him/her in any case. But if the contrary happened that would affect the next person.”<sup>159</sup>

The coming connection might affect the position of the low-income worker as well by jeopardizing his/her status. Polat says “I used to think like a good deed is its own reward. But no one knows it unfortunately. I get happy if a friend comes to somewhere but I don’t do it anymore.”<sup>160</sup> In the past Polat used to work at the same workplaces as his elder brother who was a waiter as well. They used to bring each other to the places they work. However, this created some problems at the workplace. Polat explains:

The biggest mistake of my life is to work at the same workplace with my brother who was in the service sector as well. My brother is a little aggressive. He could change job very frequently. When my brother quit the job I also quit, and both of us were unemployed.<sup>161</sup>

The low-income workers prefer not to regret when mobilizing their social capital in the labor market. In case their coming connection misbehaves according to the legitimate codes of behavior of the labor market their reputation might damage, and they would be related to undesirable categories because they are “friends”. This would both damage their reputation at the workplace and embarrasses them to their fellow workers and employers. Moreover, they do not want to spill their image at the workplace and harm the work organization as it would entail them to get into trouble or even to lose their jobs like it happened to Polat. They do not want to risk their already insecure position by hurting their reputation. Therefore, they mobilize their social capital carefully and reluctantly.

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<sup>159</sup> İş bulma konusunda iyi yanları eğer seni mahcup etmeyecekse, çalışkansa ve dürüstse, iş yeri bundan memnun kalmışsa ben har halükarda arkasında olurum. Ama tam tersi olursa bu söyledikleri tamamen bir sonraki kişiye yansır.

<sup>160</sup> Eskiden şöyle düşünürdüm. İyilik yap denize at balık bilmezse halik bilir. Ama kimse bilmiyor maalesef. Mutlu oluyoruz arkadaşımız bir yere geliyor ama artık şu an yapmıyorum.

<sup>161</sup> Hayatımın en büyük hatası abimle, o da hizmet sektöründeydi, onunla aynı işte çalışmak oldu. Abim biraz agresiftir. İşten çok sık çıkabiliyordu. Abim işten çıkınca ben de çıkıyordum ikimiz de işsiz kalıyorduk.

### 4.3. Conclusion

In this chapter I explored how internal symbolic boundaries within the neighborhood overlap with the articulation of low-income workers' decision making in mobilizing their social capital. In that sense, symbolic boundaries have social effects in the labor market by working as a kind of evaluation criteria when deciding how to mobilize social capital. Bourdieu (1986, p.) states that individuals transform their relations into subjective feelings like respect and friendship. Thus, in his terms, in order social relations to turn into exchange relations, there should be a symbolic constitution of mutual knowledge and recognition. However, as we analyzed in this chapter people distance themselves from certain kind of people which impedes them to *recognize* those certain people as their friends. They do not transform contingent relations into subjective feelings like friendship because they categorize people and draw symbolic boundaries. These symbolic boundaries have reflections on the mobilization of social capital. Therefore, I began this chapter by illustrating the internal distinctions among the residents in the neighborhood that mainly organized within the decent vs. vagabond line. Differences in behaviors are interpreted by the low-income workers and categorized along this distinction. I explored the content of this distinction that is organized in two dimensions. The first is street-related behaviors like smoking weed, theft, drinking alcohol and violence. The second is more work-related including being idler and hanging around in the street. Especially the young people often viewed under such categories. Moreover, inevitably "decent" people have "street" connections because they live in the same social environment.

Bourdieu (1986, p.47) argues that social capital is convertible to economic capital under certain conditions. The mobilization of social capital in the labor market represents this conversion by enabling individuals to find jobs thereby providing an opportunity to earn money. Mobilized social capital is the use of contacts to find jobs (Lin 2001). Thus, these approaches complement each other and compels us to analyze what are those conditions. Distinguishing the access to social capital from

the mobilization of social capital (Lin 2001), I then explored how these categorizations have effects on social capital mobilization. Following Bourdieu, I linked symbolic boundaries, the categorization systems which individuals hold (Lamont & Molnar 2002), as factors affecting the symbolic constitution of recognition. Thus, these boundaries have reflections on the transformation of contingent relation into exchange relations. I discovered that those symbolic distinctions overlap when low-income workers decide whether to be reference to their connections in job-finding. This is again organized in two forms. The first is street-related explanations, whether the person has street-related behaviors like weed, theft, alcohol etc. and the second is work-related explanations like being persistent, low job turnovers and work ethic. I explored the justifications behind these articulations in social capital mobilization. This process contributes to the perpetuation of categorized individuals living conditions and their access to relatively better jobs by blocking their job opportunities. Finally, I also discussed how low-income workers' willingness to keep their reputation and their insecure job position might hinder social capital mobilization.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

This thesis explored the criteria of evaluation of low-income workers to mobilize their social capital in the labor market. The content of worthy individuals to give hand, that is conceptualized as to be decent (*düzgün*), is a condition under which this process is activated. Considering the mobilization of social capital as a social action, this thesis utilized the analytical tools of cultural sociology, frames and symbolic boundaries, to understand the meaning-making process behind this social action.

Sincan is neither a homogenous neighborhood nor a *gecekondu* style area. Given its contextual forces it was an imperative to conduct a study on social capital in the Turkish context to explore whether and how it has changed in recent decades. The support structures of low-income workers decline in recent years. This is attributed to the fact that struggle for life is harder than it was ever. The community relations are also in decline. They do not feel a sense of solidarity within their neighborhood as it was in the past.

If the social capital mobilization is not automatic then how can we understand it. Low-income workers hold distinct frames about work, success and worth. The ways low-income workers frame these notions provide them cultural components to define who they are, and more importantly, who they are not (Lamont 2000). For instance, the older workers define success as providing for their family and being responsible. Thus, they do not make a distinction between good or bad job, and never hesitate to hold two jobs even though they need to work up to seven-teen hours a day. This creates an expectation from other people to behave in the same way, and not select jobs. On the other hand, younger people are more critical about

defining good jobs. They elaborate it in a more specific way in terms of wage payment and good boss. To find a relatively good job is conditioned upon the resources embedded in their social networks. Therefore, when it comes to their definitions of success they form two distinct groups. The first group, who can land relatively good jobs, frames work as a way to adulthood, and thus, somewhat believes that they need to endure work conditions. However, the second group, who cannot find good jobs because they have limited access to social networks, believes that they need to receive the labor they put in financial terms causing a low degree of attachment to the labor market entailing more time in the streets. They work in very casual, flexible and unstable jobs, and experience higher job turnover and periods of idleness.

These frames and lines of action later support the discourse of the creation symbolic boundaries within the neighborhood. Those who hang in the street are viewed as the vagabonds (*çakal çukal*) by the people who hold frames of worth like responsibility, family devotion, and early adulthood through work. These frames shape the way they evaluate other people. For instance, a worker who values hard work, persistency, and responsibility uses these lenses to interpret differences among people and evaluate them accordingly. Implication of this process is the creation of boundaries along decent and vagabond (*düzgün vs çakal çukal*) lines. Turning into an evaluative criteria these boundaries are categorization schemes that they employ when deciding social capital in the labor market. A worker, for example, who views his friend as vagabond because he engages in drugs and hang in the street, ward off to mobilize his social capital. Thus, those who are not considered as “decent” under these criteria face difficulties to use their contacts.

While the concept of frames helps us to understand distinct definitions of work and success through which individuals construct different lines of action, symbolic boundaries illustrates how those relations turn into a categorization system in the minds of low-income workers. Those who hold a moral view of worth based on persistence on a job and responsibility draw lines against those who experience

more job turnovers, idleness, and hanging in the street based on being a vagabond (*çakal çukal*). As the concept of symbolic boundaries suggests that they provide necessary conditions of shaping social processes (Lamont & Molnar 2002), this symbolic distinction affects the mobilization of social capital. The low-income workers evaluate their connection who seeks for a job and request information according to this criteria and decide whether to mobilize their social capital or not.

However, I wanted to examine the process from multiple sides and aimed to explore why some people, especially the young ones, view the labor market differently. This issue has double sides: structural and individual. At the structural level some young people fall into low quality jobs due to differential access to social capital. They are excluded from the “good” labor market and forced to work very casual and flexible jobs. At the individual level this leads them to frame work from a perspective that they need to receive the labor they put in financial terms. These double effects entail frequent job turnovers and idleness. Because they experience high turnovers and periods of idleness they are more prone to street-related activities, and hence, they are more prone to be categorized as vagabond (*çakal çukal*). Once they are categorized we can argue that it perpetuates their conditions as it would be less likely for them to mobilize their social capital.

During the interviews I encountered comments such as “gypsies”, “Alevis”, “Kurds” etc. while referring to ‘others’ in the district. Although I believe that it is a significant factor of differentiation among individuals I deliberately chose not to delve into ethnic articulations in the interviews. Moreover, while criminality among young people was salient in the interviews this is not a study of delinquency or crime. However, we might argue that the young people who cannot find self-worth in the formal labor market might shift to street-related realms. This requires a more systematic study to explore the complexities of drug and crime.

This thesis contributes to the capital theory of Bourdieu. The concept of conversion, transforming different capitals to each other, holds a significant role behind the

reproduction of conditions of existence. Bourdieu (1986) argues that social capital is convertible to economic capital. However, he does not thoroughly elaborate how social capital converts into economic capital. Nevertheless, he gives us some hint about the dynamics of social capital. According to him, a symbolic recognition between actors is necessary to conduct exchange relations. This is the point his theory opens up a space for problematizing the conversion of social capital into economic capital. To discuss this process I combined the theory of social capital with Lamont's symbolic boundaries to understand the constitution of symbolic recognition as the condition of exchange relations. Bourdieu does not provide a systematic analysis of this potential problematic. Therefore, this study is a moderate attempt to problematize this theoretical gap in Bourdieu's theory, which provides us valuable initial grounds to depart. This thesis contributes by adding an analysis of this process of conversion by exploring the conditions under which social capital transforms into economic capital. I observed that symbolic boundaries, the lines that people draw when categorizing others, have effects on actors to mobilize their social capital to help their contacts in job-finding assistance.

Like Bourdieu, Lin (2001) as well analyzes social capital mobilization as the use of social contacts in job-finding process that might be considered as converting social capital into economic capital. However, his analysis lacks the argument that it is an exchange relationship that it is not only depend on the person who uses his/her contacts to find a job. Thus I complemented Lin with Bourdieu arguing that the mobilization process is an exchange relationship in which it is not only the job seeker but also the job contact that should be included into the analysis. Hence, I asked individuals how they decide to help their connections in job-finding assistance. Therefore, this thesis also contributes Lin's concept of mobilized social capital by asking how it is mobilized. The symbolic boundaries play a mediating role in social capital mobilization.

This thesis also contributes the process, which symbolic turns into social. Lamont & Molnar (2002) argues that symbolic boundaries are the necessary but insufficient



conditions of social boundaries. Thus, they function as the legitimation of social issues. This thesis illustrates a case, where symbolic boundaries turn into a social issue by exploring how certain individuals are deemed unworthy of giving hand in the labor market. Moreover, it opens up a discussion about how symbolic processes contribute to urban poverty. At the political level we might argue that the ideological notion of the deserving/undeserving poor justifies framing certain people as the scapegoats of their living conditions. Thus, the creation of such a discourse at the political level, discussing the ‘underclass’ in terms of behavioral terms rather than economic or structural terms, paves the way for the marginalization of categorized individuals, especially certain young people. The usage of the underclass as the undeserving poor includes pejorative connotations that it carries judgmental baggage. The categorization of individuals through moral judgements imbued with idleness and street-relatedness blurs the essential structural issues and interacts with ideological discourses at the political level. At the public discourse we might argue these judgments open up a space for a discussion of the undeserving poor as these terms turn into labels used by people to stigmatize categorized individuals through behavioral terms.

These processes contribute to the production and reproduction of social inequality in routine ways, in our case, by blocking job opportunities, especially for relatively good jobs. The moral systems that are taken for granted tend to be affective through enable-and-constrain relationship in social action, to be more precise, social capital mobilization. Shaping everyday interactions, these processes produce various types of outcomes in various dimensions of inequality and perpetuation of poverty. The way symbolic boundaries effect the mobilization of social capital displays that, although the categorization schemes we create are symbolic, they “do indeed freeze a particular state of social struggles” (Bourdieu 1984, p. 476).

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## APPENDICES

### A. QUESTIONNAIRE

#### **Başlangıç Soruları**

1. Öncelikle biraz kendinizden bahsedebilir misiniz? Nerelisiniz? Nerede çalışıyorsunuz? Kaç yaşındasınız?
2. Evli misiniz? Çocuğunuz var mı? Yaşları kaç? Evli ise → Eşiniz çalışıyor mu? Kaç yaşında? Nerede çalışıyor?
3. Nerede yaşıyorsunuz? Ne zamandır .....’da yaşıyorsunuz? Öncesinde nerelerde yaşadınız?

#### **Hayat Geçmişi ve Göç**

4. Geçmişinizden bahsedebilir misin?  
Nerede büyüdünüz?  
Nerelerde yaşadınız? Okula gittiniz mi? Kaçınıcı sınıfa kadar okudunuz?  
[Eğitim düzeyi]  
Aile yaşantınız nasıldı? (Baba ne iş yapardı? Anne çalışır mıydı? Kardeşler? Eğitim düzeyleri)
5. Ankara’ya ne zaman ve nereden geldiniz? Neden bu şehre gelmeye karar verdiniz? (Eğer önceki nesil gelmiş ise → Ankara’ya gelmeyi kimler karar vermiş? Neden memleketlerinden ayrılmışlar?)
6. Bu şehre gelmenizde size yardımcı olanlar oldu mu? Olduysa kimler, nasıl oldu? (Burada daha önce oturan aile, akraba ya da hemşerileriniz var mıydı?)
7. ....’ya gelmeden önce Ankara’nın başka mahallelerinde yaşadınız mı?
8. Neden ....’ya geldiniz? (Veya aileniz neden .... mahallesine gelmiş?)  
[Hemşerilerin etkisi]
9. Ne kadar süredir .....’da oturuyorsunuz? Oturduğunuz ev size mi ait yoksa kirami?

#### **Mahalle**

10. Daha önce hiç ....’ya gelmemiş birine ....’yı nasıl anlatırsınız?

11. ....'da yaşamak sizin için ne anlam ifade ediyor?
12. Mahallenizde kimler, ne tür insanlar yaşar?
13. Bu mahallede oturmaktan memnun musunuz?
14. Kendinizi mahallenize ne kadar bağlı hissediyorsunuz? Taşınmayı hiç düşündünüz mü? Neden?
15. Mahallenizle ilgili sevmediğiniz şeyler nelerdir? Hiç sorun yaşadınız mı? [Gerginlik, şiddet] Sevdiğiniz şeyler? [düzeni bozan gruplar]
16. Nasıl bir mahallede yaşamak isterdiniz?
17. Mahallenizde sizden farklı gruplar/insanlar var mı?
18. Kendinize en uzak hissettiğiniz grup hangisi? Neden? [benzerlikler ve farklılıklar] Sizi onlardan ayıran şeyler/özellikler nelerdir?
19. .... dışında Ankara'da gittiğiniz semtler var mı? O bölgelere ne için gidirsiniz? Bu semtler ile .... arasında ne gibi benzerlikler ve farklılıklar var? İş dışında gittiğiniz semtler var mı? Ne için gidirsiniz?
20. Mahallenizde komşular arasındaki ilişkileri nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? Komşularınıza ne kadar güveniyorsunuz?
21. ....'yı ilk geldiğiniz zaman göre karşılaştırırsanız ne gibi değişiklikler oldu? İnsan ilişkileri değişti mi? [Sosyal hayat, yapı] (değişti ise → sizce bu değişimin nedeni ne?)
22. Bu mahallede kendinizi ne kadar güvende hissediyorsunuz? (Hissetmiyorsa → Neden?)
23. Sizce .... çocuk yetiştirmek için uygun bir yer mi?
24. Bu mahallede yaşayan insanlar genelde ne işle meşguldürler? Çalışmayan insanlar var mıdır? Var ise neden çalışmıyorlar/neden iş bulamıyorlar?
25. Biraz da arkadaşlarınızdan bahsedebilir misiniz? Kimlerdir, ne yaparlar?
26. İş yaşamı dışında ailenizle birlikte olmadığınız boş vakitlerinizi kimlerle geçirirsiniz? En çok görüştüğünüz kişiler kimler? [hemşeri, akraba, yakın arkadaş, iş arkadaşı]
27. Bu kişiler sizinle aynı mahallede mi otururlar? .... dışından düzenli olarak görüştüğünüz arkadaşlarınız var mı? Neler yaparsınız? Ne sıklıkla görüşürsünüz? Geçmişte Ankara'nın diğer semtlerinden birlikte zaman geçirdiğiniz arkadaşlarınız oldu mu? Eskiden arkadaşlarınızla bugüne göre daha farklı şeyler yapar mıydınız?

## **İş Yaşamı**

28. Hayatınız boyunca ne tür işlerde çalıştınız? (Hangi yollardan para kazandınız? Bir işte çalışmak dışında para kazanma yollarınız oldu mu?) [önceki işlerden ayrılma sebepleri]
29. Şu anda ne iş yapıyorsunuz? Yaptığınız işi anlatabilir misiniz? Ne zamandır bu işte çalışıyorsunuz? (İşsiz ise → İş arıyor musunuz? Neden iş aramıyorsunuz? Başka bir şehre iş bulmak için gider misiniz? Hayır ise neden?)
30. Şu anki işinizi nasıl buldunuz? Önceki işlerinizi nasıl bulmuştunuz? İş bulmak için hangi yöntemleri deniyorsunuz?
31. Sizce iş bulmak ne kadar zor? Peki şimdilerde iyi bir iş bulmak ne kadar zor?
32. İş bulurken ne gibi engellerle karşılaştınız?
33. Sizce iş ararken arkadaşlar, tanıdıklar ve akrabalar ne kadar önemli?
34. Kendi işyerinizde veya başka bir yerde açık bir iş ilanı olduğunda ne yapıyorsunuz? Tanıdığınız insanlara bu işten basediyor musunuz?
35. Kendiniz veya bir başkası için bir iş için tanıdığınız birinden bilgi aldınız mı? (Hayır ise 36'ya geç) Kimden bilgi aldınız? Neden o kişiden? Bu kişi ne yapar? Size ne tür işler bulmanızda yardımcı olur?
36. Daha önce hiç kimse sizden iş bulma konusunda yardım istedi mi? Kimler? Ne tür bir iş için yardımınızı istedi? Yardımcı oldunuz mu? Nasıl oldunuz? İş için yardımınızı isteyenler işe girebildi mi?
37. Birisi sizden iş bulma konusunda yardım istediğinde o kişiye yardım edip etmeyeceğinize nasıl karar verirsiniz? (daha önce çekinceli davrandığınız oldu mu?)
38. Başkalarına iş bulma konusunda yardımcı olmanın iyi ve kötü yanları nelerdir?
39. Arkadaşlarınızı, ailenizi veya tanıdıklarınızı düşündüğünüzde başkalarına iş bulma konusunda çok yardımcı olan birisi var mı? Kimdir? Ne tür işler bulur? Ne iş yapar?
40. Başka bir işiniz veya para kazanma yolunuz var mı? Geçici bir işiniz? Başka bir iş arıyor musunuz?
41. İşinizin sevdiğiniz ve sevmediğiniz yanları nelerdir?
42. Hayatınızı bu işte geçirmekten memnun musunuz?
43. Aileniz ve arkadaşlarınız işiniz hakkında ne düşünüyor?

44. İyi bir işi nasıl tanımlarsınız? Ankara’da iyi bir iş bulabilmek için gerekli olan en önemli şey nedir? Sizce siz böyle iyi bir iş bulabilir misiniz?
45. Bu şehirde sizce kimler iyi bir işe sahip? Mahallenizde (Ne tür işler size göre iyi iştir? Neden?)
46. Bir işe sahip olmak sizin için ne anlam ifade ediyor? İnsanlar neden çalışırlar? Çok paranız olsa yine de çalışmaya devam eder miydiniz? Nasıl bir hayat yaşamak isterdiniz?
47. Şu anki işinizde aldığınız maaşa benzer ücret ödeyen bir işi başka bir işverenden bulma şansınızı nasıl görüyorsunuz? [çok kolay, kolay, zor]
48. Sizce ülkede herkes için yeterince iş var mı? Ankara’da? Değilse neden? Bu durumu düzeltmek için ne yapılmalı?

### **Sosyal Mobilité**

49. Hayattaki hedefleriniz için neler söylersiniz?
50. Başarıyı nasıl tanımlarsınız? Yaşamda başarı sizin için ne anlama geliyor? (Kendinizi başarılı olarak görüyor musunuz?) [Başarılı kişi örneği]
51. Sizce Türkiye insanların maddi olarak daha iyi yerlere gelmesini sağlayan ve hak ettiklerini aldığı fırsatların olduğu bir yer mi?
52. Sizce insanlar maddi olarak ilerlemek için bugün geçmişe göre daha fazla fırsata sahip mi?
53. Ankara’da maddi yönden ilerlemek için gerekli en önemli yol nedir? Hangi insanlar bu açıdan için en çok şansa sahip? Peki kimler en az şansa sahiptir? [Aile ve arkadaşlardan spesifik örnekler]
54. Aşağıda maddi olarak ilerlemenin yollarını önem sırasına göre işaretleyebilir misiniz?

	Çok önemli		Bilmiyorum		Hiç önemli değil
Eğitim	1	2	3	4	5
Aile mirası	1	2	3	4	5
Çok çalışma	1	2	3	4	5
Çevrenin geniş olması	1	2	3	4	5
Şans	1	2	3	4	5

Bilgili olmak 1 2 3 4 5

Kişinin yaşadığı mahalle 1 2 3 4 5

55. Bazı insanlar hayatta başarılı olmak için eğitimin en iyi yol olduğunu söylerler. Siz ne düşünüyorsunuz?

### **Aile ve Sosyal İlişkiler**

56. Biraz ailenizden bahseder misiniz? Eşiniz tam olarak ne yapar? Ne mezunu? Hanehalkı kaç kişi? (Çocuk varsa → Çocuklarınız kaç yaşında? Okuyorlar mı? Çalışıyorlar mı? Nerede oturuyorlar? Ne yapıyorlar?)

57. Sizce sizin hayatınız ailenizin(anne-babanızın) hayatından daha iyi mi?

58. Sizce Ankara'da aile hayatı geçmişe göre değişti mi? Peki hemşerilerinizle olan ilişkileriniz? [Zayıflama/güçlenme, spesifik örnekler]

59. Şimdi bu kağıtta “aile” başlığı altında en yakın aile üyelerinizin, “arkadaşlar” başlığı altında akraba olmadığınız en yakın arkadaşlarınızın isimlerini veya baş harflerini yazabilir misiniz? Kağıt sizde kalacak bana vermeyeceksiniz.

Kağıda bakarak;

Aile Üyesi

Arkadaş

Kaç tane yakın aile üyesi/arkadaş yazdınız?

Kaç aile üyesi/arkadaş sizin mahallenizde yaşıyor?

Kaç aile üyesi/arkadaş Ankara'da yaşıyor?

İçlerinde üniversite mezunu olan var mı? Kaç tanesi?

Kaç tane aile üyesi/arkadaş tam zamanlı işe sahip?

Kaç tane aile üyesi/arkadaş yarı zamanlı işe sahip?

Kaç tane aile üyesi/arkadaş iş bulmanız için size yardımcı oldu?

Aralarında kiranızı ödemenize yardımcı olan var mı?

Bir süre evinde kaldığımız aile üyesi/arkadaş var mı?

Uyuşturucu kullanan olan aile üyesi/arkadaş var mı?

60. Birçok insan ihtiyaçları için veya ekonomik olarak idare edebilmek için diğer kişilerin desteğine ihtiyacı olabilir. Şimdi veya geçmişte ekonomik olarak idare edebilmeniz için size yardım eden birisi/birileri oldu mu? Kıyafet, yemek yardımında bulunan?
61. (Evet ise → Şimdi size idare etmenizde en çok destek olan kişiyi veya kişileri düşünmenizi istiyorum. Kaç kişi düşündünüz? → Lütfen size en çok yardımcı olan birinci kişiyi düşünün. Bu birinci kişi listenizde mi?)
62. Bu kişiyi ne zamandır tanıyorsunuz? Bu kişi sizin neyiniz olur?)

### **Değerler ve Arkadaşlık**

63. Yakın olduğunuz bir arkadaşınız var mı? Onu bana anlatır mısınız? Onun hangi özelliklerini seversiniz?
64. Genel olarak hayatta sevdiğiniz türden insanları anlatmanızı istesem, hangi özellikler sizin için en önemli olur?
65. Peki ya sevmediğiniz bir kişi var mı? Genel olarak, sevmediğiniz türden insanları anlatabilir misiniz? Sinirinize dokunan insanları nasıl tanımlardınız?
66. Kendinize örnek aldığınız birisi var mı? Bu kişinin hangi özelliklerinden dolayı onu örnek alırsınız?
67. İstesek de istemesek de bazen diğer insanlara karşı kendimizi daha üstün veya aşağıda hissettiğimiz olur. Hangi insanlara karşı kendinizi üstün hissedersiniz? Aşağıda? Kimler sizi üstün veya aşağıda hissettirir? Örnek verebilir misiniz?
68. Sizce toplumda belli bir kesim diğerlerine göre bazı ayrıcalıklara sahip mi? Hangi kesim? [cevap zenginler ise → zenginler ile yoksullar/garibanlar arasında ne gibi farklılıklar var? Olumsuz yanlar? Sevmediğiniz özellikleri?]
69. Peki aileniz size ne tür değerler verdi? Hayatta önemli olduğunu söyledikleri şeyler nelerdi?
70. Çocuk varsa → Siz de çocuklarınızı aynı şekilde mi eğittiniz/eğitiyorsunuz? Çocuk yoksa → ilerde çocuğunuz olursa onu da aynı şekilde eğitmeyi düşünüyorsunuz?
71. Onlara hangi değerleri aktarıyorsunuz/aktardınız? Hangi özelliklere sahip olmalarını isterdiniz?
72. Bu anlamda en önemlisi sizin için hangisidir? [din, vatan-millet, ahlak, kültür, eğitim]
73. Büyüyünce ne olmalarını isterdiniz?

74. Kardeşleriniz var mı? Aile üyelerinizle yakın mısınız?

75. İyi bir aile üyesini nasıl tanımlarsınız? Aile üyelerinin birbirine karşı olan sorumlulukları var mıdır? Nelerdir?

## B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKCÖ ÖZET

Bu tez dar gelirli işçilerin işgücü piyasasında sosyal sermayelerini nasıl harekete geçirdiklerini araştırmaktadır. Erişilen sosyal sermayeyi, mobilize olmuş sosyal sermayeden ayırarak, dar gelirli işçilerin, bağlantılarına iş bulma konusunda karar verirken kullandıkları değerlendirme kriterlerini analiz etmektedir. Bazı kişilere işgücü piyasasında neden yardım edilmediğini anlamak için sembolik sınırlar ve çerçeveler kavramlarını kullanır. Sembolik sınırların - aktörlerin insanları kategorize etme konusundaki kavramsal ayrımlar - sosyal sermayenin harekete geçirilmesinde yansımaları olduğunu savunmaktadır. Görüşmeciler, düzgün vs çakal çukal sınırında bir ayırım yapmaktadırlar. Bağlantılarına iş bulma konusunda yardım ederkenki karar verme söylemleri, düzgün ve çakal çukal insanlar arasında yarattıkları sembolik sınırlarla örtüşmektedir. Sosyal sermayelerini harekete geçirmek için iş arayanın düzgün olmasını şart koşarlar.

Türkiye bağlamında sosyal ağların rolü konusunda uzun bir çalışma geleneği vardır. Bu genellikle kentleşme süreçleri ve zincir göçü modelleri ile paralel olarak kentsel-kırsal göç ile belirgindir. Bireylerin geniş aile bağları içindeki hemşehricilik ağları, çoğunluğu gecekondulu bölgelerinin oluşturduğu homojen mahallelerin oluşumu, aynı kökenlerden gelen insanlardan oluşması ve yeni gelenlerin yeni yerleşim alanlarına kaynaştırılması, genellikle sosyal sermayenin Türkiye'de çalıştığı yolları şekillendirmiştir. Karpat (1976, s.118) göçmenlerin aynı kökenlerden büyük şehirlere göç ettiğinin yoğun ağ yapılarına sahip gecekondulu bölgeleri oluşturduğunu göstermiştir. Bu zincir göç paterni göçmenlerin şehir hayatına entegre olmalarını sağlayacak bilgi ve kaynak alışverişi yapmalarına izin vermiştir. Dahası, kendilerini ahlaki dejenerasyondan korumak için güvene dayalı bir tür ilişkiler sistemi kurdular. Karpat'ın ardından, daha fazla araştırma, düşük gelirli gruplar arasında sosyal kumaşa entegrasyonundaki ağların rolünü ortaya koymuştur (Tekşen 2003, Erman 1997, Güneş-Ayata 1996, Işık ve Pınarcıoğlu 2001). Homojen ağlarından oluşan mahalleler, sakinlerin birbirleri içinde sosyal kontrol uygulamalarına izin vermiştir



(Tekşen 2003, s. 71). Böylece, yoğun bağlara gömülme, kentsel yaşamın atomize edici etkilerinden etkilenmelerini engelledi. Gecekondu ve apartman dairesi algılarını inceleyen Erman (1997), gecekondu sakinlerinin genellikle sakinler arasında güçlü destek ağlarını takdir ettiklerini belirtmiştir. Komşular arasındaki enformel ve yakın ilişkiler, sakinlerin birbirlerine karşı güven ve dayanışma içinde oldukları gecekondu topluluklarının önemli bir özelliği olarak belirtilmiştir (s. 96). Işık ve Pınarcıoğlu (2001), yeni gelenlerin uzun vadeli mali sıkıntı yaşamalarını önleyen bir tampon mekanizması olarak gecekondu bölgelerindeki sosyal ağları da incelemiştir. Yeni göçmenlerin istihdam ve konut bakımından yaşlı göçmenlerin kaynakları sayesinde yeni başlayanların yoksullukla başa çıkma sürecini örneklemek için “nöbetleşe yoksulluk” terimini kullanmaktadırlar. Böylece, eski yerleşimciler yoksulluk halini kentsel yaşama adapte olması gereken yeni yerleşimcilere aktarmaktalar. Bölgede yaşadıklarında daha yeni göçmenler de aynı süreci yaşamaktadırlar.

Dar gelirli gruplar arasındaki sosyal ağlar hakkındaki literatür, sosyal ağların düşük gelirli insanlar arasındaki rolünü analiz etmektedir. İşgücü piyasasında, gecekondu mahalleleri, mahalledeki yoğun sosyal bağlar sayesinde istihdam edilmektedir. Hemşehri ağları, yoksul bireylerin akrabalarının işyerlerinde iş aldıkları kanallar olarak görülmektedir. Yoksulluk hali yeni gelenlere aktarılacak geçici bir süreç olarak kabul edilir. Homojen mahallelerde aynı kökenlilerle birlikte yaşarlardı. Böylelikle, gecekondu bölgeleri, yoksul insanların iş bulma ve konut bulmalarına yardımcı olan yoğun geniş aile bağları ve hemşehri ağları ile doldurulur. Kalaycıoğlu ve Rittersberger – Tılıç (2002, s. 212) yoksullukla başa çıkma dayanışma ağları olarak “Aile Havuzu” kavramını önermektedir. Model, birbirleri ile karşılıklı ilişkilere sahip olan geniş aile bağlarına dayanmaktadır. Kuşakların ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel kaynakları birbirine aktardıkları ve böylece bir dayanışma sistemi yaratan bir sistemdir. Ayrıca aile havuzunun işleyişini engelleyen koşulları da analiz etmektedirler (s. 229). Ancak, dayanışma ağlarının sonsuza kadar işlev görmesi fikrinin yanlış olacağı sonucuna varmışlardır (s. 238). İş ekonomisinde ve konut piyasasında azalan kaynaklara bağlı olarak dayanışma

ağlarının sürdürülebilirliğini engellemektedir. İşgücü piyasasındaki ve kentsel peyzajdaki değişimler, düşük gelirli gruplar içindeki sosyal sermaye üzerinde etkisi olan bağlamsal güçleri değiştirmektedir. Bu nedenle, önce ilgili toplumsal değişimleri anlamaya ve sonra bu boşluğu nasıl dolduracağımızı tartışmalıyız.

Keyder (2005, s. 127), formal entegrasyon mekanizmasının yokluğunda, insanların ekonomideki son değişiklikler nedeniyle önemli ölçüde değişmiş olan akrabalık ve mahalle karşılıklılıklarına dayandığını öne sürmektedir. Başarılı kalkınma çağının sonunun, küreselleşme ve neoliberal kapitalizm nedeniyle işgücü piyasasında değişimleri gerektirdiğini belirtmektedir (s.127). İşgücü piyasasının ve istihdam olanaklarının yapısal dönüşümü, yeni göçmenlerin ücretli istihdamla bütünleşmesini zorlaştırırken, imalat işleri yerine daha fazla hizmet sektörü işine yol açmıştır (s. 129). Böylece, işgücü piyasası daha karmaşık ve doymuş hale geldikçe, yoksulluk halinden bir çıkış yolu bulmak daha da zorlaşmaktadır. Yoksulluğun geçici niteliği, değişen istihdam modelleri nedeniyle kalıcı bir deneyime dönüşmektedir. Buğra & Keyder (2003, s. 9), sosyal korumanın aile ağı tarafından sürdürüldüğü daha eski varsayımın, geçici olarak kabul edilen yoksulluk olarak ele alındığını ileri sürmektedir. Tampon mekanizması olarak kullanılan aile ağları, istikrarlı istihdam fırsatlarının azalması nedeniyle çözülmeye başlamıştır. Böylece, Buğra & Keyder'e (2003, s. 19) göre, aldıkları maaşın üzerinden geçemeyen yeni bir sosyal tabaka ortaya çıkmıştır. Geniş aile bağları çoğu üyelerin aynı durumda olmalarından dolayı daralmıştır.

Sosyal sermayeye dair çalışmamızı gözden geçirmemize iten ikinci ilgili değişiklik, arazinin metalaştırılması, kentsel dönüşüm projeleri ve mahalle toplulukları üzerindeki yansımalarıdır. Bu süreçleri kısaca tartışacağım çünkü argümanımın kapsamı kentsel yenilenmelerin politik ekonomisini analiz etmek değil değil, bölge sakinleri ve toplulukları üzerindeki etkilerine dayanmaktadır. Göçmenlerin arsalarla yerleşmelerine ve konut inşa etmelerine izin veren politikalar çıkar çatışmaları nedeniyle terk edilmiştir. Toprak, karların çıkarılabileceği bir meta haline gelmiştir (Keyder 2005, s. 130). Bu nedenle, arazi işgal ve gayri resmi konutlar artık mümkün

değildir. Buna ek olarak, zincir göçü modellerine yerleştirilen homojen gruplardan oluşan mevcut gecekondu bölgeleri kentsel dönüşüm projelerine tabi tutulmuştur. Kentsel alanın yönetişimi neo-liberal bir moda dönüştüğü için kentsel dönüşüm projeleri, toprağın metalaştırıldığı ana mekanizmalardır. Kuyucu & Ünsal (2010, s.1484) gecekondu bölgelerinin bu projelerin ana hedefleri olduğunu belirtiyor. Onlara göre (s. 1485), reformlar, devlet kurumları, özel geliştiriciler ve kredi kurumları için gecekondu ve şehir içi gecekondu alanlarında yenileme projeleri uygulamak için fırsatlar yaratan metalaştırılmış bir kentsel rejime olanak sağlamıştır. Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı (TOKİ) 2000'li yıllardan sonra Türkiye'de kentsel dönüşüm sürecinin ardındaki en önemli aktör olmuştur. Yasal düzenlemelerle desteklenen TOKİ, büyük devlet fonlarıyla kentsel politikalar konusunda tekel sahibidir (Gough & Gündoğdu 2009). Bir zamanlar gecekondu bölgelerine ev sahipliği yapan şehir içi bölgelerden kar elde etmek amacıyla TOKİ, bu bölgeleri, kamusal söylemin yarattığı “suç” damgalarından ve arazi üzerindeki yasal belirsizliklerden yararlanan kentsel yenileme alanları olarak nitelendirmektedir (Kuyucu & Ünsal 2010 ).

Amacım, düşük gelirli işçilerin sosyal sermayelerini harekete geçirme kararında etkili olan anlamları araştırmaktır. Başka bir deyişle, sosyal sermaye meselesine kültürel sosyoloji perspektifinden yaklaşmayı ve böylece sosyal sermaye hareketliliğinin anlamlı sürecini açıklamak için güçlü kuramsal araçlar kullanmayı hedefliyorum. Kültürel perspektifin amacı, bir sosyal süreci açıklamak için teorik araçlarını kullanmaktır. Bu araçlar, sosyal sermaye mobilizasyonunu açıklayan çerçeveler ve sembolik sınırlar kavramlarıdır. Bir sonraki bölümde, sosyal sermaye teorilerini gözden geçireceğim, ve neden analizimize çerçeveleri ve sembolik sınırları eklememiz gerektiğini açıklayacağız.

Sosyal sermaye son yıllarda geniş bir bilimsel ilgi kazanmıştır. Sosyal sermaye teorisi, insanların sosyal ilişkilerde sahip oldukları kaynaklar sayesinde birbirine bağlı olduklarında daha iyi olduklarını öne sürmektedir. Bu kaynaklar, dayanışma ve birbirlerine duyulan güven duygusunu, paylaştıkları bilgi kanallarını, aktörler

arasındaki karşılıklı yükümlülükleri içerir (Lin 2001, Coleman 1988, Bourdieu 1986, Putnam 2000). Sosyal sermayenin entelektüel kökleri çoğunlukla Bourdieu, Lin ve Coleman'ın eserlerinde yatar.

Coleman (1988), farklı sosyal sermaye biçimlerini ve yapısal koşullarını tanıtmaktadır. Sosyal sermayeyi üç açıdan tanımlar: yükümlülükler ve güvenilirlik, bilgi kanalları ve normlar. Sosyal aktörlerin rasyonel olduğu fikrinde sosyal sermaye kavramını ele alır. Coleman, sosyal sermayeyi, sosyal yapı içerisinde elde ettiği kaynakları arzu edilen bir sonuca ulaştırmak için görmüştür.

Lin (2001, s. 29), sosyal sermayeyi “amaca yönelik eylemlere erişilen ve / veya harekete geçirilen bir sosyal yapıya gömülü kaynaklar” olarak tanımlamaktadır. Dört tür kaynağın bilgi, aktörler üzerindeki etkisi, bağlanan sosyal kimlikler olduğunu. ve duygusal destek olduğunu savunmaktadır (s. 20). Sosyal sermayeyi üç analitik bölüme ayırır: kaynaklar, bir toplumsal yapıya gömülü olmak ve eylem.

Bourdieu (1986, s. 51), sosyal sermayeyi “kalıcı bir ağa sahip olma ile bağlantılı olan gerçek ya da potansiyel kaynakların bir araya getirilmesiyle, karşılıklı tanınırlığın kurumsallaşmış ilişkileri” olarak tanımlamaktadır. Sosyal sermayenin, kaynaklara yalnızca kâr olarak değil, sermayelerin dönüştürülmesi yoluyla, aynı zamanda sosyal bağlantıların bakım süreçleri olarak erişilmesini sağladığını iddia etmektedir. Aktörlerin “erişebileceği sosyal sermaye hacminin” etkili bir şekilde harekete geçirebileceği bağlantı ağının büyüklüğüne ve sermayenin hacmine (ekonomik, kültürel ya da sembolik) bağlı olduğu her bir tarafın kendi hakkına sahip olduğu hacmine bağlıdır” (s. 51).

Dönüşüm kavramı, sermayeleri birbirine dönüştürmek, mevcut bireylerin koşullarının yeniden üretilmesinde önemli bir mekanizmayı temsil etmektedir. Bu tez, sosyal sermayenin ekonomik sermayeye dönüştürülmesini sağlayan veya engelleyen koşulları araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ancak, Bourdieu'nun teorisindeki sosyal sermayenin işleyişini ele aldığımızda, ekonomik sermayeye nasıl dönüşebileceği, bunun koşulları ve bu süreci deneysel olarak nasıl

inceleyebileceğimiz hakkında sorular sorabiliriz. Bireyler, “mahalle, işyeri, hatta akrabalık gibi koşullu ilişkileri, , öznel olarak hissedilen dayanıklı yükümlülükleri (şükran, saygı, arkadaşlık, vs.) üzerinden gerekli ve seçmeli olan ilişkilere dönüştürür” (s. 52) . Bourdieu'nun belirttiği şey, ilişki ağının yaratılmasının "karşılıklı bilgi ve tanıma öngördüğü ve ürettiği" sembolik anayasa yoluyla yapıldığıdır (s. 52). Bireyler arasında karşılıklı tanıma gerektiren bu sembolik boyut, değişim ilişkilerinin önünü açan bir durumdur. Böylece, Bourdieu'den yola çıkarak, sosyal sermayeyi saf ekonomiye indirgeyemeyiz ya da bireylerin birbirlerini bu ilişkileri sürdürmeleri için tanıdıkları sembolik boyutu ihmal edemeyiz. Bireylerin birbirlerini tanıması ve sosyal sermayelerini harekete geçirme koşullarını analiz etmek için bu iki özelliği uzlaştırmalıyız.

Sembolik sınırların kavramı, “insanları kategorize zaman bireyler çizmek çizgilerin türleri” analizine yardımcı olur (Lamont 2002, s. 98). Bu kavramı, düşük gelirli işçilerin, emek piyasasında sembolik sınırların etkilerini araştıran sosyal sermayelerini harekete geçirmeye yönelik değerlendirme kriterlerini anlayacağız. Lamont & Molnar (2002), sembolik sınırları sosyal sınırlardan analitik olarak ayırır ve iki tip sınır arasındaki ilişki hakkında bilgi vererek bir çerçeve oluşturur. “Sembolik sınırlar nesnelere, insanları, uygulamalar ve hatta zaman ve mekan kategorize etmek sosyal aktörler tarafından yapılan kavramsal ayrımlardır.” Kalıcı kategoriler halinde düzenlenen sembolik sınırlar, toplumsal ilişkilerin dinamik boyutlarını kavramamızı sağlar. Öte yandan sosyal sınırlar, kaynakların (maddi ve maddi olmayan) eşitsiz dağılımı ya da erişiminde ve sosyal fırsatta kendini gösteren daha dayanıklı ve kurumsallaşmış toplumsal farklılıklardır. Sembolik sınıflandırmaların nesnelleştirilmesi, geniş ölçüde üzerinde anlaşıldığı zaman, bir sosyal etkileşim modelinde belirgindir.

Bu tezin araştırma tasarımı nitel tasarıma dayanmaktadır. Yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşme tekniği kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmada kullanılan sosyal sermayenin tanımlanmasından sonra, bireylere en yakın aile üyelerini ve arkadaşlarını eşleştirmelerini ve kompozisyonunu ve işlevlerini anlamak için takip

soruları sordum. Sosyal sermayenin parametreleri arasında akrabalık ve mahalle bağları göz önünde bulundurulmaktadır. Bu nedenle, bilgi verenlerin bu ilişkileri değerlendirmelerini isteyerek bu parametrelerdeki değişikliklerin doğasını araştırmayı hedefledim. Eğitim ve konut hareketliliği, sosyal sermaye hareketliliğini etkileyen yapısal faktörler olarak yer almaktadır. Katılımcılara mahallelerindeki güven duygusunu keşfetmek için komşuları ve akrabaları arasındaki ilişkilerini değerlendirmelerini de istedim. Bilgi kanalları için, bilgi verenlere iş fırsatları ile ilgili bağları ile bilgi paylaşımını sordum. Son olarak, mobilize sosyal sermaye ile erişileni birbirinden ayırarak, onlara iş bulma konusunda başkalarına yardım edip etmeyeceklerine nasıl karar verdiklerini sordum. Ayrıca, katılımcıların bulaşıkçı ve garson olarak çalıştığı bir düğün salonunda da katılımcı gözlemci olarak bulundum. Mahallelerinde gençlerle vakit geçirme şansım oldu.

Dar gelirli işçiler iş, başarı ve değer hakkında farklı çerçeveler taşırlar. Düşük gelirli çalışanların bu kavramları çerçevelendirme biçimleri, onlara kim olduklarını ve daha önemlisi kim olduklarını tanımlamak için kültürel bileşenler sağlar (Lamont 2000). Örneğin, yaşlı işçiler, başarı kavramını aile ve sorumluluk odaklı belirtmektedirler. Böylelikle, iyi ya da kötü iş arasında bir ayrım yapmazlar ve iki işte çalışmaktan gocunmazlar. Bu, diğer insanlardan aynı şekilde davranması ve işleri seçmemesi için bir beklenti yaratır. Öte yandan, gençler iyi işleri tanımlamak konusunda daha eleştireldirler. Ücret ödemesi ve iyi patron açısından daha spesifik bir şekilde konuşurlar. Göreceli olarak iyi bir iş bulmak, sosyal ağlarına yerleştirilmiş kaynaklar üzerine kuruludur. Bu nedenle, başarı tanımlarına gelince, iki ayrı grup oluştururlar. Göreceli olarak iyi işlere sahip olabilen ilk grup, işlerini yetişkinliğe giden bir yol olarak çalışmaktadır ve bu nedenle, bir şekilde çalışma koşullarına katlanmak zorunda olduklarına inanmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, sosyal sermayeye erişimleri sınırlı olduğu için iyi iş bulamayan ikinci grup, mali şartlarda verdikleri emeği almaları gerektiğine inanırlar. Esnek ve istikrarsız işlerde çalışarak daha uzun süreli işsizlik dönemleri yaşarlar.

Bu çerçeveler daha sonra mahalle içindeki yaratım sembolik sınırlarının söylemini desteklemektedir. Sokakta gezenler, çalışma, sorumluluk, aile adanmışlığı ve erken yetişkinlik gibi değerlere sahip kişiler tarafından çakal çukal olarak görülmektedir. Bu çerçeveler diğer insanları değerlendirdikleri şekli şekillendirir. Örneğin, sıkı çalışmaya, devamlılığa ve sorumluluklara değer veren bir işçi, bu lensleri, insanlar arasındaki farklılıkları yorumlamak ve bunları uygun şekilde değerlendirmek için kullanır. Bu süreç düzgün ve çakal çukal hatlarında sınırların oluşturmaktadır. Bir değerlendirme kriterine dönüşen bu sınırlar, işgücü piyasasında sosyal sermayeye karar verirken kullandıkları kategorizasyon şemalarıdır. Örneğin, arkadaşını uyuşturucuyla uğraştığı ve sokakta takıldığı için çakal çukal olarak nitelendiren bir işçi, sosyal sermayesini o kişi için mobilize etmemektedir. Dolayısıyla, bu kriterler altında düzgün sayılmayan kişiler, bağlantılarını kullanmakta zorlanmaktadır.

Çerçeveler kavramı, bireylerin farklı iş tanımlarını ve başarılarını anlamamıza yardımcı olurken, sembolik sınırlar bu ilişkilerin düşük gelirli işçilerin zihninde bir kategorizasyon sistemine nasıl dönüştüğünü göstermektedir. Sembolik sınırlar kavramı, sosyal süreçleri şekillendirmek için gerekli koşulları sağladığını öne sürdüğü için (Lamont & Molnar 2002), sosyal sermayenin mobilizasyonu üzerinde etkileri vardır. Düşük gelirli çalışanlar, iş arayan ve bu kriterlere göre bilgi talep eden bağlantılarını değerlendirir ve sosyal sermayelerini harekete geçirip geçirmeyeceklerine karar verirler.

Bununla birlikte, süreci birçok yönden incelemek istedim ve bazı insanların, özellikle de gençlerin işgücü piyasasını niçin farklı gördüklerini keşfetmek istedim. Bu konu çift taraflıdır: yapısal ve bireysel. Yapısal düzeyde, bazı gençler, sosyal sermayeye farklı erişim nedeniyle düşük kaliteli işlere girmektedir. “İyi” işgücü piyasasının dışında tutulurlar ve çok istikrarsız ve esnek işlerde çalışmaya zorlanırlar. Bireysel düzeyde, bu, onları, mali açıdan koyduğu emeği almaları gerektiği perspektifine götürür. Bu çifte etkiler, sık sık işten ayrılmalara ve boşta kalmalara neden olur. Sokakla ilgili faaliyetlere daha eğilimlidirler ve bu nedenle daha çakal çukal olarak sınıflandırılırlar. Kategorize edildiklerinde, kendi sosyal

sermayelerini harekete geirme olasılıklarının daha dşük olması nedeniyle koşullarını sürdürdğünü iddia edebiliriz.

Bu tez, Bourdieu'nun sermaye teorisine katkıda bulunur. Farklı sermayeleri birbirine dönüştüren dönüşüm kavramı, varoluş koşullarının yeniden üretilmesinin ardında önemli bir rol oynar. Bourdieu (1986), sosyal sermayenin ekonomik sermayeye dönüştürülebileceğini savunuyor. Bununla birlikte, sosyal sermayenin ekonomik sermayeye nasıl dönüştüğünü ayrıntılı olarak açıklıyor. Yine de, bize sosyal sermayenin dinamikleri hakkında bazı ipuçları veriyor. Ona göre, deęişim ilişkileri yürütmek için aktörler arasında sembolik bir tanıma gereklidir. Bu onun teorisinin, sosyal sermayenin ekonomik sermayeye dönüşümünü sorunsallaştırmak için bir alan açmasıdır. Bu süreci tartışmak için sosyal sermaye teorisini, Lamont'un sembolik sınırlarıyla birleştirdim. Bourdieu bu potansiyel sorunsalın sistematik bir analizini sağlamaz. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, Bourdieu'nun teorisindeki bu teorik açığı sorunsallaştırmak için mütevazı bir girişimdir; Bu tez, sosyal sermayenin ekonomik sermayeye dönüştüğü koşulları araştırarak bu dönüşüm sürecinin bir analizinin eklenmesine katkıda bulunur. Sembolik sınırların, insanların başkalarını kategorize ederken çizdikleri çizgilerin, aktörlerin sosyal sermayelerini, iş bulma yardımı ile ilişkilerine yardımcı olmaları için harekete geçirecekleri etkileri olduğunu gözlemledim.

Bu tez, aynı zamanda, sembolik olanın sosyale dönüşmesine de bir örnek sunar. Lamont & Molnar (2002), sembolik sınırların sosyal sınırlar için gerekli ama yetersiz koşullar olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Böylece sosyal meselelerin meşrulaştırılması işlevini görürler. Bu tez, belirli bireylerin işgücü piyasasında yardım edilmeye değer olmadıklarını inceleyerek, sembolik sınırların sosyal bir konuya dönüştüğü bir durumu göstermektedir.



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