

ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN CHILDREN'S AGENCY AND  
THE STRUCTURES OF SOCIAL MOBILITY: A CASE STUDY OF  
ADOLESCENTS' ASPIRATIONS IN ANKARA, TURKEY

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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## ABSTRACT

### ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN CHILDREN'S AGENCY AND THE STRUCTURES OF SOCIAL MOBILITY: A CASE STUDY OF ADOLESCENTS' ASPIRATIONS IN ANKARA, TURKEY

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The objective of this thesis is to study the encounter between the structure and agency on the basis of adolescents' aspirations for social mobility. The thesis has written in a Bourdieusian theoretical framework and has adopted a qualitative longitudinal methodology. Findings show that it is unfair to expect a fairer social stratification system and a more equal society based on the aspirations of adolescents. Parentocracy appears to be a more powerful determinant than meritocracy as opposed to what is suggested by the neoliberal politics. As habitus plays the convener role, positions occupied in the social space, aspirations and strategies adopted to realize the aspirations are affected by adolescents' socio-economic status and the capitals their parents possess. However, habitus also facilitates the internalization of the neoliberal discourse on the equality of opportunities. It becomes a *doxa* leading to the neglect of the social structures that

may enable or impede social mobility. As a result, a neoliberal subject is successfully constructed releasing the tension between the structure and the agency. Hence, the key channel to realize the aspirations appears to be the agency itself. Adolescents, when encountered with a recognized social structure, a centrally organized examination in the case of this research, start hesitating about the realization of their future aspirations. Nevertheless, they continue keeping the focus on their agency leading to the development of coping strategies, varying based on the socio-economic status and gender, against the social structures with the exception of patriarchy. Despite the decipher of the gender ideology, patriarchy appears to be the only social structure that is not neglected and not to be struggled against by the adolescents, especially among the low socio-economic status girls.

**Keywords:** Structure, Agency, Social Stratification, Social Mobility, Adolescents, Aspirations

## ÖZ

ÇOCUKLARIN AKTÖRLÜĞÜ VE TOPLUMSAL HAREKETLİLİĞİN  
YAPILARI ARASINDA BİR KARŞILAŞMA: ANKARA TÜRKİYE'DE  
ERGENLERİN GELECEĞE YÖNELİK İSTEKLERİ  
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Bu tezin amacı ergenlerin geleceğe yönelik istekleri üzerinden yapı ve aktör arasındaki karşılaşmayı çalışmaktır. Tez Bourdieu'cu bir teorik çerçeve üzerinden ve niceliksel uzun erimli bir metodoloji kullanılarak yazılmıştır. Bulgular ergenlerin geleceğe yönelik istekleri üzerinden daha adil bir toplumsal tabakalaşma sistemi ve daha eşit bir toplum beklemenin çok da adil olmadığını göstermektedir. Neoliberalin siyasetin önerdiğinin aksine parentokrasi, meritokrasiden daha geçerli bir belirleyici gibi durmaktadır. Habitus gerekli ortamı yarattıkça toplumsal düzlemdeki konumlar, geleceğe yönelik istekler ve bu istekleri gerçekleştirmek için uygulanan stratejiler sosyo-ekonomik statü, toplumsal cinsiyet ve ebeveynlerin sermayelerine göre farklılık göstermektedir. Ancak habitus aynı zamanda kolaylaştırıcı rolü oynayarak neoliberal siyasetin altını çizdiği fırsat eşitliği söyleminin



içselleştirilmesine yardımcı olmaktadır. Bu durum doksik hale gelerek toplumsal hareketliliğe yardımcı ya da engel olacak toplumsal yapıların ihmali ile sonuçlanmaktadır. Sonuç olarak da yapı ve aktör arasındaki gerilimi ortadan kaldıran neoliberal özne başarı ile inşa edilmektedir. Bu durumda isteklerin gerçekleşmesindeki temel araç öznenin kendisi olmaktadır. Ergenler kendilerinin tanıdığı bir sosyal yapı ile karşılaştıklarında –bu tez mevzu bahis olduğunda bu yapı merkezi olarak uygulanan bir sınavdır- ilerideki isteklerinin gerçekleşmesiyle ilgili şüphe duymaya başlamaktadırlar. Ancak gene de odağı kendi aktörlüklerinde tutarak sosyal yapı ile mücadele etmek için sosyo-ekonomik statü ve cinsiyetlerine göre değişen aktörlük stratejileri geliştirmektedirler. Buna istisna tek yapı patriarşidir. Toplumsal cinsiyet ideolojisi deşifre olmaya başlamış olmasına rağmen patriarşi özellikle alt sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen kız çocukları için reddedilmeyen ve karşı durulamayacak bir sosyal yapıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yapı, Aktör, Toplumsal Tabakalaşma, Toplumsal Hareketlilik, Ergenler, Geleceğe Yönelik İstekler

To My Mother

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

- ERIC** – Ethical Research Involving Children
- HSES** – High Socio-Economic Status
- LSES** – Low Socio-Economic Status
- LYS** – High School Placement Exam (Lise Yerleřtirme Sınavı)
- METU** – Middle East Technical University
- MoFSP** – Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Turkey
- MoNE** – Turkish Ministry of National Education of Turkey
- MSES** – Middle Socio-Economic Status
- NDP** – Turkish National Development Plan
- ÖSYM** – Presidency for Student Measurement, Identification and Placement (Öğrenci Ölçme, Seçme ve Yerleřtirme Merkezi Başkanlığı)
- ÖSYS** – Student Identification and Placement System (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleřtirme Sistemi)
- SES** – Socio-Economic Status
- TEOG** – Exam for Transiting from Primary to Secondary Education (Temel Eđitimden Orta Öğretime Geçiř Sınavı)
- TL** – Turkish Lira
- YGS** – High Education Entrance Exam (Yükseköğrenim Giriř Sınavı)

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

*"We want our children — and all children in this nation — to know that the only limit to the height of your achievements is the reach of your dreams and your willingness to work for them."*

*Michele Obama, 2008*

Obama's quote implies that once children aspire high and believe in their capacity, there is a possibility that children can fully realize their potential and be mobile to go upwards in the social space irrespective of their socio-economic, ethnic, cultural backgrounds; thus, overcoming the structural obstacles. They have no limits than themselves and their aspirations. This dissertation is inspired by this quote, among many other similar ones, that are prevalent in the current era, influenced by the neo-liberal political economy and social environment since 1980s. The ultimate aim of this study is to analyze the encounter between children's agency and the structure on the basis of aspirations for social mobility to understand movements within the social structure with a view to contribute to social mobility and stratification studies. Social stratification and mobility studies in social science literature are quite old. There are plenty of studies available to understand the dynamics behind social mobility. These include qualitative and quantitative studies. There has also been attempts to understand the linkages between aspirations and social mobility. As a result, studies, with longitudinal, intergenerational or within one life-course methodologies, found differences among the aspirations of children from different

socio-economic and gender backgrounds mainly due to the factors influencing the aspirations such as parents' expectations from their children, parents' education levels or peers. Current paradigm suggests a more individualized recipe for aspirations relying on the capacity of agency to build and realize them. This goes hand in hand with the paradigmatic shifts in the sociology of childhood which has shifted from perceiving children as passive receivers to perceiving children as active agents contributing, adapting and reproducing the society they live in.

This dissertation adopts a sociological perspective in social mobility and tries to find out how children perceive their capacity of agency to realize their aspirations vis-a-vis their movements in the social space. It is a study among the Turkish children, to be more specific, adolescents of 14-15 years of age, determined as per the developmental stages of children, in Ankara from different socio-economic statuses and genders. Thus, this dissertation is an attempt to bridge the literatures on aspirations with literature on social mobility through an analysis of the sociological dilemma on the encounter between the agency and the structure with a particular focus on Bourdieusian theory. The significance of this study does not only come from providing the bridge between the literatures but also from providing a perspective from the eyes of children. Additionally, this study should also contribute to overall social mobility and aspiration studies in Turkey, which is very limited compared to other countries.

### **1.1.The Background of the Study**

The studies on stratification and social mobility are heavily focused on developing models to understand the layers of the social structure and the elasticities between these layers across generations. However, the qualitative and life-course approaches remain rather limited. It is becoming more important to have a qualitative analysis in this neo-liberal context, where the responsibility of social mobility rests on agents' shoulders.

A qualitative study on social mobility is fed from the major sociological dilemma between the structure and the agency. Thus, understanding how social mobility occurs requires an explanation of the limits of the social structure, representing the

social space, as well as the individual agency, representing the individual moving in that social space. How much the structure allows us to move and how much we are, as human beings, are capable to move within the social structure? This dilemma is beyond the scope of social mobility and will be elaborated in the theoretical framework chapters of this dissertation. However, for the sake of providing a background here, structuralists focused on the limits of the social structure, which defines these movements through the constraints they pose on individuals. On the other hand, individualists focused on the capacity of agency the individuals have, allowing them to overcome the constraints as the agents indeed are the ones creating the structure. In between, with an attempt to find the middle ground, Bourdieu introduced the concept of *habitus*, which is a great instrument for a qualitative analysis. For Bourdieu, this dilemma can be addressed neither by reducing the subject to pure subjectivity; freedom or individual rationality, nor constructing the subject as totally determined by social structures. Rather, he recognized the possibility of freedom that social beings have within the internalized social and cultural backgrounds as matter of knowledge, dispositions and practices but with *habitus*, as a mediating structure, providing relative autonomy of the agents from the social structures (Leyton, 2014). Then,

‘the *habitus* is not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organizes the perception of the social world is itself the product of internalization of the division into social classes’ (Grusky cited from Bourdieu, 2008, p.874).

As mentioned earlier, *habitus* will be the primary lens providing a room for children’s capacity to realize their aspirations, while acknowledging its limits in line with their dispositions in the social structure.

Among the limited studies focusing on the qualitative aspects of social mobility, many studied how much aspirations affect the movements within social structure. Among the many factors, such as socio-economic status, wealth, networks, education and parental influences, that define these movements, some studies focused on the role of aspirations and found out that young people with higher aspirations are more likely to have high-status occupations as they are more likely

to pursue educational requirements for these occupations compared to their low aspiring peers Howard et al (2011).

There are not plenty of social mobility studies available for Turkey and available ones have a heavy focus on education and mobility and provides contradicting findings. As it will be discussed in detail in the following chapters, mobility across generations in Turkey is quite limited compared to other developed countries, mainly OECD. However, some available research also proves that mobility among the younger generations increase especially when the education level of parents increases. None of the available research study the individual level factors behind the movements in the social structure in Turkey, which will be the goal of this study.

## **1.2.Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters. Following this *introductory* chapter, the *second* chapter will introduce the literature available in this area and the theoretical framework. Thus, this chapter, first, presents the dilemma between the structure and the agency in a wider sociological discussion. Then it devotes sections on Bourdieu's theory, particularly his concepts of *capitals*, *fields* and *habitus*. Special emphasis is provided on family and education as fields due to their importance and relevance for this dissertation. This chapter on the theoretical framework also discusses the social stratification and social mobility literature in order to introduce and present earlier work done in these fields and to set the stage for the findings for this dissertation. There is a special section allocated for the literature on children's agency and how gender is constructed within years of childhood as well as aspirations of children, and the factors shaping/influencing these aspirations based on the findings of other researches done in this area, to provide a background for the readers. The *third* chapter introduces the context, thus, the political, economic and social climate in Turkey at the moment when this dissertation is written. This chapter includes sections on the political climate in Turkey, including the influence of neo-liberal politics, on key socio-economic indicators, such as human development index and the employment, unemployment rates, on the structure of the education system, as well as the key education indicators such as distribution of students across

grades and genders, schooling ratio, sex ratio and budget allocated for education in Turkey over years. This chapter also includes information on adolescents' profile and previous research done on similar, and/or, relevant subjects in Turkey. The *fourth* chapter of this dissertation will present the research methodology. This will include operational definitions used throughout the study, research design, data collection, ethical considerations while studying on and with children, as well as limitations of the research.

Chapter *five* and *six* portrays the findings of the field research and presents the adolescents' daily practices, aspirations, and their perceived capacity of agency to realize these aspirations. The field research was divided into two stages; the first stage took place before the research participants took the central examination that places adolescents in secondary schools in their final year of primary school. The second stage was organized after the exam. It is a longitudinal panel research intending to see how children changes their aspirations and their perceived capacity of agency for the realization of these aspirations when they encounter a major structural challenge, an examination posed by the structure, thus, the education system. Chapter *five* is devoted to the findings of the first stage, while chapter *six* is devoted to the findings of second stage of the research. The findings of the second stage are presented, in chapter *six*, in comparison to the findings of the first stage. The last chapter, the *seventh*, is the concluding chapter which presents findings on the interplay between children's agency and the structure to realize aspirations for social mobility and discusses the findings in relation to the theoretical framework.

## CHAPTER 2

### CONCEPTUAL AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK: LINKING SOCIAL MOBILITY TO CHILDREN'S AGENCY, ASPIRATIONS AND *HABITUS*

*"The interaction between agency and structure must be fused with an appreciation of a dialectic between coordination and conflict" (Folbre, 1994, p.39)*

#### **2.1.Introduction**

This dissertation focuses on the encounter of the structure and agency on the basis of adolescents' aspirations for social mobility. Hence, the theoretical framework is built on the sociological dilemma between structure and agency, to which many sociologists brought various interpretations. This means that the conceptual and theoretical framework of this dissertation is derived from the broader dilemma on agency versus structure in sociology. While interested in the encounter of the structure and agency based on aspirations for social mobility, it specifically focuses on Bourdieu's theory, who suggests a middle ground for this encounter. The dissertation studies how agency and structure interplay with each other when it comes to setting and realizing the aspirations of adolescents for social mobility.

The first section will introduce the major sociological dilemma between structure and agency, and attached to it, the interpretations brought to this dilemma by various sociologists. Understanding this dilemma is particularly important to give a meaning of several interpretations on how mobility between strata occurs. At the end, this



dilemma, whether the structure impose on individuals or whether individuals shape the structures, forms the backbone of mobility studies. No matter how the mobility is explained, it cannot be detached from an explanation how much it rests upon individuals and how much it relies on objective structures. Following the broader introduction of the dilemma, the section will focus on Bourdieu's theory and concepts, such as fields, capitals and habitus that offers a middle ground for the discussion.

This chapter will then continue to review the literature on social stratification, social mobility and in relevance to them, the role of aspirations.

## **2.2. Agency versus Structure Dilemma in the World of Sociology**

*'Nothing classifies somebody more than the way he or she classifies'*

*Bourdieu, 1990, p.132*

Blau (1975, p.3) underlines that

“social structure refers to the patterns discernible in social life, the regularities observed, the configuration detected. But the nature of the patterns and shapes one can recognize in the welter of human experience depends on one's perspective. One perspective, though not the only one, is the range of our vision, whether we view things from a distance or whether we stand up close not to lose sight of details”

He suggests that this range of vision was presented in the analysis of many sociologists. While some of the sociologists, like Lenski or Parsons, taking a macro-sociological perspective and explaining the social structure from a distance, others, like Homans or Coleman, provides the explanation from a micro- sociological lens based on individual behaviors.

Homans (1975) underlines that a structure, as used by many sociologists, refers to the enduring or persistent social behaviors, including organizations such as the Church of Roma or relatively less enduring organizations such as marriages, or distribution of occupations and incomes –stratification system- which are related to organizations and institutions. For some sociologists, these structural forces are more fundamental to study compared to others in the social world. For some other sociologists, social structure is a social whole which can at least conceptually be divided into parts that are interdependent to each other. Thus, no matter how

interdependent they are to each other, social structure is not different than a social system. Some sociologists study whether this whole system is bigger than its parts, which will further be discussed below.

On the other hand, some sociologists, like Merton or Blau and Lipset, bring an explanation at intermediate range, thus taking both the micro and macro-sociological perspectives but “without grounding structural analyses in rational individual behavior or seeking to encompass the entire course of history or entire institutional systems” (Blau, 1975, p.4).

Merton, for example, indicates that social structures are products of human behaviors that are shaped by the external constraints on individuals. He underlines that these constraints embedded in the social structures alter the individual behaviors as a result of psychological conditioning (Blau, 1975). Similarly, Parsons, Lipset and Blau highlights the importance to study social norms and values, their legitimation and institutionalization and their functional interrelation, which regulate the human behavior, to understand the social structure.

In short, as Blau (1975, p.220) puts, the social structure may “refer to social differentiations, relations of production, forms of association, value integration, functional interdependence, statuses and roles, institutions or combinations of these and other factors”. For Blau, it is the parts and their relations. These parts are groups or classes of people such as men and women, ethnic groups or socioeconomic strata; thus, the positions of people in different groups and strata. A social structure is then “population distributions among social positions along various lines – positions that affect people’s role relations and social interaction” (Blau, 1975, p.221).

While the social structure is being defined, the capacity of agency comes in as one of the most fundamental question that the sociologists has brought several interpretations, critically shaping the explanations on the dichotomy between structure and agency.

Social ontology tries to answer whether the society creates individuals or whether individuals creates the society (Benton and Craib, 2001). “Social structuralist theory

treats purposiveness and other subjective orientational factors at least secondary and at most irrelevant in explaining the social phenomena, while these factors are primary in social actionist theory” (Wallace, 1975, p. 122).

The structuralist vein of this dichotomy suggest that society and its structures are a system which shapes the actions of individuals, whereas individualistic vein underlines that society is formed by the actions of individuals who are agents of their own actions (Walsh, 1998). Structuralist positions underlines that “purposive orientations are fixed, universal and prior taking the full attention to structural configurations” (Wallace, 1975, p. 125) and that human beings are social creatures and their interest, purposes and values derive from the social world. Indeed, Durkheim’s emphasis on the sui generis society (existing on its own) as a new reality not as an aggregate of individuals exemplifies structuralist position. Within structuralists, Marxists and neo-Marxists claim that the “structural organization of social relationships derives from the collective organization of the processes of production through which a material basis is provided for the existence of society so that social relationships have an essentially economic foundation” (Walsh cited from Bottomore and Rubel, 1998, p.10). On the other hand, culturalist or functionalist theories underline that society has to adapt to pre-defined conditions to make social life possible, which is done through the institutions and structures it has, to have solutions to the problems that social life creates. Thus, despite the fact that the explanation behind what ‘structures’ entail vary, the commonality is that the system is fixed and has a deterministic character shaping the behaviors and actions of the individuals, suppressing the capacity of agency.

In contrast, individualist vein of this dichotomy opposes the structuralist school of thought because it underlines that structuralism dehumanizes the social world and reifies society by separating the institutions from the actions of the individuals in it through the objectification of these institutions. Accordingly, individualist vein highlights that individuals are agents who have the capacity to produce and sustain the social world and shape it in a way to respond their own needs. Thus, the social structure is a collection of individual interactions, which are

‘meaningful to the actor in the sense that it is determined by the interests, purposes and values of the individual actor and it leads to social interaction only in so far as these orientates to the actions of other individuals and conducted by them on this basis’ (Walsh, 1998, p.21).

Anthony Giddens is one of the pioneers, who attempted to break the dichotomy between the structure and the agency through his structuration theory. He takes this dichotomy in a historical, processual and dynamic way (Ritzer, 1996; Platt, 2011).

‘the basic domain of the study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across time and space’ (Giddens, 1984, p.2)

Thus, Giddens argues that the structure and the agency cannot be separated from each other as suggested by the structuralists. Structure is not an externality like Durkheim was suggesting. According to him, the structure does not exist in time and space. It exists in and through agents’ activities. Agents have the ability to change the social world, if they cannot, they could not have been called as agents, and they would cease to be an agent. While arguing that, Giddens does not deny that the social structures can be constraining for agents’ actions or practices. Rather, agency and structure are a duality meaning that all social actions involve structure and all structure involves social actions. Agency and structure are interlinked and tied to each other in all human activities and practices (Ritzer, 1996). He underlines that agents’ practices are neither produced by consciousness nor by the social structure. The process is reflexive, agents monitor the flow of activities and the structural conditions as they act (Ritzer, 1996). This is what he calls structuration; ‘the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize’ (Ritzer cited from Giddens, 1996, p.395).

A similar perspective on the dichotomy between the structure and the agency came from Bourdieu. Bourdieu has also attempted to break the dualism between structure and agency, the dichotomy of agent-less structures and free acting agents, and presented a social theory that make a synthesis between structure and agency (Swanson, 2011). By doing this, he introduced a reflexive sociology in which the analysis is not undermined one way or the other; rather he conceptualized the encounter between the structure and the agent (Smith, 2001).

In this attempt to bridge the structuralist and individualist orientations in the social theory, Bourdieu acknowledged the necessity to move away from structuralist notion of structure to eliminate any risk of creating an autonomous structure that is able to act as agents without human agency and producing passive individuals, as sole reflections of this external structure (Fuchs, 2003; Appelrouth and Edles, 2008). By combining the ‘mind is a thing’ and ‘mind is the internalization of the cosmos’, he provided ‘an image of the world inscribed in the architecture of the mind’ to explain how he bridges these two veins (Bourdieu, 1980, p.41). In the *Logic of Practice* (1980), Bourdieu stated that structuralism proposes categories of structure that determine subjectivities and practices of agents without any credit given to human agency. He was hence concerned that this objectivism, thus structuralism, does not take into account that the agents may be able ‘to develop strategies, and individual and collective struggles in order to preserve or transform the value and meaning of the capitals or their distributions that reproduce arbitrary hierarchies’ (Fuchs, 2003, p.403).

Thus, the social structure cannot be a powerful entity suppressing the capacity of agency. He explains that the reason behind his criticism of structuralism, or objectivism, is ‘to give it a solid basis by freeing it from the distortions arising from the epistemological and social conditions of its production’ (Bourdieu, 1980, p.27). Bourdieu’s reflexive sociology uncovers sources of power and illuminates the reasons for social asymmetries and hierarchies while providing a powerful tool for social emancipation in a given context (Navarro, 2006).

On the other hand though, he was also critical of the individualists, and proposed that there is a interplay between social structures and subjective dispositions and distinctions of the social world (Fuchs cited from Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2003).

“The site of the dialectic of the *opus operatum* [the outcomes] and the *modus operandi* [the modes]; of the objectified products and the incorporated products of historical practice; of structures and *habitus* (Fuchs cited from Bourdieu, 2003, pp.399).”

Bourdieu rejected the idea of passive agents following merely the cultural codes who are unaware of their construction and reintroduces the concept of active agents

through concept of *habitus* which allows individuals to shape their actions, perceptions and practices.

*Habitus*, for Bourdieu, is a

“systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor” (Bourdieu, 1980, p.53).

For Bourdieu, *habitus* is a mental filter which shapes an individual’s perceptions, experiences and practices. This mental filter identifies dispositions through which one acquires a point of view to interpret both one’s and others’ actions. It is important to note that, according to Bourdieu, individuals do not create their dispositions but they acquire them (Appelrouth and Edles, 2008). This mental filter does not derive from individuals’ act unconsciously or an external compass shaping one’s actions and practices. *Habitus* allows free production of perceptions, thoughts and actions within the framework of its own conditions that are restricted from itself not through a mechanical determinism. *Habitus* can generate a series of practices but due the existence of *habitus*, all these practices are limited because of their reasonable characteristic in the given possibilities. By referring to all these restrictions, it should be noted that these restrictions are not like pressures placed upon individuals, they are restrictions from within, almost in our unconscious part. There is an ‘internalization of externality’.

In the concept of ‘internalization of externality’, existence of an externality is admitted. This externality is internalized through *habitus* depending on the point of view, which differs depending on one’s position on the social space. Thus, in contrast to rigid structuralists, Bourdieu proposes that the structures appropriate themselves as they are interpreted by agents based on the position of the agent in the social space (Callinicos cited from Bourdieu, 2007).

Thus, *habitus* is mediated mechanism ‘in the dialectic process between the internalization of the external forces and prior conditions of existence and the

externalization of the internality through the production and construction of the social structure by the work of agents during their social relations and struggles' (Fuchs, 2003, p.405). This dialectic relation takes place between freedom and determinism in a given space to variable degrees of uncertainty and creativity.

Then in the dialectic between the *opus operatum* and *modus operandi*, referred above, *habitus* is both a constraint in front of practices but also a product of creative social relations between human beings (Fuchs, 2003). It is not a mechanical adjustment of individual to structures, it contains a process of dislocation; refusal or indeterminacy opens to subjects. 'This adjustment between agents and social structures is not a principle or social law, but a condition which must be interrogated in order to know how and when it might occur' (Fuchs, 2003, p.402).

This adjustment is a product of history, a product of individual and collective practices. The practices in the individual and collective history allows to structure the *habitus* through the past experiences, which are alive in the present and carry over to the future through the perceptions, thoughts and actions it create. This allows 'correctness of practices and their constancy over time' that are more reliable than any other rules and norms (Bourdieu, 1980, p.54).

All these do not mean that *habitus* can operate in a way to make strategic calculations for an absolute possibility, but rather an estimation of chances in relation to the past experiences. Bourdieu resembles *habitus* to the action of the tennis player running towards the ball. How the player will hit the ball does not have any long-term planning; rather the player hits the ball based on an immediate decision without contemplating on why we are playing or how we should hit the ball (Smith, 2001). Thus, *habitus* makes it possible for us to react in every condition in our lives and provides an enabling environment to cope with life. It is "a tacit competence implicit in actors' practical ability to cope with a wide range of situations in ways that are predictable ability being reducible to the conscious observance of a set of rules" (Callinicos, 2007, p. 296). With *habitus*, as a cognitive and motivating mechanism, natural and normal paths and procedures to take are

already there, natural and normal as this was the way they apprehended (Bourdieu, 1980).

This is why *habitus* is a crucial research tool for this dissertation. It provides hints on the objective chances and the subjective expectations. It is the dispositions that make it possible to understand the causality relationship between the objective chances and the subjective expectations. Agents do not only modify their aspirations but the dispositions the agents possess are being revised based on the possibilities and impossibilities attached to the conditions of the social space they occupy. Accordingly, agents adjust their demands, through which the impossibilities are already excluded. These adjustments are not made based on scientific experiments, such as trial and failure, rather early experiences and structures surrounding these class conditions, in which these early experiences are practiced, shape the structures of *habitus*.

Agents' aspirations are shaped according to some indices, from which *habitus* selects, to see what is possible and what is not possible. Thus, *habitus* does not determine our life choices but it shapes them (Mills, 2008). *Habitus*, as a mental filter, selects from the indices and generates responses to the objective conditions which are same or similar to the earlier experiences and prepare the agent to a probable future.

“This disposition, always marked by its social conditions of acquisition and realization, tends to adjust to the objective chances of satisfying need or desire, inclining agents to ‘cut their coats according to their cloth’ and so to become the accomplices of the processes that tend to make the probable a reality” (Bourdieu, 1980, p.65).

The logics of arbitrariness and domination is a product of this ‘process of incarnation’ through which the agents possess a perception and classification of practices as well as a representation of social order based on the unequal distribution of capitals and symbolic power as necessary and natural (Leyton, 2014, p.179). *Habitus*, then, ‘represents the effects of social conditioning on agents that adopts them to the requirements of the field in which they operate’ (Callinicos, 2007, p.296). Thus, members' position in that specific field depends on the accumulation of field-specific type of capital. Thus, practices are shaped based on the following:



[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practices

Bourdieu recognizes that social mobility can coexist with stable class structures (Sullivan, 2002, p.150). However, the struggle to impose the social categories is the root of all action. Bourdieu calls the arenas, where this struggle takes place, as fields. For Bourdieu, the social world can be divided into various fields, such as education, art, religion, etc., for each there are specific set of rules, knowledges and as said a different composition of capitals. Fields are relatively autonomous arenas, in which actors and institutions mobilize their capital in an effort to capture the stakes that are specific to these fields (Appelrouth and Edles, 2008, p. 694).

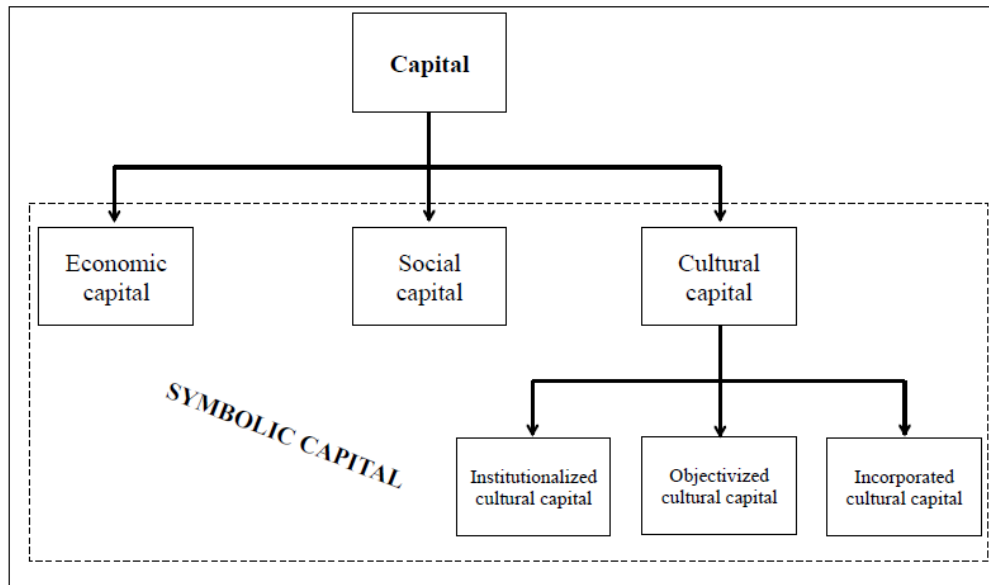
Field, a network of relations, is an important concept in Bourdieu's theory. For him, there are semi-autonomous fields, in which there are relations existing apart from the consciousness and will of the agents. Each field has its own set of rules. Bourdieu calls them *doxa*.

“*Doxa* is a particular points of view, the point of view of the dominant, which presents and imposes itself as a universal point of view – the point of view of those who dominate by dominating the state and who have constituted their point of view as a universal by constituting the state” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 57).

Based on the *doxa* of the field, the individuals evaluate themselves and take a legitimate position constrained by the structure of the respective field (Ritzer, 1996). Every field has its own set of positions based on antagonistic relations. Agents' positions in the field depends on the composition of the capitals one possess, over which there is continuous struggle to obtain more ‘in order to impose their definition of the social and in particular of their position within it on the others’ (Callinicos, 2007, p.294).

According to Bourdieu, there are four kinds of capital. These are economic capital, the material possessions and assets, cultural capital, knowledge, educational credentials, social capital, networks and relationships, and symbolic capital, the honor and prestige. For Bourdieu, capitals are important to understand the social order as he thinks, similar to Marx, that the more capital one has, the more power s/he has (Ritzer, 1996; Callinicos, 2007; Sullivan, 2002). He ‘sees capital as a resource (that is a form of wealth) which yields to power’ (Calhoun, 1993, p.69).

**Table 1 - Forms of Capital**



*Source: Walther, 2014, p. 11*

An important dimension of Bourdieu's theory is that the boundaries in between these capitals are not clear-cut. Rather, they are mutually convertible. One can convert their economic capital into educational capital by investing in acquiring academic qualifications, which will later bring more salaries or other kinds of income. This is what Bourdieu calls as 'transubstantiation of capital' (Rostom cited from Bourdieu, 2012, p. 8). Another example is symbolic capital.

'Symbolic capital is nothing more than economic or cultural capital, which is acknowledged or recognized, when it is acknowledged in accordance with the categories of perception that it imposes, the symbolic power-relations tend to reproduce and the reinforce the power-relations which constitute the structure of the social space' (Callinicos cited from Bourdieu, 2007, p.293)

Thus, it is the economic, cultural and social capital, which shapes one's position in the social space, whereas it is the social capital that shapes the social order by 'establishing a monopoly over the legitimate principle of vision and division on which social reality is constructed' (Appelrouth and Edles cited from Bourdieu, 2008, p.693). The shift across the capitals may also differ in different fields.

Two fields, education and family, will be discussed separately in detail based on their relevance for adolescents' aspirations for social mobility.

### ***2.2.1. Family as a Field***

For Bourdieu, family is a realized category. A category into which the individuals are thrown in to as soon as they are born and infuses practices for everyday life. Family, for Bourdieu, is a social field, a site where capital is accumulated and dispositions are acquired. It is a key field, where dispositions of habitus, linked with taste, interests, behaviors and attitudes, are being embedded. In a family, different forms of capital and exists and they shape the structure of the field, thus the actions of the agents within it (Quarmby, 2013).

Family should also be recognized a field of struggle. Families are not only autonomous fields freed from the externality. Rather, familial relations are heavily influenced by exterior powers. This constructs the childhood and parenthood, in which internalization of schemes of perception, relations of subordination and authority is experienced. It should be recognized that there is a family-specific doxa about the composition of a family, through political and public discourses, what should be done in this family, family-specific language and family specific stories, all of which shaping the specific experiences and practices in a family.

The very particular reason why family is an important field for this dissertation is that children start developing complexes of semantic and emotional associations and recipes of action. At the end, habitus, formed by the combination and composition of the three forms of capital, is crucial for one's life outcomes as it shapes the dispositions, preferences and tastes towards life. "Habitus is especially developed through the process of socialization and determines a wide range of dispositions that shape individuals in a given society" (Navarro, 2006, p.16). Then, family is the field, where dispositions with regards to social mobility, life preferences and aspirations are shaped together with the discourse on the encounters of structure and agency.

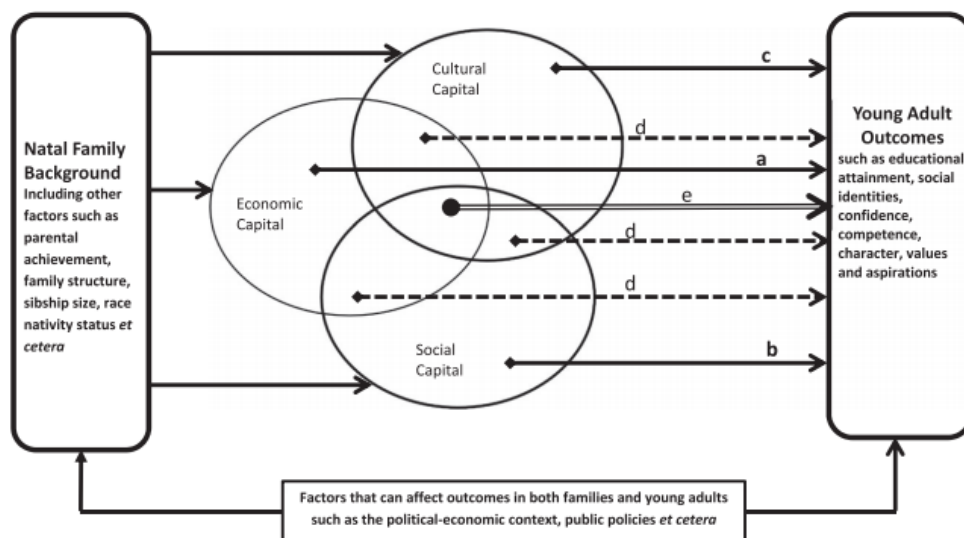
Thus, family, as a field, is influential on life chances. There are some economic as well as sociological arguments put in place to explain why family, as a field, is important to be analyzed to study social mobility. While the economic argument focuses on the financial resources that a family uses as investment in their children,

Bourdieu's theory provides a more comprehensive explanation for the role of family environment.

Bourdieu acknowledges familial field as the child's training ground for future field struggles, the first arena of contention in which investment in the social game or the search for recognition, is shaped and changed as the child comes to distinguish others within the field as objects who not only take care her as object but do so in particular, that is as a recognized source of recognition worthy of struggling for (Atkinson, 2014, p.229). The capitals within the family, economic, social and culture, can be invested in their children in various ways. There are instrumental transfers that mainly include the passing over of economic assets. Through the economic capital, children's living conditions, the studying environment, the quality of schools they attend, the materials they possess to succeed, such as textbooks. Parents, for example, may be responsible for paying the wedding costs of newly-married children, buying or renting a house or flat, and furnishing it for them. The grandparents may finance the schooling expenses of the grandchildren, or some of the durable household goods for their children. On the other hand, social capital, social networks and social exchanges, within the family, is important to shape their children's lives. 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. The concept of intergenerational solidarity networks within families is defined, first, as the practice of mutual accumulation and allocation of family resources among the members. It is not only important to leverage the network resources to achieve goals but also in terms of the exposure of the opportunities available. This is what Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç (2000) call moral transfers. Thus, in addition, with regards to cultural capital, habits, attitudes and preferences, into which children are socialized as well as emotional support and advice can be used as resources to negotiate with the social systems to achieve the desired goals (Waithaka, 2014, p.476). These are transfers of family norms, values and traditions from older to younger generations within the family.

Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç (2000) argues that a family-pool for economic, social and cultural capital is being formed this way. This pool does not only cover the immediate family. It may include a wide network, extending over the household, neighborhood, village or town, even including kin living in other countries. Family-pool is a way to redistribute and share economic, social and cultural capital that exists in the family pool among and across the members of the family, which may include, as said earlier, brothers and sisters, to achieve, maintain, or improve the standard of life. This redistribution and share of capitals can take the form of financial aid and exchanging services or goods as well as moral and psychological frame for the younger members of the family.

**Table 2 - Model to examine how family capital (economic, social and cultural) influences young adults’ transition process and life outcomes<sup>1</sup>**



Source: Waithaka, E. (2014). *Family Capital: Conceptual Model to Unpack the Intergenerational Transfer of Advantage in Transitions to Adulthood*, *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 24(3), 471-484, pp.479.

<sup>1</sup> ‘a’ refers to techniques that families use in relation to economic capital, whereas ‘b’ is for social capital and ‘c’ for cultural capital. ‘d’ represents a family use of a combination of two forms of capital, while ‘e’ represents the family use of the combination of three capitals.

Obviously, family is an important field to read how habitus, tastes, preferences for aspirations for social mobility is shaped as well as opportunities, which comes with the distribution of various capitals, to channel to realize these aspirations. Earlier researches found out that family is crucial to shape the aspirations. Family plays a role in determining not only the boundaries, in terms of what is possible to achieve but also the nature of what children can perceive as desirable (Archer et al., 2012). Family habitus intervenes as an economic dimension as well as a cultural dimension. Family environment draws the framework of what is central and what is peripheral for the rearing of a child (Archer et al., 2012).

On the other hand, though, the family should also be recognized as field, where the encounter between agency and structure takes place from the first days of life. As Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç (2000) point out the solidarity that characterizes most families leaves little space for individuals to gain in self-reliance and to make independent personal decisions on economic, social and cultural issues. Nevertheless, mutual aid greatly strengthens relations based on obligation and reciprocity, binding members of the family to each other as a close-knit group and excluding others: non-kin, members of different ethnic groups, and often their neighbors. Rather than creating inter-generational cleavages in society, this generates a strong family identity that is influenced and defined in large part by the authority of the older members (Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2000).

However, for Bourdieu, this does not mean that individuals flow through the circuits of symbolic power. Instead, they read these schemes but harness them in their own social conditionings and practices and reshape doxa.

### ***2.2.2. Education as a Field***

Bourdieu's theory, studying education as a field, highlights the importance of his theory for social stratification researches. Bourdieu has studied the field of education to a great extent to set out the linkages between the original class and ultimate class and to show how this process is mediated through the education system (Sullivan, 2002).

Bourdieu argues that the field of education is the place, intersecting with the school and family, where the relations and commonalities of power and the demands of the field becomes more public (O'Donoghue, 2012). School is the first place, where the encounter with the classification take place, the seeds of which is planted in the family.

Cultural capital, which is partially obtained through the education system, can be translated into wealth and power. However, cultural capital is not evenly distributed across the socio-economic classes and affects the educational attainment.

Bourdieu argues that the cultural capital required for the educational attainment is the culture of the dominant classes. Thus, high-class people impose their cultural traits to be basis of the knowledge in the education system, define it as worthy, which should be obtained by others too. By injecting it in the education system, this culture becomes legitimate. Consequently, children who already possess this cultural capital are advantageous as they have been socialized in that dominant culture. They have internalized the skills and knowledge during their childhood, which has a spill-over effect in the later years since the educational attainment relies on the amount of the cultural capital (Trueman, 2015). Thus, children do not participate in the system as natural, nor homogeneous. The ways they engage with the field, marked by their upbringing, will continue to mark (O'Donoghue, 2012). His theory of practice clearly sets the model for accumulation out. For one person, to be successful in the field, it is not only required to be able to play the game, but also know the game. Games are:

“the product of a long slow process of autonomization and are therefore, so to speak, games ‘in themselves’ and not ‘for themselves’, one does not embark on the game by conscious act one is born into the game, with the game” (Bourdieu 1990, 67).

Then, the education system functions as an arena for cultural reproduction, the reproduction of the dominant classes' culture. Linked to this, he also underlines the role of the education system for social reproduction because inequalities in cultural capital reflect inequalities in social class. The education system help the dominant class to maintain its status quo. It generates educational credentials, linked to high-class habitus, as a strategy to legitimize the social order (Sullivan, 2002).

“The system of dispositions towards the school is understood as a propensity to consent to the investments in time, effort and money necessary to conserve and to increase cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, p.495)

The system in place is presented as a channel for equality, thus, according to which the outcomes are portrayed as meritocratic and legitimized, which actually reproduce the social inequality. The disadvantaged position of the lower-class children in this competition becomes invisible because of the so-called meritocratic and legitimate system in place. The instances, when low-class children achieve as much as their high-class peers, perpetuates and strengthens this idea (Sullivan, 2002).

Thus, there is an assumption that the high-class culture is better than the low-class culture feeding into the perception of the high-class children that they are superior and to the low-class children that their positions their fault.

“Education is in fact one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social pattern, as it both provides an apparent justification for social inequalities and gives recognition to the cultural heritage, that is, to a social gift treated as natural.” (Bourdieu, 1974, p.32)

These inequalities are facilitated in schools where cultural capital of the dominant class is promoted by teachers by making differentiations between the children who possess and do not possess this capital. The school becomes an agent of for the reproduction of social stratification and inequalities (Tzanakis, 2011).

### **2.3.Social Stratification and Social Mobility as Social Structures**

This dilemma of agency versus structure is embedded in the social stratification and mobility studies and of the explanations on how stratification occurs. As Bowles and Gintis (2002) underlines, for example, researches on stratification focus on to explain why poor are poor and why rich are rich, linking their position to agency related factors such as hard work, or willingness to take risks, or to external structural factors such as money inherited from the family, or the family and the right environment, or the having the connections with right people.

Stratification research has created its own terminology. Inequality refers to the distribution of assets and resources, including political, economic, social or civil, among the individuals in the society positioned in different points of the social



structure. None of the stratification theories, though, neither by Marx nor by Durkheim, have provided an explanation on how mobility between social standings occurs. Simply because these stratification theories seek to explain the difference in a society in relation to the historical conditions that has led to these strata concerned about the institutional conditions that compose the class structures. However, empirical social mobility studies have a different lens

“The design of mobility research is not suited for the study of the problems posed by stratification theory, for it centers attention not on the institutional differences between societies but on the differential conditions that affect mobility within any one” (Blau and Duncan, 1967, p.4)

The rigidity of the social stratification system indicates the continuity in the social standing of its members and the possibility of changing positions over time. A social stratification system occurs to be a rigid one, allowing not much of a mobility along the different positions if the wealth, power and prestige that one person has cannot change over time, throughout one life-course, or compared to its parents, intergenerational.

“Social mobility is the process through which social structures adjust to changing conditions by changing themselves, in as much as structural change involves, in terms of the conception employed, that the distribution of people among social positions is altered, typically as the result of people’s movements between positions” (Blau, 1975, p.248).

Parameters, ascriptive and achievable, affect how these assets and resources are shared within the society and how individuals take social standings based on their share of these assets and resources. When ascriptive factors dominate, in the case of when the social structure, thus the strata in it is the most rigid, there will be no mobility among the social positions, such as in the case of castes, as the positions people occupy is inherited at birth to be maintained over the whole life-course (Blau, 1975).

As Blau and Duncan (1967, p.163) puts, in a liberal democratic society the basic principle for mobility is claimed to be “the achievement”. “Some ascriptive features of the system may be regarded as vestiges of an earlier epoch, to be extirpated as rapidly as possible” (Blau and Duncan, 1967, p.163). This paradigmatic shift placing

more emphasis on the achievement relies on the promise that capacity of agency can overrule, or at least challenge, the ascribed positions.

“a stable society is hardly conceivable that does not ascribe to every child a status in some kinship group, which is responsible for rearing and socializing him, and which therefore strongly influences his motivation to achieve, his qualifications for achievement, and hence his chances for success” (Blau and Duncan, 1967, p.207).

As this shift accepts the likelihood of movement within the given social structure through achieved factors, it makes the analysis more complex bringing more parameters into the picture. Then, social mobility can be explained by several parameters, both achieved and ascribed, encompassing both external and individual factors, such as age, sex, race, wealth and socio-economic status, or motivations, aspirations, hard work, influencing people’s role relations, which is governed by social positions.

The distribution of ascribed and achieved parameters in individuals bring social differentiation within the social structure, distinctions people make, explicitly or implicitly, in their role relations. The aforementioned parameters can be nominal, gradual and ordinal. Nominal parameters, such as gender, produce horizontal differentiation; thus, heterogeneity, whereas gradual parameters, such as socio-economic status, produce vertical differentiation thus inequality (Blau, 1975).

The relationships between the parameters are crucial to understand the process of mobility, the nature of social change and the depth of social inequalities (Blau, 1975). Blau suggests that consolidated parameters reinforce one another and widen the social barriers. The social structure will be more consolidated once these graduated parameters start having significant correlations with nominal parameters, such as religion, sex or race (Blau, 1975). If the correlations are strong, the same individuals will appear in the strata, either high or low (Grusky, 1994). This leads to cumulative status inequalities.

“Social inequalities are greatly magnified when strongly correlated parameters produce status distinctions along lines that reinforce one another and some people enjoy many status advantages while others oppressed by multiple status handicaps” (Blau, 1975, p.252).

“Statuses are inequalities among social units, such as persons or families, which are more or less institutionalized within the larger social system” (Haller and Portes, 1973, p.51). Basic dimensions, such as wealth, power and prestige, as most universally accepted, define the locus of these inequalities. These basic dimensions include income and property, political influence, prestige in the occupational domain, and generalized esteem in the community in themselves. As Haller and Portes (1973) pointed out the movement among these statuses, whether one person keeps the status they have at birth along their lives took attention of various empirical research, whose initial impetus was put by Sorokin in 1927 pleading the researchers to study upward and downward mobility instead of speculating to explain the determinants of status movements.

Following that, studies on social mobility tries to understand this dynamic, both ascribed and achieved, behind possible movements within the social structure. It looks into how individuals move upwards or downward vertically and horizontally and changing their positions in the social structure and space.

D’Agostino and Regoli (2013) underlines that majority of the sociological studies study social mobility through matrices showing educational achievements, occupational status or social class or by economic studies looking at the elasticities or correlations between incomes or wealth of generations. However, “interpretation of statistical results based on mobility as a difference score runs into the constant risk of confusing substantive findings with those due to an inevitable regression toward the mean” (Blau and Duncan, cited by Haller and Portes, 1973).

Following the traditional social mobility researches focusing on the mobility tables and studying the occupational origins and destinations, Blau and Duncan have intended to study “the process by which the background advantages could be converted into socioeconomic status through the mediating variables of schooling, aspirations and parental encouragement” (Grusky, 1994, p.18).

Despite the fact that Bourdieu did not really provided an empirical account for social mobility, his concept of *habitus* provides an ideal staging point for mobility studies, especially when it comes to analyzing the individual social change (Friedman,

2016). *Habitus* enables the researchers to study aspirations that goes beyond the secluded interpretations of term as do the rational action theories, failing to recognize that the agent is the product of a collective history who is economically and socially conditioned, involving the social context, distinction and negotiation for the social analysis (Stahl, in Costa and Murphy eds, 2015). Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* may sound antithetical to social mobility since he argues that

“dispositions flowing from *habitus* are so robust that in the majority of cases they stay unified, meaning that those with strong initial reserves of economic, social and cultural capital are likely to accumulate further and vice versa. This durability is also a strong source of psychological stability, according to Bourdieu, because it ensures that one's practices are pre-consciously orchestrated with, and validated by, those from homologous social backgrounds and the that ‘through the systematic ‘choices’ it makes, the *habitus* tends to protect itself from crises by providing itself with a milieu to which it is pre-adapted as possible” (Friedman cited from Bourdieu, 2016, p.131).

However, as Friedman (2016) highlights, his argument on the composition of social space depending on volume and composition of capital and changes of these properties over time, he was indeed providing a theoretical framework on social mobility especially when he argued that *habitus* owns the necessary equipment to adapt and improvise itself to new social fields despite the fact that the change may be tied to childhood dispositions. Thus, Bourdieu places primary dispositions as long-lasting with a tendency to perpetuation and reproduction of themselves but definitely not eternal (Friedman cited from Bourdieu, 2016).

Then, *habitus* can limit the goals, consciously or unconsciously, based on their beliefs on what individuals can achieve and what not (Camfield et al., 2013). This is similar to what Appadurai defined as capacity to aspire, which will be discussed in detail in the upcoming section on aspirations. These are almost instruments to reproduce the existing social structural conditions. Influenced by *habitus*, capacity to aspire provides ‘an ethical horizon within which more concrete capabilities can be given meaning, substance and sustainability’ (Appadurai, 2004, p.82). That is the reason why this research is using *habitus* as a tool to assess the possibility of adolescents’ aspirations and capacity of agency as a primary factor in social mobility.

Similar to the theorists, trying to find the middle ground between structuralists and individualists, Blau and Duncan (cited by Haller and Portes, 1973) suggested to explain social mobility as a process to cover both internal and external determinants, which they call status attainment. This was an attempt to understand and explain the causal relationship for movements in the social space, to show that social positioning is not by family origins but also through various variables which are partly determined by origins and ascriptive elements. Blau and Duncan's study has played a pivotal role in this field finding out that the parental or individual starting points may not be identical with the terminal ones.

Their status attainment research tries to identify the basic factors shaping the individuals' locations they occupy in social space.

Blau and Duncan's model focus on i) The extent to which inherited status determines the social fate of individuals; ii) The extent to which earlier positions in status hierarchies affect later levels of attainment (Haller and Portes, 1973). Thus, it is an analysis of how structural forces, faced at birth, affects one's social standing and secondly how much capacity does the agency have to change this over the course his/her life. They conclude that, parental positions, which imply part of ascribed parameters, is crucial to explain into which social standing the child is born. However, their influence on final destination, specifically in occupational attainment is indirect via educational level. Education, obviously, has a direct effect on occupational attainment. Later on, Blau and Duncan has introduced the Wisconsin model to complement the model by mediating psycho-social variables, such as aspirations. It was found that family's socioeconomic status influences one's educational and occupational attainment is due to its impact on the types of attainment-related personal influences that the person receives in his adolescence. Significant others influence the status aspirations to a significant extent, access to which is limited through family's socioeconomic position. "It affects, for example, the class and general background of possible friends and hence the likelihood of their having and conveying college plans" (Haller and Portes, 1973).

To summarize, Blau and Duncan's two step analysis provided the same findings. The first level attempted to focus on objective, mostly ascribed, status variables with regards to their relation to status transmission, such as socio-economic status, parental education level. The second level of analysis added social psychological variables, thus, achievable, such as aspirations and significant others' influences. It shows that "direct effects of parental status variables on educational and occupational attainment in the first causal model are shown by the second to be mediated by formation of educational and occupational aspirations and the impact of significant others' influences on this process" (Haller and Portes, 1973).

#### **2.4.Children's<sup>2</sup> Agency**

While the dichotomy on the structure and the agency has many fronts, the agency of children within this dichotomy is becomes even more disputable due to children's evolving capacities and adult dependent natures. How can we talk about the capacity of children's agency as we question the capacity of individuals over objective structures? However, it is essential to review the literature in this area since it contributes to the research question whether we can talk about children's agency as a factor in social mobility.

The definition and perception towards a child has changed across the centuries and countries. Not only these variations across time and space but also the dichotomy between the structure and agency led to changing paradigms in sociology of childhood, which attributes different levels of capacity of agency to children.

It is important to differentiate children's agency from self-esteem. Cuhadaroglu (1986) explains that self-esteem refers to the concept that one knows himself/herself, assess in realistic terms, and recognize his /her skills and capabilities that lead to self-respect and trust. This concept is mostly associated with psychology and

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<sup>2</sup> The Convention of the Rights of the Child defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger (UNICEF, 1989). Despite the fact that the concentration of this dissertation is limited to adolescents, this section will predominantly use the term 'child', since adolescence refers to a specific period within childhood. This concentration to adolescents was made for the purposes of the research methodology, which will be explained in detail in the following chapter. However, discussions on children's agency remains relevant for this age group.

composes an element of agency, which is beyond psychological realm, and a sociological concept that takes into account the role of individuals, with varying levels of self-esteem, in a wider society. Despite their capacities at the time of birth are neither equal to early adolescence nor to late adolescence or adults, thus, with evolving capacities, changing paradigms in the sociology of childhood has provided that children have capacities to be active agents despite their evolving capacities.

Similar to the wider dichotomy of structure and agency there are structuralists, individualists and middle grounders in this dichotomy too. Traditional approaches takes children as passive agents being socialized within society, whereas the others take children as active children who contribute to social maintenance and change (Corsaro, 2005).

Traditional theories of childhood, following the structuralist vein, focus on the socialization referring to the process that child adopt themselves to the existing society and shape themselves accordingly. Thus, children internalize the society. This approach, primarily affected by the developmental psychology, adopts a fixed and universalized experiences of children across time and space neglecting the fluidity and multiplicity of children's realities (Davies and Robinson, 2010). It fails to recognize the instability, multiplicity and fluidity of childhood across a broad range of socio-cultural, gendered, sexualized, classed, racialized and historical contexts (Davies and Robinson, 2010).

On the other hand, new approaches highlights the need to deconstruct the fix understandings and perceptions of childhood as well as girlhood and boyhood (Davies and Robinson, 2010).

Following individualist vein of the sociological dilemma, this school of thought places great emphasis on the role of children as active agents in their own development and participation in the society. This line of thinking follows the traces of George Herbert Mead. Representatives of this approach is Piaget, a leading psychologist, who believed that children use, organize and construct information from their environment from the first day of their infancy, or Vygotsky, another psychologist, stressing children's role in human development through collective

actions. For him, all ‘psychological and social skills are always acquired from our interactions with others (Corsaro, 2005, p.14). This vein mainly operates in the realm of psychology.

Similar to Bourdieu’s attempt to break this dichotomy, Corsaro (2005) introduces a new approach called interpretive reproduction, an attempt to bridge the social structure to individual agencies. According to this approach, ‘socialization is not only a matter of adaptation and internalization; but also a process of appropriation, reinvention, and reproduction’ (Corsaro, 2005, p.18).

This approach refutes the focus on socialization since socialization implies an end, to which a child should reach. Rather, “interpretative” stresses the importance of creative and innovative aspects of children’s participation into society to create their own peer culture. In addition, “reproduction” emphasizes that children do not merely internalize the society but actively contributes to its production and change. However, the term also recognizes the constraints children faces, while participating in the society, by the existing social structure and societal reproduction. Corsaro (2005, p.24) argues that children’s participation into the culture they live in is not linear as explained by the socialization theorists, but rather reproductive. Thus, they do not only internalize the existing structures around them but continuously interpret their environment and create their own peer cultures with each societal structure. For that reason, using the spider web as a metaphor. Citing from Bourdieu, Corsaro (2005, p.25) underlines that

“the radii or spokes of the model represent a range of locales or fields that make up various social institutions (family, economic, cultural, educational, political, occupational, community and religious). The fields illustrate the diverse locations in which institutional interaction or behavior occurs”.

Thus, Bourdieu does not necessarily take children as passive agents but recognizes their capacity to be an active participant and challenger of the existing structures (Atkinson, 2014).

Reproductive models require special attention for this dissertation due to their attempts to bridge the child agency with the structure. As Corsaro (2005, p. 10) emphasizes Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus* ‘is inculcated in early socialization and



plays itself out reproductively through the tendency of the child and all social actors to maintain their sense of self and place in the world.’

While underlining the discussions on children’s agency as a whole, it is important to mention that in the literature, the period covering adolescence took special attention of the academics. Several academics have studied how experiences during adolescence affect the interplay between the agency and the social order in the rest of their lives. For example, Davis (1944) takes attention to the correlation between the desires to be successful during the period of adolescence is very much interlinked with the expectations on social class in the future. On the other hand, Elder (1980) underlines that the political climate and the crises experiences during adolescence have substantial impact on the development of adolescents in this era. Additionally, gender dimension is crucial to be brought in when analyzing children’s agency as the limits, constraints posed by patriarchy for girls and the superior role and domination for boys is key to understand shaping processes of their agencies. The next section will further dwell on the gender dimension of children’s agency.

#### ***2.4.1. The Gendered Agency: Construction of Patriarchy***

*“One of the specific forms of oppression which women suffer, and which other oppressed social categories share, is the inability to be in social relationship and social situations in which gender is not present”*

*Whitehead, 1979, p.11*

We live in a patriarchal society and, thus, girls and boys grow up in a patriarchal society. Children’s role to reproduce and transform the society is already recognized, as explained in previous section. However, the gender differentiation with the influence of patriarchy in the social environment shaping gender norms, attitudes and preferences between boys and girls is an important factor to understand the limits and scope of this reproduction.

Bourdieu did not study gender in detail. However, his theory on habitus is significant to examine how habitus influences gender relations. ‘As individuals act move in social settings like home, school, and work, they learn attitudes and behaviors

appropriate for these spaces, they acquire classed, gendered and racialized dispositions, which shape how they perceive and respond to the world' (Miller, 2016, p.331).

Bourdieu was not particularly interested the gender dynamics between the field and habitus despite the fact that he recognized that habitus is gendered. He was even criticized for assuming that all women have the same feminine habitus that does not vary across time and space and cultures. His analysis of gendered habitus is fixed and does not interact with fields of action. Departing from Bourdieu's theory, in order to complement his work with gender lens, Miller (2016) has studied how gendered dispositions reproduce fields of cultural production. Her point is to explore how gender interacts with field and habitus to understand different ways of doing gender. Miller (2016) argues that people do gender in a habitual and routine way without necessarily attributing gendered motivations to their behavior. Additionally, they also do so to fulfill the expectations from the society. Thus, for Miller (2016, p. 349) gendered habitus is both constituted by and constitutive of other cultural fields. The link between habitus and field is textured by gender. Acknowledging this linkage allows a much better understanding of Bourdieu's field theory, which focuses on power relations and inequality, and sensitized the theory to a very important dimension of power relations. It is an embodied cultural capital.

As much as the experience of childhood is not universal across time and space, as explained in the previous section, it is also not identical across genders despite the time and space remain the same. This section will dwell upon the different constructions of agency among different genders.

Gender is embedded in the construction of agency, thus, children's agency is not gender neutral. Similar to the gender roles, children construct a gendered agency while constructing their agency starting from early years influenced by the patriarchal society. Gender differentiations are rooted in the customary norms, beliefs, and values that characterize the "intrinsically gendered" relationships of family and kinship. They spell out dominant models of masculinity and femininity in different societies, allocating men and women and boys and girls to different roles

and responsibilities on the basis of socially-constructed aptitudes and dispositions and affects the formation of social identity based on individual choices and collective action (Kabeer, 2016; Folbre, 1994). Girls acquire stigmata of femininity, while boys acquire masculinity as they are exposed and immersed to the gendered practical schemes into which they are born and dictated by their class positions (Lovell, 2000). We are born as female and male, as biological sexes, but raised as woman or man, socially organized genders, around which gender inequality in division of labor, in life styles and in relationships is organized (Hartmann, 1979).

This system, which organizes the spheres, relations between men and women, including the social norms, choices and preferences of each, is called patriarchy.

Patriarchy refers to:

“our society .... The fact is evident at once if one recalls that the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political offices, finances –in short, every avenue of power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands” (Hartmann cited from Millet, 1979, p.10).

The origin of the patriarchy can be considered as family. For example, children are mostly reared by women at home, recognized as inferior to men, and learn their places in the gender hierarchy through this raising norms. However; feminist theory argues that patriarchy always finds a way to renew and reshape itself through various institutions. As women were able to break free from the patriarchs in the household, such as their father or husband, they are faced with new forms of patriarchy. Indeed, instead of freeing themselves from the patriarchy, their subordinate position is maintained through other patriarchal structures and become even more exposed to more diffused sites of patriarchal practices, such as arbitrariness, bureaucracy and the power of the state (Carlson, 2007). These norms are continuously consolidated through churches, schools, workplaces and other social structures such as local community and family (Hartmann, 1979; Fortier, 1975; Connolly and Healy, 2004).

Patriarchy is then

“a set of mechanisms, practices, beliefs, myths and relationships organizing relatively stable patterns of human activity with respect to the distribution of resources, the reproduction of individuals, and the type of societal structures within a given patriarchy (Facio, 2013).

These institutions are not only the mechanisms perpetuating patriarchy, they are also beliefs, practices, myths, relationships, etc. ensuring that patriarchy does not remain visible even to those which suffer the most, the women, from its exclusionary and discriminatory means and consequences. It appears to be natural how the way things are and always will be for women. (Rotman, 2006). It takes to attention to the gaps in beliefs that women consider themselves as subordinate to their men peers and takes their inferior position in the society as natural or God-given (Longwe and Clarke, 1994).

Patriarchy operates in the psychological realm, where girls and boys learn how to become a woman and a man. It is then an ideological structure. This explains how sex is turned into gender. “Male seeks power and domination; he is egocentric and individualistic; competitive and pragmatic; the technological, whereas female is nurturing, artistic, and philosophical. She is the aesthetic” (Hartmann cited from Firestone, 1979).

In patriarchy, men ‘own’ the women and children and rule over them. The reason why this system is called as patriarchy is that it captures the hierarchy and male domination in the present system (Hartmann, 1979). Patriarchy allows us not only how society is organized in terms of hierarchy but also who fills out these positions in the society.

Within patriarchy, men from different races, ethnic groups and socio-economic statuses are positioned differently; however; united on the dominance over the women and are dependent on each other to maintain this domination. Thus, whatever their position is within the patriarchy they are positioned at least above some women. This dominance is maintained by excluding women from access to access to labor and by restricting their sexuality. Longwe and Clarke (1994) underlines that gender gaps are not accidental, they are products of gender discrimination, the differential treatment towards women and girls. This gender discrimination can be observed throughout a woman’s lifecycle starting from a birth such as valuing the birth of a boy more than a girl. The period of adolescence, the years from 12 to 18 ages, appear to be the period when the initial subordination of girls start in domestic

and sexual realms. The girl's safety and security becomes a concern for the family and the community which leads to protective measures to be in place for girls, even seclusion in certain cases.

Although this dissertation does not study its research question from a gender perspective, a light emphasis was given to the role of patriarchy in forming the genders and shaping the agencies. The impact of legal, political, economic and social reforms, discourses is bound with the patriarchally constructed identities like wife/mother, or breadwinner. Patriarchy is hence critical to factor in to understand and assess not only the aspirations but also the channels used to realize these aspirations between boys and girls (Rankin and Aytaç citing from Özyeğin and Kağıtçıbaşı, 2006). Previous researches conducted, studying the relationship between gender and aspirations, have also found out that the gender relations within a family is influential in shaping children's aspirations (Craft et al., 2014; Ashby and Schoon, 2010; Arnot and Naveed, 2014; Muldoon and Reilly, 2003). For example, Craft et al. (2014) has concluded that children gender-role beliefs and occupational aspirations were predicted by their parents' beliefs and implicit associations as well as with the division of labor for the domestic tasks within the households.

## **2.5. Aspirations as a Strategy to Link the Structure with Agency**

As discussed in the previous sections, aspirations were studied by many scholars as one of the variables for social movements in social space. Aspirations reflect the negotiations taking place between the structures and agency and this negotiation potentially leads to mobility; thus, used as a strategy by the agency to go through the structures. The elements of this negotiation and the strategy has been explored and interpreted widely through various theoretical frameworks by several scholars (Appadurai, 2004; Stahl, 2015; Shu and Marini, 2007; Ray, 2003; Hart, 2016). Studying aspirations is important both to understand how stability or change in structure occur both within and across generations. The inequalities among aspirations can be an important denominator among the persistent inequalities among the society (Shu and Marini, 2007). Studies so far showed, for instance, that

educational aspirations are important determinants of future educational and occupational outcomes. This might be the reason for the neo-liberal emphasis on aspirations and on education as a tool for a more fluid social structure across generations (Lee et al., 2012).

Future orientation is a subject under study both by psychology and sociology. Many psychologists have studied the factors influencing the formation of identities and expectations from selves. Roth et al (2013) underlines that sociological perspective to future orientation does not relate future orientation to optimism, self-confidence, positive illusions or other personality characters as psychology does, but rather; it relates to adult attainment through educational and occupational goals. Future orientation, for sociology, means adult attainment, including educational and occupational goals, aspirations and expectations (Roth et al., 2013).

Future orientation gives us clues about future behaviors, including delinquency, risks, vocational plans and overcoming adversity (Roth et al, 2013). It is complex. It is not uni-dimensional not completely personal. Roth et al (2013, p.377) suggests that, as *habitus* indicates, 'future orientation is a complex and multidimensional construct, that results from a process in which attitudes and assumptions based on previous experiences on roles and capabilities play a large part.' Both micro-systems such as family, school, teachers and macro-systems such as education systems, socio-economic status, social class, cultural orientation and material circumstances play a role in how people envisage a future for themselves (Roth et al., 2013).

From the sociological point of view, there is a difference between expectations and aspirations. Aspirations are idealistic, whereas expectations base on realistic outcomes. 'Aspirations are the hope or ambition of achieving something. Yet an aspiration is not just a plan a person will start working out knowing with reasonable confidence that it will succeed; rather, there may be a greater element of hope and of not knowing whether it will work out' (Conradie and Robeyns, 2013, p.561). Aspirations can be overambitious, or adapted aspirations or in between, meaning safe or achievable. Thus, expectations refer to realistic outcome that individuals'

elaborate to achieve, on the other hand, aspirations refer to idealistic goals for future attainment.

In connection to that, Ray (2003) makes distinctions between ‘aspiration window’, referring to one person’s cognitive world which is shared by similar individuals, and the ‘aspiration gap’, referring to the difference between their actual and aspired standard of living, and the ‘aspiration failure’ referring to response to the gap. He finds out that people are more motivated when the aspirational gap is smaller, which was later supported by Kempen’s study in 2009 conducted in North-East India that valuation of agency decrease when the aspirational gap is too large, whereas moderate gap encourage people to commit to future empowerment (Camfield et al, 2013). Scope of aspirations narrow down as a result of previous experiences, lack of recognition and negative identification and discourses (Gottfredson, 1981; Roth et al, 2013; Tynkkynen, 2012).

Conradie and Robeyns (2013, p.562) and Geckova (2010) state that aspirations are influenced by the ‘social surroundings, our upbringing, the cultural and social context in which we move, the social networks in which we are embedded, and so forth’. Thus, future orientation is not determined merely on personal characteristics and abilities but also affected by socio-economic status, opportunities, family, school, social class, cultural orientation, all of which is discussed below with some examples from previously conducted studies. According to them, aspirations do not exist out there and waiting to be found; rather they are formed along the way. For example, Camfield et al. (2013) underlines that material inequalities are usually accompanied by aspirational inequalities, signaling to people’s possibility of adapting themselves to the material conditions they have potentially leading to reduced aspirations. This adaptation to available material circumstances is more prevalent among matures than among adolescents and youth. Mature people tend to adapt and become marginalized once the aspirations are not met, whereas the youth and adolescents have rising aspirations towards life.

Adaptation plays an important role to shape aspirations. Bourdieu (1984) underlines that agents adapts their aspirations to the objective chances they have according to

the conditions they live in and lose all the lateral possible along the way. Elster's study (cited by Conradie and Robeyns, 2013) showed that adaptations occur unconsciously to respond to the incompatible cognitive processes that one will not be achieving the desires. Dynamic nature of the aspirations allows one to adapt aspirations as per the achievements. Thus, the aspirations may change as one person achieves something. Adaptation of aspirations was also emphasized in Amartya Sen's capability approach when he was mentioning about 'the considerations of feasibility' or 'practical possibility'. Bühler-Niederberger and König (2011) underlines that possibilities for the future are evaluated and perceived from a structured point and serves as an eliminating factor for the lower classes to compete for higher classes as people from lower classes find higher positions unreachable.

Bertaux and Thompson have highlighted that personal and family relationships played significant role for future orientation. Housing, education, culture and inheritance proved to be important indicators for future prospects coming. Family was found to be the most important channel to transmit the religion, language, housing etc. but it was also substantial for 'social values and aspirations, domestic skills, and those taken-for-granted ways of behaving in parenthood and in marriage which Tocqueville called 'the habits of the heart' or for which Bourdieu chose the old word '*habitus*'" (Bertaux and Thompson, 1997, p.43). They also acknowledged motivation by the family, in addition to teachers, NGOs, people from neighborhood as important factors for their future. They found out that adolescents were aware of the obstacles impeding their chances in future success such as financial resources, violent and insecure environments, improper housing conditions or discriminatory practices and adolescents emphasized that their personal characteristics are much less important than these structural obstacles in their transition to a better occupation than their family members. However, many of them have also expressed their willingness to improve their own status and their family trajectories. Complementing that, Ashby and Schoon's (2010) study suggests that parental education aspirations and income was an important factor influencing the teenage aspirations. For example, 16 years old children proved to have higher aspirations for



their jobs and educations when their families have higher expectations from them. As a result, Ashby and Schoon (2010) are suggesting that high educational aspirations by the families of low income can be play a balancing role in low educational outcomes.

D'Agostino and Regoli's (2012) research among the young adults in Italy found out that the past experience of financial distress within the family limits the future possibilities and intergenerational mobility. The study conducted by Roth et al (2013) among the Roma adolescents has also found out that, occupational aspirations are influenced by financial situation, which explained their choice of going into labor instead of prolonged education.

Researches on the relationship between aspirations and socio-economic status are presenting contradicting findings. Some researches found out that children from low socio-economic status had higher educational attainment, when their aspirations were compared to their peers from high socio-economic backgrounds. However, educational aspirations and expectations, which change during adolescence, are positively associated with educational attainment (Lee et al, 2012). Educational aspirations have been a significant predictive factor in school persistence, academic motivation, educational attainment and ultimately occupational outcomes (Shapka et al, 2012; Ashby and Schoon, 2010; Howard et al, 2011; Schmitt-Wilson and Welsh, 2012).

In addition to the effect of structural factors such as financial resources, family, education, despite of their interconnectedness, and the adaptation occurs at individual level, Swidler and Appadurai focused on the '*capacity to aspire*' with an attempt to find a middle ground between these structural forces that comes with the accident at birth and individual capacities and capabilities. Despite the fact that the capacity to aspire was emphasizing the role of individual capacities, it did not overlooked how this capacity was shaped by structural obstacles. Echoing Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, capacity to aspire was put forward as an agency driven concept. Swidler (cited by Camfield et al, 2013) has argued that people with

limited economic resources have limited repertoire of actions and strategies, which was further developed by Appadurai's concept of 'capacity to aspire':

'the development of people's capacity to aspire is central to overall development process as it provides an ethical horizon within which more concrete capabilities can be given meaning, substance and sustainability. By exercising and nurturing these capabilities people are then able to move away from wishful thinking to thoughtful wishing' (Appadurai cited by Camfield et al, p.1054).

Aspirations has strong linkages with preferences, wishes, wants, desires, choices and calculations and because of these characteristics, they were dealt with economics and dedicated to individual actors. However, they are not formed on individual basis. They derive from cultural norms and they are not simply individual; rather they are formed in interaction with social life (Appadurai, 2004). As much as the resources is not distributed equally, capacity to aspire is not evenly distributed in the society either. It means that the better off you are, the more likely you are to be conscious of the links between the more and less immediate objects of aspiration as the better offs will have a greater variety of experiences (Appadurai, 2004, p.68).

Capacity to aspire thus provides a capacity to navigate. The privileged people will have more opportunities to use this map to practice navigating and will develop their aspirations based on their practices or the practices in their social network, which are also rich in experience. Complementing these findings, Bandura et al (2001) studied the role of self-efficacy on the aspirations and highlights that perceived self-efficacy, rate of belief in their level of capability to execute the designated activities, significantly affected career choice and development. For example, a research conducted among adults showed that people with beliefs of higher efficacy consider a wider spectrum of career options available and accessible for them resulting in higher commitments and motivation to achieve. In another study conducted with children, it was found that socio-economic status had no direct impact on children's self-efficacy; rather socio-economic status had an impact on parent's aspirations for their children, to promote their academic development, which directly influences children's academic aspirations as it was also underlined in the other researches mentioned above (Camfield, 2013).

## **2.6. Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the theories that forms the framework of this dissertation as well as the literature available around the research topic. In line with the research question, thus, the role of adolescents' aspirations and their capacity of agency in social mobility, the chapter has introduced the structure and agency dichotomy in dilemma and what role this dilemma plays in social mobility. To test the assumption that adolescents' capacity of agency and their aspirations may effect social mobility, Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* was applied. This enables to study the social mobility both from structure and agency driven elements that shapes the movements in the social space.

The chapter also elaborates on theories that provides explanations on the capacity of children, which goes beyond the capacity of agency against the social structures due to children's evolving developmental stages. That section has also dwelled upon the formation of agency with a gender lens.

Furthermore, a review of existing literature on aspirations and their relations with social mobility and *habitus* was presented with a view to allow readers to see the gaps in the existing literature as well as the contribution of this dissertation for the literature.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF TURKEY IN THE SECOND DECADE OF 2000s IN RELATION TO ADOLESCENTS OF THE ERA**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the context in Turkey when this dissertation is written from 2015 to 2017. It is organized in seven sections. Following this first introductory section, the remaining sections will introduce political economy of Turkey, including the socio-economic and human development indicators, the profile of adolescents based on available official statistics and a review of the available similar and relevant studies on the subject in Turkey, the current education system in Turkey to frame the context of the research, to help the readers to understand and interpret the findings within the described context and to facilitate the understanding of perspectives and attitudes of adolescents in a larger context.

#### **3.2. Political Economy in Turkey**

Neo-liberalism has been governing the political economy of Turkey since the beginning 1980s. The neo-liberal policies was introduced to the Turkish economics with the 24 January 1980 decisions, expanding privatization and the role of state in the economy. Starting with the rule of the former prime-minister and president of republic of Turkey, Turgut Özal, these policies remained at the heart of the Turkish politics and economics since then.

Today, as Yeldan (2013) suggests, this neoliberal project is being implemented by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), since they assumed power in

2002, oriented by Islamist values aiming to transform the state apparatus, to dissolve the public sector by “localization” and “democratization based on civil society organizations” and to commercialize basic services such as health and education. There is no doubt that the neoliberal transition in the country under the AKP’s rule has been realized through its fusion, as elsewhere, with conservatism in social values (Yeldan, 2013). Although this conservatism is identified with Islamism in Turkey, it is clear that the AKP’s conservatism is about removing all kinds of dissent in the way of neoliberal economy-politics (Coşar and Özcan, 2011)

Neoliberalism advocates for ‘self-regulating’ free markets ‘to create a better world’, advancing individualism in terms of making choices and taking initiatives, minimizing the state intervention in economic matters emphasizing the primacy of the market in laissez faire conditions (Ryan cited from Zafarullah & Huque, 2015).

Beyond the relationship between the market, the state and the individuals, neoliberal movement was suggesting individual freedom is fundamental for progressive civilizations, while opposing ideologies with government constraints and centralized planning resulting in tyranny and servitude of human beings (Thompson and Coghlan cited from Hayek and Atlas, 2015). They claimed that the mind of each person is capable of reason, characterized by self-direction and personal responsibility rather than bounded-ness and subordination (Thompson and Coghlan cited from Ingersoll et al., 2015).

This ideology shifted the focus from social conditions to individual conditions and transformed responsibility and the accountability for the conditions from the state to the individuals. Thus, it does not ignore the fact that each person’s position in the social space is different based on the class, gender, age, ability, race or caste background. These are often helpful to predict the educational possibility, occupation, access to resources, political power and prestige and at the end the prospects of social mobility, which enable or constrain ‘self-determination and self-development’ (Armstrong, 2006, p.293). However, this shift brought an explanation behind these social relations and institutions as a consequence of individual choice (Armstrong, 2006).

This can be read as an attempt to restructure the power relations between the state and the society. State was tasked to provide conditions where individuals' can perform their abilities. Instead of state controlled or planned sharing over the resources, it was highlighted that the resources should be shared through the competition directing the individuals to compete with each other and with the market to be positioned in the society. Therefore, ambition and self-improvement is encouraged to be advantageous in this competition (Jankowski and Provezis, 2014 and Vijayakumar, 2013). Individuals are encouraged to take responsibility over their self-development and self-determination if these appears to be a preference for them.

To avoid social unrest that might be caused due to the unequal results of this competition, the political government is held accountable to ensure that the competition is fair and all individuals have equality of opportunities to be and to act in the competition. As long as the opportunities are equal, unequal results are natural and functional as hard-working and ambitious can benefit from these opportunities to a greater extent. Then, people's social standing, including the volume and the composition of the capitals, are not controlled by the state. Rather, it is shaped by individuals.

Equality of opportunity highlights that different things matter to different people; thus, it provides a room for the individuals to choose from the options based on their preferences, instead of allocating identical parcels of social space, and secondly, it acknowledges individuals as responsible agents, accountable at least to some extent for the choices they make and the things that they do. Thus, as equal as our chances are, the less excuse is available to explain failure (Philipps, 2006; Littler, 2013).

There are two ways of interpreting equality of opportunity. The first is to analyze the social standings, thus, the outcomes of movements in the social space, on compensation factors, such as innate abilities, handicaps, called and responsibility factors, such as ambition, or preferences. It is more acceptable if the outcomes are different due to compensation factor and not by responsibility factors. A second approach to equality of opportunity focuses on the opportunity set that individuals

have access to. As long as the opportunity sets are equal, individuals remain responsible for their choice (Ooghe, 2007).

Thus, the emphasis on individualism and competition not only extended the availability of the choices the individuals can make but also the responsibility and the accountability of the individuals on the consequences of the choices they make.

Thus, this discourse 'located problems of deficit in individuals, families and communities concealing structural, cultural, discursive and material misrecognitions and inequalities and ignore the ways that intelligence talent and potential are socially constructed in the interests of a particular hegemonic groups and communities' (Burke, 2006, p.722).

As the focus shifted from social conditions and outcomes towards individuals, empowerment of individuals to take up these opportunities and determine their social standings appeared to be the most feasible tool for social mobility. It refers to the process of acquiring the ability to make choices (Kabeer, 1999).

Kabeer (1999) underlines that empowerment includes three dimensions: i) resources, including not only material resources but also human and social resources which may take the form of actual allocations or future expectations or claims, ii) agency, the ability to define goals and act upon them, including the motivation and purpose that the individuals bring to their activities and iii) their sense of agency, the power within, referring to the capacity to define their own life-choices and pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others.

The discourse on equality of opportunities and empowerment of individuals to benefit from these opportunities has been the locus of the major strategic documents of Turkey including National Development Plans, Youth Strategy and Education Strategy, which has its manifestations from the top to the bottom through several institutions and mechanisms influencing the norms, attitudes and perspectives of the adolescents.

To be more specific, 10<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan (NDP), among its principle, underlines that

“It is aimed to establish a social and administrative structure where human rights and individual freedom are guaranteed by a fair and fast legal system, equal opportunity is offered through effective, predictable and institutionalized public policies and, accessible and high quality public services exists. Within the framework of human-centered development, it is a core to make people realize themselves through increasing individual and social qualifications and competences, to ensure individuals to participate more actively in socio-economic life and to extend social welfare through reducing poverty” (MoD, 2014, p. 28).

Similarly among its objectives, the plan specifies that Turkey’s development heavily relies on “qualified people, strong society”, where equality of opportunity is maintained throughout all segments of society through which sustainable development will be achieved (MoD, 2014, p. 30). Along the same line, there specific references for regions and certain groups of the society where opportunities should be equalized for inclusive development. For example, it is highlighted that equality of opportunities needs to be improved to ensure equality of opportunities across different geographies of Turkey

“...within the scope of regional development policies, provision of basic quality of life standards in all urban and rural settlements and minimization of disadvantages arising from spatial constraints are required in order to realize equal opportunity and inclusive development” (MoD, 2014, p.117).

In education sector, free textbooks for all students, conditional education supports, transportation supports have been put in place to ensure equality of opportunities among all children and adolescents (MoD, 2014, p.30).

Turkish Ministry of National Education’s (MONE) strategic plan has also an explicit emphasis on equality of opportunities. In the strategic plan covering the years from 2015 to 2018, it is highlighted that FATİH project (Fırsatları Artırma ve Teknolojiyi İyileştirme Hareketi – Movement to Increase Opportunities and Improve Technology), initiated MONE in 2012, will be the main entry point to ensure equality of opportunities for all students by improving access to and quality of knowledge aligned with the requirement of knowledge era (MoNE, 2015).

As the opportunities are equalized, neoliberal ideology encourage the individuals to have aspirations that is competitive, economic and status-based. Aspirations are rendered an ‘unequivocal good’ to become the ‘the best of the best’ in line with the



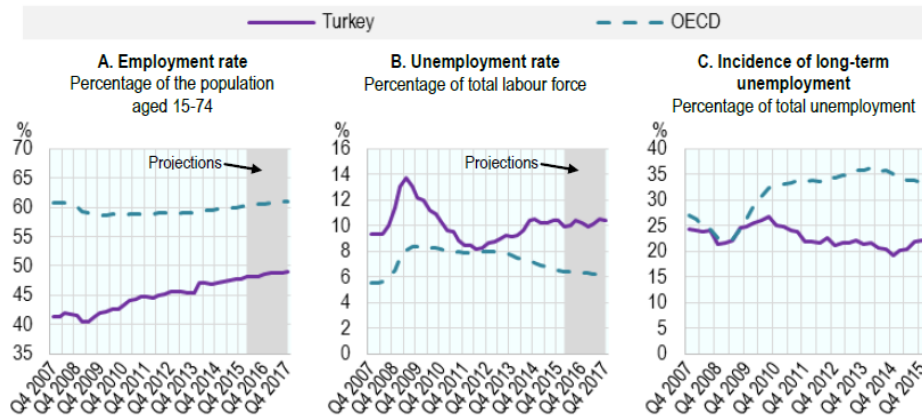
neo-liberal ideology (Stahl, 2015). Learning is equalized with earning and credentialism is dominant.

### **3.3. Socio-Economic Indicators**

World Bank's analysis of October 2016 suggests that Turkey has been economically performing well since early 2000s with macroeconomic and fiscal stability, increased employment and incomes, which made Turkey an upper-middle-income country and 17<sup>th</sup> biggest economy in the world, and reduced poverty. However, these achievements were challenged since 2012 with slower growth rate and increased unemployment with an increased severity following the political developments in 2015 and 2016, elections in June and November 2015, a cabinet reshuffle in May 2016, an attempted coup in July, and the consequent replacement of public officials (World Bank, 2016).

The employment trends show that Turkey's employment rate has been increasing significantly, mostly driven by the rise of women's employment rate, yet with a substantial gap compared to OECD average. According to the OECD figures, Turkey's employment rate was 47.8% in 2015, whereas it was 60.2% in OECD countries (OECD, 2016). As the table below shows, the unemployment rate has been following an increasing trend from 2012 onwards much above the OECD averages with a projection of further increase.

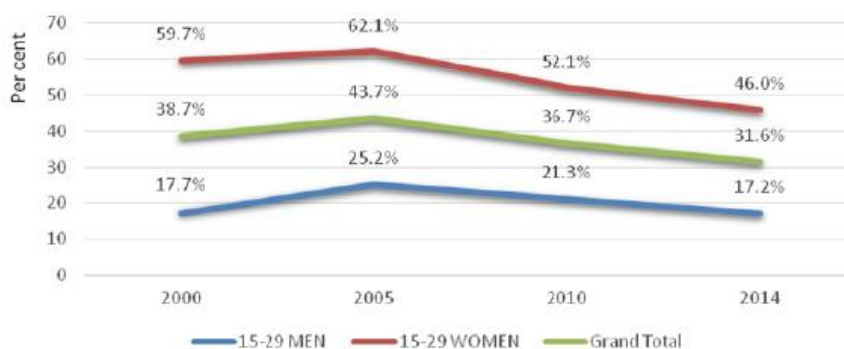
**Table 3 - Employment Trends in Turkey**



Source: OECD Economic Outlook No 99, June 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9572784d-en>; OECD Employment database

More importantly, for this dissertation, because of its early linkages with adolescents' aspirations, youth unemployment is one of the highest in Turkey, 20% in 2015 and 19.2% in early 2016, compared to OECD and G20 countries making young population a particularly vulnerable group. Young people neither in education nor in employment and training (NEET) compose 30% of the young population, which is well above the OECD average of 15% (OECD, 2016). The rates change significantly when gender is taken into account. The chart below shows the NEET rates among males and females and change over time in Turkey since 2000.

**Table 4 - NEET in Turkey (15-29 years, male-female comparison), 2014**



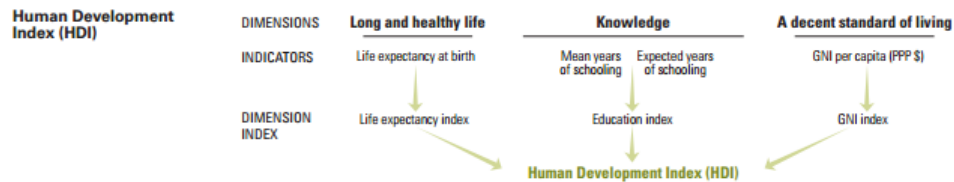
Source: Erdoğan et al, E. (2017). *Being a NEET in Turkey: Determinants and Consequences*, p.6

### 3.3.1. Human Development in Turkey

Turkey ranks 72<sup>th</sup> in Human Development Index (HDI), an index developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to monitor human development in countries. It stands for a “summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living. The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions” (UNDP, 2016).

The table below shows dimensions, indicators and indexes used in the calculation of HDI.

**Table 5 - Human Development Index**



This index ranges from 0 to 1 and as it gets close to 1, the level of human development increase. Turkey’s index is 0.761. More importantly, this index drops to a significant extent, to 0.641, when it is adjusted to inequalities<sup>3</sup> in the country across the different segments of the society. It means inequalities in Turkey leads to a loss of 15.8% of HDI.

### 3.4. Education system in Turkey

Turkish constitution, article 42, underlines that education is a right for all citizens including boys and girls and is free in state schools for all children. It reads as follows:

<sup>3</sup> “The Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) combines a country’s average achievements in health, education and income with how those achievements are distributed among country’s population by “discounting” each dimension’s average value according to its level of inequality. Thus, the IHDI is distribution-sensitive average level of HD. Two countries with different distributions of achievements can have the same average HDI value. Under perfect equality the IHDI is equal to the HDI, but falls below the HDI when inequality rises” (UNDP).

ARTICLE 42- No one shall be deprived of the right of education. The scope of the right to education shall be defined and regulated by law. Education shall be conducted along the lines of the principles and reforms of Atatürk, based on contemporary scientific and Educational institutions contravening these principles shall not be established. The freedom of education does not relieve the individual from loyalty to the Constitution. Primary education is compulsory for all citizens of both sexes and is free of charge in state schools.

The principles governing the functioning of private primary and secondary schools shall be regulated by law in keeping with the standards set for the state schools. (Paragraph added on February 2, 2008; Act No. 5735, and annulled by the decision of the constitutional Court dated June 5, 2008 numbered E. 2008/16, K. 2008/116). The State shall provide scholarships and other means of assistance to enable students of merit lacking financial means to continue their education. The State shall take necessary measures to rehabilitate those in need of special education so as to render such people useful to society. Training, education, research, and study are the only activities that shall be pursued at institutions of education. These activities shall not be obstructed in any way. No language other than Turkish shall be taught as a mother tongue to Turkish citizens at any institution of education. Foreign languages to be taught in institutions of education and the rules to be followed by schools conducting education in a foreign language shall be determined by law. The provisions of international treaties are reserved (Turkish Grand National Assembly -TGNA).

Turkish education system is organized by several laws, including Law No 222 on Primary Schooling and Education and Law No 1739 on Principles of National Education approved by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) in 1961 and 1973 respectively.

The education system in Turkey is composed of formal and non-formal education. Formal education provides education through set curriculum for students, at certain age groups, having same level educational background in school settings. This includes pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education.

Law No 222, organizing the formal education system, went through major amendments in 2012, which reformed the education system known as the 4+4+4 education reform, giving the education system its current structure.

According to new amendments, 12 years compulsory schooling was introduced in Turkey. The first stage of the primary schooling starts at the age of five and lasts for four years at the end of which children continue to the second stage of the primary schooling, which may or may not be in the same facility based on the physical conditions and availability. The transition from the first stage of primary schooling

to the second stage of primary schooling is being done automatically by the state based on the residence of children to proximity to schools.

There are different kinds of secondary schools. These are regular high schools, Anadolu high schools, Natural Sciences high schools, Anadolu Fine Arts high schools, Social Sciences high schools and Sports high schools. Fine arts and sports schools accept students based on talent exams, while registration in the remaining high schools takes place with a central examination, which is called “*Exam for Transiting from Primary to Secondary Education*” -*Temel Eđitimden Orta Öđretime Geçiř Sınavı (TEOG)*<sup>4</sup>.

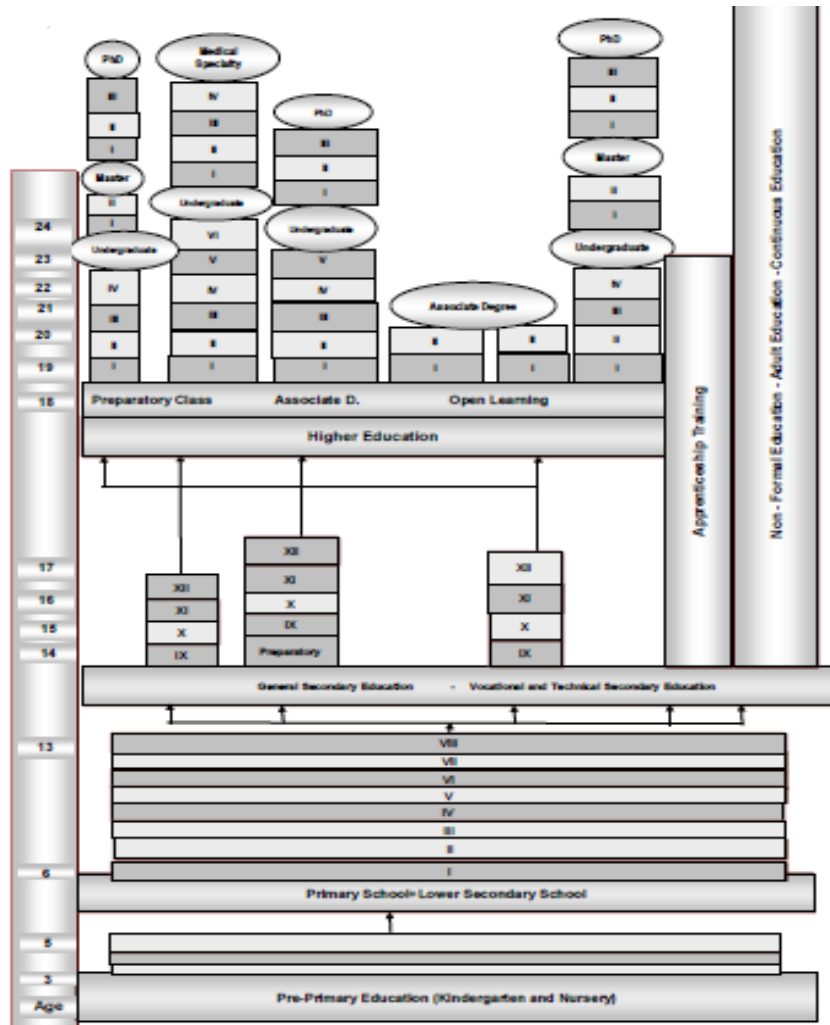
At the end of the second stage of the primary schooling, thus, at the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students sit in *TEOG*. Based on the scores students receive in *TEOG* and their preferences, they are placed in the secondary schools, which includes regular, technical or vocational high schools. If students are not placed in one of their preferences, they will be automatically placed in a regular high school based on their address registration as the amendment made enrolment and attendance to secondary school compulsory, while allowing the students to attend open high schools according to their circumstances (MoNE, 2012).

Formal education is provided both by public and private institutions available for each grade. Private schools’ are financed through private individuals or institutions but inspected and monitored by the Ministry of National Education.

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<sup>4</sup> Exam for Transiting from Primary to Secondary Education was introduced in 2013-2014 school year by the Turkish Ministry of National Education to organize the transitions from primary to secondary education. It is composed of 12 exams conducted at the national level on the following subjects Turkish, Mathematics, Science and Technology, History of Turkish Reforms and Atatürkism, Foreign Language and Culture of Religion and Knowledge of Ethics. Placements in the secondary schools are based on a weighted average of the TEOG score (70%) and the yearly averages for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade (30%).

**Table 6 - Current Turkish Education System**



Source: National Education Statistics – Formal Education 2016-2017

Quality and access to education are important indicators to understand a country’s human, social and economic development level. In order to introduce the educational context, featuring parents’ and adolescents’ aspirations both as a means and as an end, some relevant data will be presented below.

**Table 7 – Teacher and student numbers by type of school and education year in 2012-2017**

Number of schools, teachers, divisions, students and graduates by type of school and educational year (continued)

Okul Türü ve Öğretim Yılı Type of School and Educational Year	Öğretmen <sup>(2)(3)</sup> Teacher <sup>(2)(3)</sup>				Şube Division	Öğrenci Student			Mezun <sup>(2)</sup> Graduate <sup>(2)</sup>		
	Okul <sup>(1)</sup> School <sup>(1)</sup>	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female		Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female
<b>Resmî - Public</b>											
2012/ 13	3 307	99 198	58 048	43 150	77 218	2 587 181	1 324 912	1 262 249	357 094	183 787	193 307
2013/ 14	2 737	95 785	53 807	42 178	75 417	2 785 881	1 411 207	1 354 474	398 145	187 082	209 063
2014/ 15	2 781	99 707	55 275	44 432	70 030	2 738 873	1 403 870	1 335 003	440 927	210 080	230 847
2015/ 16	2 807	101 560	55 848	45 914	84 352	2 874 109	1 377 229	1 298 880	335 277	158 824	176 453
2015/ 17 (Lidönem)	2 944	102 188	54 409	47 779	89 018	2 522 850	1 284 877	1 237 973	-	-	-
2016/ 17	2 979	102 254	54 277	47 977	81 915	2 733 880	1 408 832	1 324 848	-	-	-
<b>Özel - Private</b>											
2012/ 13	907	20 197	9 851	10 346	8 317	138 811	77 021	81 790	31 428	17 747	13 681
2013/ 14	1 007	21 588	10 112	11 458	9 388	140 810	78 830	83 780	33 798	18 710	15 088
2014/ 15	1 174	23 453	11 198	12 255	10 635	184 281	88 983	75 298	37 358	19 855	17 701
2015/ 16	2 504	49 898	25 355	24 543	28 397	373 394	197 355	178 039	138 892	87080	89832
2015/ 17 (Lidönem)	2 208	45 880	20 908	24 774	24 417	389 243	215 380	173 883	-	-	-
2016/ 17	2 248	44 798	20 322	24 478	24 391	402 780	223 497	179 283	-	-	-
<b>Mesleki ve Teknik Ortaöğretim - Vocational and Technical Secondary Education</b>											
2012/ 13	8 204	135 502	78 202	59 300	84 851	2 289 851	1 241 481	1 028 170	339 270	181 142	158 128
2013/ 14	7 211	181 288	87 894	73 394	92 971	2 513 887	1 371 445	1 142 442	428 888	220 938	205 928
2014/ 15	5 108	175 218	93 452	81 788	119 874	2 788 117	1 498 275	1 291 842	471 885	239 038	232 849
2015/ 16	5 239	184 232	98 292	87 940	124 122	2 780 140	1 472 558	1 287 582	515 485	258 888	256 799
2015/ 17 (Lidönem)	5 444	195 888	99 815	96 051	138 843	2 801 838	1 410 377	1 191 281	-	-	-
2016/ 17	5 851	185 988	94 780	91 208	158 350	2 713 530	1 493 893	1 219 837	-	-	-
<b>Resmî - Public</b>											
2012/ 13	8 078	133 321	75 325	57 998	83 748	2 251 797	1 233 374	1 018 423	338 872	180 909	157 963
2013/ 14	6 785	153 816	85 032	68 784	89 803	2 457 834	1 344 941	1 112 893	425 898	220 358	205 540
2014/ 15	4 877	187 558	90 283	77 295	118 484	2 712 227	1 457 732	1 254 495	489 297	237 788	231 509
2015/ 16	4 820	175 828	92 932	82 896	121 171	2 880 923	1 421 844	1 239 079	505 889	254 053	251 818
2015/ 17 (Lidönem)	5 078	188 977	98 483	90 514	134 108	2 490 440	1 349 115	1 141 325	-	-	-
2016/ 17	5 479	178 217	91 971	86 248	152 459	2 801 810	1 432 097	1 189 713	-	-	-
<b>Özel - Private</b>											
2012/ 13	128	2 181	877	1 304	903	17 854	8 107	9 747	398	233	165
2013/ 14	428	7 472	2 882	4 810	3 188	58 053	28 504	29 549	988	580	388
2014/ 15	429	7 880	3 189	4 471	3 190	75 890	38 543	37 347	2 588	1 248	1 340
2015/ 16	419	8 804	3 380	5 244	2 951	99 217	50 714	48 503	9 798	4 813	5 183
2015/ 17 (Lidönem)	388	8 889	3 152	5 537	2 735	111 198	61 282	49 938	-	-	-
2016/ 17	372	7 771	2 809	4 982	5 891	111 720	61 598	50 124	-	-	-

Source: National Education Statistics – Formal Education 2016-2017

**Table 8 – Budget of Ministry of National Education**

Ödenek türü Type of Appropriation	2016 Yılı Bütçesi Budget of year 2016	2017 Yılı Bütçesi Budget of year 2017	2017 Yılı'nın 2016 Yılına göre Arz oranı Increase ratio of 2017 as compared with 2016
	(TL)	(TL)	(%)
<b>Toplam - Total</b>	<b>76 354 306 000</b>	<b>85 048 584 000</b>	<b>11,39</b>
<b>01 Personel giderleri</b> Personnel expenditures	<b>52 735 625 000</b>	<b>58 552 662 000</b>	<b>11,03</b>
<b>02 Sos.Güv.Kur.Dev.Plr.giderleri</b> Insurance premium expenditures	<b>8 109 878 000</b>	<b>8 926 306 000</b>	<b>10,07</b>
<b>03 Mal ve Hiz.Alım giderleri</b> Goods and Services Purchasing Expenditures	<b>7 036 578 000</b>	<b>8 106 505 000</b>	<b>15,21</b>
<b>05 Cari transferler</b> Current transferals	<b>2 049 064 000</b>	<b>2 202 960 000</b>	<b>7,51</b>
<b>06 Sermaye Giderleri</b> Capital Expenditures	<b>6 284 628 000</b>	<b>7 237 121 000</b>	<b>15,16</b>
<b>07 Sermaye transferleri</b> Capital transferals	<b>138 533 000</b>	<b>23 030 000</b>	<b>-83,38</b>

Source: National Education Statistics – Formal Education 2016-2017

Above chart only shows the budget allocated to Ministry of National Education of Turkey as compared to Turkey's GDP. Additionally, OECD figures show that Turkey is ranked as the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest among the OECD countries in terms of the share of public spending in GDP with 8,6% in 2010 for from primary to tertiary education. Public spending on education is an important indicator for development as it shows how much the government prioritizes investment in human capital.

**Table 9 – Schooling Ratio by Educational Year and Level of Education**

Öğretim Yılı Educational Year	Yaş -Age	Okul Öncesi Pre Primary Education			Okulya Oran Schooling Ratio	İlköğretim Primary Education			Ortaöğretim Secondary Education			Yükseköğretim Higher Education		
		Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female		Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female
		1997/98	3-5 Yaş	-		-	-	Brüt - Gross	89,51	96,26	82,43	52,79	60,20	44,97
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	84,74	90,25	78,97	37,87	41,39	34,16	10,25	11,28	9,17
1998/99	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	94,31	100,72	87,60	57,15	64,89	48,99	21,67	25,47	17,68
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	89,26	94,48	83,79	38,87	42,34	35,22	10,76	11,81	9,67
1999/00	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	97,52	103,31	91,47	58,84	67,10	50,15	21,05	24,55	17,42
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	93,54	98,41	86,45	40,38	44,05	36,52	11,62	12,68	10,52
2000/01	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	100,93	106,32	95,31	60,97	69,67	51,84	22,25	25,55	18,79
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	95,28	99,58	90,79	43,95	48,49	39,18	12,27	13,12	11,38
2001/02	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	99,45	104,19	94,51	67,89	76,94	58,38	23,37	26,59	19,99
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	92,40	96,20	88,45	48,11	53,01	42,97	12,98	13,75	12,17
2002/03	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	96,49	100,89	91,91	80,76	93,36	67,52	27,12	31,00	23,04
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	90,98	94,49	87,34	50,57	55,72	45,16	14,65	15,73	13,53
2003/04	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	96,30	100,31	92,14	80,97	90,71	70,76	28,15	32,23	23,88
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	90,21	93,41	86,89	53,37	58,01	48,50	15,31	16,62	13,93
2004/05	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	95,74	99,48	91,85	80,90	90,29	71,08	30,61	34,79	26,63
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	89,66	92,58	86,63	54,87	59,05	50,51	16,60	18,03	15,10
2005/06	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	95,69	98,83	92,24	85,18	95,07	74,88	34,46	38,78	29,94
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	89,77	92,29	87,16	56,63	61,13	51,95	18,85	20,22	17,41
2006/07	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	96,34	99,21	93,37	86,64	96,24	76,66	36,59	41,07	31,89
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	90,13	92,25	87,93	58,51	60,71	52,16	20,14	21,56	18,66
2007/08	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	104,54	106,41	102,57	87,55	94,04	80,70	38,19	42,62	33,56
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	97,37	98,53	96,14	58,56	61,17	55,81	21,06	22,37	19,69
2008/09	3-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Brüt - Gross	103,84	104,91	102,71	76,62	80,96	72,05	44,27	49,05	39,28
	4-5 Yaş	-	-	-	Net - Net	96,49	96,99	95,97	59,52	60,63	56,30	27,69	29,40	25,92
2009/10	3-5 Yaş	26,92	27,34	26,48	Brüt - Gross	106,48	107,05	105,88	84,19	89,14	78,97	53,43	58,14	48,48
	4-5 Yaş	38,55	39,17	37,91	Net - Net	98,17	98,47	97,84	64,95	67,55	62,21	30,42	31,24	29,55
2010/11	3-5 Yaş	29,85	30,25	29,43	Brüt - Gross	107,58	107,36	107,81	89,70	94,42	84,73	58,45	62,65	54,04
	4-5 Yaş	43,10	43,70	42,47	Net - Net	98,41	98,59	98,22	66,07	68,17	63,86	33,06	33,44	32,65
2011/12	3-5 Yaş	30,87	31,23	30,49	Brüt - Gross	108,42	108,21	108,65	92,56	95,68	89,26	66,23	70,58	61,68
	4-5 Yaş	44,04	44,56	43,50	Net - Net	98,67	98,77	98,56	67,37	68,53	66,14	35,51	35,59	35,42
	5 Yaş	65,69	66,20	65,16										



**Table 10 – Schooling Ratio by Educational Year and Level of Education (cont'd)**

Öğretim Yılı Educational Year	Okullaşma Oranları Schooling Ratio	Yaş -Age	Okul Öncesi Pre Primary Education			İlkokul Primary School			Ortaokul Lower Secondary School			Üniversite Upper Secondary Education			Yükseköğretim Higher Education		
			Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female	Toplam Total	Erkek Male	Kadın Female
			Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık	Yaklaşık
2012/13	Brüt - Gross	3-5 Yaş	30,93	31,42	30,41	107,52	107,21	107,84	107,54	106,12	109,24	96,77	99,60	93,77	74,86	79,51	70,01
	Net - Net		26,63	26,94	26,31	98,86	98,81	98,92	93,09	93,19	92,98	70,06	70,77	69,31	38,50	38,40	38,61
	Brüt - Gross	4-5 Yaş	44,04	44,86	43,18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		37,36	37,88	36,80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2013/14	Brüt - Gross	3-5 Yaş	55,35	57,34	53,24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		39,72	41,03	38,33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Brüt - Gross	4-5 Yaş	28,03	28,61	27,42	111,94	111,49	112,41	108,80	106,89	110,83	103,26	106,05	100,32	81,70	86,24	76,96
	Net - Net		27,71	28,23	27,15	99,57	99,53	99,61	94,52	94,57	94,47	76,65	77,22	76,05	39,89	38,90	40,93
2014/15	Brüt - Gross	3-5 Yaş	37,94	38,84	36,98	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		37,46	38,28	36,58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Brüt - Gross	4-5 Yaş	43,49	45,38	41,49	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		42,54	44,27	40,72	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2015/16	Brüt - Gross	3-5 Yaş	37,12	37,96	36,24	101,10	100,82	101,39	107,12	105,52	108,80	107,36	109,82	104,77	88,94	93,44	84,24
	Net - Net		32,68	33,11	32,22	96,30	96,04	96,57	94,35	94,39	94,30	79,37	79,46	79,26	37,95	37,95	41,10
	Brüt - Gross	4-5 Yaş	46,83	47,88	45,72	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		41,57	42,23	40,87	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2016/17	Brüt - Gross	3-5 Yaş	66,02	68,42	63,48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		53,78	55,27	52,21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Brüt - Gross	4-5 Yaş	38,61	39,40	37,78	99,19	98,91	99,48	107,13	105,49	108,87	109,85	112,28	107,29	-	-	-
	Net - Net		33,26	33,63	32,87	94,87	94,54	95,22	94,39	94,36	94,43	79,79	79,36	80,24	-	-	-
2017/18	Brüt - Gross	3-5 Yaş	49,27	50,20	48,30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		42,96	43,53	42,36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Brüt - Gross	4-5 Yaş	70,19	72,28	67,59	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Net - Net		55,48	56,74	54,16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Not 1. 18.08.1997 tarihli ve 4308 sayılı Kanun ile 1997/98 öğretim yılından itibaren 8 yıllık kesintisiz, 30.03.2012 tarihli ve 6287 sayılı Kanun ile 2012/13 öğretim yılından itibaren de 12 yıllık kesintisiz zorunlu eğitime geçilmiştir.

2. 2000/01-2005/06 öğretim yılları arasında okullaşma oranları 2000 Genel Nüfus Sayımı sonuçlarına göre yapılan nüfus projeksiyonlarına göre, 2007-2008 öğretim yılından itibaren okullaşma oranları Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi, Nüfus Sayımı sonuçlarına göre hesaplanmıştır.

Note 1. Compulsory education was expanded to 8 uninterrupted with law No. 4308 dated 18.08.1997 as of 1997/98 educational year, and to 12 grades year with law No. 6287 dated 30.03.2012 as of 2012/13 educational year.

2. Schooling ratios for the educational year 2000/01-2005/06 were calculated according to the population projection based on the results of General Population Census 2000 and schooling ratios as of the 2007-2008 educational year were calculated according to the results of the Address-based Population Register System Population Census.

Source: National Education Statistics – Formal Education 2015-2016

Tan and Somel (2005) was arguing that the gender inequality was being reinforced through support mechanisms for education. Their analysis on the number of boys and girls benefitting from these support mechanisms show that less girls benefit from the bursaries, free dormitories or bussed education than boys which quite contrary to the rhetoric of equality of opportunities among girls and boys. They highlight that the current regulations are based on male norms and it is expected to see equality in consequence of the legal arrangements made on the existing structure and suggest to put measures that would mainstream gender equality in all steps of the education system.

**Table 11 – Sex Ratio<sup>5</sup> by Educational Year and Level of Education**

( % )				
Cinsiyet Oranı <sup>(1)</sup> - Sex Ratio <sup>(1)</sup>				
Öğretim yılı Educational year	İlköğretim <sup>(2)</sup> Primary Education <sup>(2)</sup>	Ortaöğretim Secondary Education	Yükseköğretim Higher Education	
1997/98	85,63	74,70	69,58	
1998/99	86,97	75,60	69,44	
1999/00	88,54	74,74	70,96	
2000/01	89,64	74,41	73,56	
2001/02	90,71	75,87	75,17	
2002/03	91,10	72,32	74,33	
2003/04	91,86	78,01	74,09	
2004/05	92,33	78,72	74,66	
2005/06	93,33	78,76	77,20	
2006/07	94,11	79,65	77,65	
2007/08	96,39	85,81	78,74	
2008/09	97,91	88,99	80,08	
2009/10	98,91	88,59	83,38	
2010/11	100,42	89,74	86,24	
2011/12	100,41	93,29	87,38	

Cinsiyet Oranı <sup>(1)</sup> - Sex Ratio <sup>(1)</sup>				
Öğretim yılı Educational year	İlkokul Primary School	Ortaokul Lower Secondary School	Ortaöğretim Upper Secondary Education	Yükseköğretim Higher Education
2012/13	100,59	102,94	94,15	88,05
2013/14	100,82	103,69	94,59	89,24
2014/15	100,57	101,10	95,40	90,15
2015/16	100,57	103,20	95,56	-

(1) Cinsiyet oranı tanımını için açıklamalar bölümüne bakınız. (1) See the explanations for the definition of sex ratio.

(2) 18.08.1997 tarihli ve 4306 sayılı Kanun ile 1997/98 öğretim yılından itibaren 8 yıllık kesintisiz, 30.03.2012 tarihli ve 6287 sayılı Kanun ile 2012/13 öğretim yılından itibaren de 12 yıllık kademeli zorunlu eğitime geçilmiştir. (2) Compulsory education was expanded to 8 uninterrupted with law No. 4306 dated 18.08.1997 as of 1997/98 educational year, but to 12 gradual years with law No. 6287 dated 30.03.2012 as of 2012/13 educational year.

Source: National Education Statistics – Formal Education 2015-2016

### 3.5. Adolescents' Profile in Turkey

Adolescence is a significant period, when dynamics between autonomy and relatedness are being shaped. For the development of the self, autonomy from the family is encouraged during adolescence especially in the individualistic cultures such as European or North American. In the conservative societies, Turkey being considered as one of them, autonomy of children, and/or, adolescence can be perceived as a threat to the family as the livelihood depends also depends on children. This becomes less of a concern as the countries become more urbanized, during which the reliance on children decreases. However, in such contexts,

<sup>5</sup> Student Sex Ratio indicates the relative greatness of female gross schooling ratio as compared to male gross schooling ratio in a specific educational year and level of education. It is obtained by dividing the female gross schooling ratio by the male gross schooling ratio multiplied 100.

psychological interdependence are still valued (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Psychological interdependence family type, as Kağıtçıbaşı (2005) calls, allows the autonomy and relatedness coexist. This type of family facilitates the development of autonomous-related self that proved to foster adolescent adjustment. She has found that this type of family can be observed more among the high SES urban families in Turkey.

A Situation Analysis conducted on the Adolescence and Their Spiritual Problems underlines that adolescence is the most intense period for identity crisis; however, the same study reveals that adolescents in Turkey are following a healthy path to separate from their families and get individualized. For adolescents, the most important values are family, love and honesty, whereas the least important values are traditions. The key to be successful in the future is to be hard-working, well-educated and being honest and what they expect from the future is to have an occupation and earn money (Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, 2004).

A more recent study on the profile of adolescents published by the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policy is conducted on a representative sample with adolescents, whose average age is 14,97. 97,5% of the students, who were interviewed are attending or have attended public schools. 5% of them are working (including looking for a job) and studying at the same time (MoFSP, 2013). The findings of this research suggest that two-thirds of the adolescents has computers at home and more than 80% of those who has computer at home has regular internet, which is used for social media, to a great extent, games, music and internet surfing. Over 80% of the adolescents identify themselves happy and have normal self-esteem rate based on Rosenberg scale<sup>6</sup>. They spend most of their free time with their parents, followed with friends from school and from their neighborhood. They believe that their families expect them to study well, with a rate of 83%, followed by keeping their rooms organized, with a rate of 17%, and helping with household chores, with a rate of 14% (MoFSP, 2013).

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<sup>6</sup> Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is believed to be uni-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Adolescents' has a positive approach towards their lives and think that they will be able to achieve their aspirations. Their life expectations are mostly shaped by occupational expectations, followed by familial ones (MoFSP, 2013). Similar findings were echoed by the research conducted by Erdoğan (2017), among 1200 young people across Turkey on a stratified random sampling, that 71% of the research participants were hopeful for their futures, which was heavily connected to their satisfaction of life at the moment.

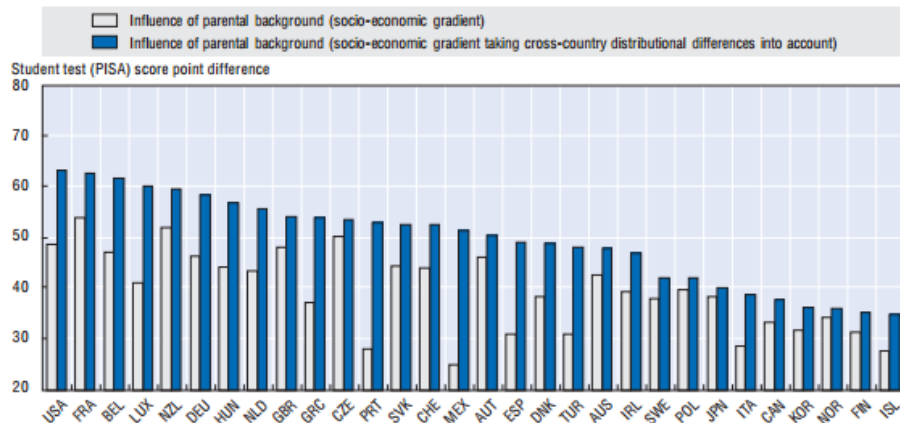
### **3.6.Relevant Studies in Turkey**

Within this context, some studies by several academics and state institutions were conducted in Turkey that contributes to this dissertation. Reviewing these former studies help to determine the key gaps in the literature and to play a complementary role, while setting the stage and familiarizing the researcher and the readers with the context, where the research takes place.

No research is available in Turkey in the exact topic of this dissertation, which is also partly the reason why this dissertation was written. However, several studies are available on social mobility, the role of education on children's lives and aspirations and expectations of the Turkish society. These studies, when combined with the context presented in earlier sections, prepares the background for this particular study.

Studies on social mobility in Turkey have a focus on educational attainment across generations relying on quantitative data. OECD report (2010) underlines that countries, including Turkey, with large inequalities in socio-economic background result in large educational persistence across generations. As the table below shows, educational attainment changes significantly when socio-economic background takes cross-country distribution into account.

**Table 12 - The influence of parental background on student achievement in secondary education**



1. Socio-economic gradient: change in PISA science score due to an improvement of one international standard deviation in the PISA index of student socio-economic background. Socio-economic gradient taking cross-country distributional differences into account: change in PISA science score due to an improvement of one country-specific, inter-quartile change in the PISA index of student socio-economic background. In countries where the difference in socio-economic background across students is particularly large (e.g. Italy, Portugal and Mexico) the gap between the socio-economic gradients with and without account for cross-country distributional differences is comparatively wide. The PISA test score scale has a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100 test-score points. For details, see Causa and Chapuis (2009).  
 Source: OECD calculations based on the 2006 OECD PISA Database.

A re-analysis of OECD findings conducted by Turkish Economic Policies Research Foundations (Aslankurt, 2013) has found out that Turkey remained in the lower ranks in educational mobility compared to other OECD countries. It was underlined that 66% of the children maintained the same level of educational attainment with their parents, 91% of which do not have high school diploma pointing out that children of parents with low educational attainment are destined to have lower levels of schooling.

Tansel (2015) and Buyruk (2008) have findings also supporting these conclusions that socio-economic status plays a critical role in shaping the educational trajectory of one's life starting from pre-school years and has domino effect towards the other periods. Tansel (2015) underlines that children's and their parents' educational outcomes are strongly correlated and attaining a university increase once the father's schooling level increases. This link is even stronger when the parental educational background is poor. Duman (2010) finds out, based on his analysis from Household Income and Expenditure Survey data from 2004, is that both boys' and girls' education is related to parental education. Mother's education is particularly important for girls' education. Other than the parental education, he found out that

higher income per head brings more years of schooling. The disparity in urban versus rural is significant in terms of educational attainment especially for the girls as schooling opportunities are scarcer in rural areas fueling families' willingness to keep their children at home, especially when home to school distance is big. In addition, Buyruk (2008) finds out in his master thesis that students from different socio-economic backgrounds have chosen pathways to higher education or working life linked with their background. He discovered that students from high socio-economic background have tendency to continue with higher education in reputable institutions, while students from low income tend to quit education as early as possible and get started with working life.

Interested in the impact of the social capital in the likelihood of drop-out of children who are exposed to social inequalities such as socio-economic status, gender and race, Cemalcilar and Gökşen (2014) find out that children with closer relations with teachers tend to stay more at school. Teachers can act as institutional agents to redistribute the resources for counter-stratification. Parents' involvement has also showed promising positive effects for staying longer at school signaling the potential utility of school based parenting programmes to increase educational outcomes in Turkey. The research also finds out that girls get more positively affected by the interventions of social capital, by teachers or parents, than boys. However, at the end, despite all these, Cemalcilar and Gökşen's (2014) research reveal that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have very limited access to social capital confirming that social capital is embedded in gender and social inequalities.

Based on the research conducted by HSBC in 2014 among more than 300 families, for which the details of the sampling is unknown, in Turkey, more than 75% of the families think that children's education is the best area for investment and allocate 42% of their resources for their children's education.

In addition to these findings on the link between socio-economic status and educational attainment, Torun's (2016) findings has highlighted that the ascribed characteristics such as material conditions, gender, ethnic origin or social network

born in are still more important to determine the positions in the society than the achieved elements such as degrees or positions at work in opposite to what was suggested by the functionalist stream.

Looking closely in the education system in Turkey, from a gender equality perspective, Sayılan and Özkazanç (2009) underline that the education system in Turkey was heavily affected by the neo-liberal politics and turned schools into public places where conservative ideas, mainstream authoritarian patterns and gender insensitive teachings are taught reproducing inequalities. On the other hand, with the rise of the feminist movements underlining the discourse on women's empowerment, more and more girls started to rely on education as a means to empower them to stand on their own feet.

Despite the fact that these studies portrays beneficial data for social mobility in Turkey, they fail to incorporate other, such as psycho-social indicators influencing social mobility such as aspirations and the perceived capacity of agency. On this front, few other studies are available on children's and adolescents aspirations as well as their life expectations.

The study is conducted by MoFSP mentioned earlier on adolescents in Turkish society also reveals data on adolescents' occupational aspirations. The below figure shows what adolescents' aspirations are, based on their socio-economic status divided into five categories.

**Table 13 - % of Occupational Aspirations of Adolescents (based on the SES)**

	<b>High SES</b>	<b>Upper-middle SES</b>	<b>Middle SES</b>	<b>Lower Middle SES</b>	<b>Low SES</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	9,4	13,3	13,8	18,9	26,9	17,6
<b>Doctor</b>	23,8	18,9	18,1	15,5	19,9	17,5
<b>Engineer</b>	16,7	19,0	15,4	12,3	5,0	13,0
<b>Police</b>	4,6	6,5	9,4	12,6	12,1	10,7
<b>Lawyer</b>	13,8	11,2	6,6	6,8	5,6	7,4
<b>Soccer player</b>	2,6	2,3	4,6	3,4	3,6	3,6
<b>Civil servant</b>	2,1	1,5	3,7	4,0	2,0	3,3
<b>Army personnel</b>	2,6	2,3	4,4	2,6	2,0	3,0
<b>Shopkeeper</b>	1,6	1,3	2,2	2,6	1,3	2,1
<b>Politician</b>	2,6	2,8	2,4	0,7	0,0	1,4
<b>Artist</b>	3,2	1,9	0,8	0,8	0,4	1,0

*Source: Research on the Adolescent Profile of Turkey, MoFSP, 2013*

Other smaller scale studies are concentrating either on the children who are working, thus, from low socio-economic background, or focusing in Southeast of Turkey, the least developed region in Turkey. For example, Sisman (2006) has found, in his study conducted among the children working the street in Eskisehir, which is province situated in central Anatolia with a sample of 200 children, whose ages vary between 6 and 13, that over 60% of these children aspire to get professional occupations such as police, pharmacist, lawyer or medical doctor, requiring a significant level of education. Majority of the interviewed children already lack this level of education because they already miss out from school due to their working conditions. Sisman (2006) also underlines that 1% of children in his study expressed that they would like to become rich without working and 0.5% has expressed to become unemployed, most probably because of the tiredness of their experiences in their current situation.

Ikizoglu et al (2007) has found out, in their study conducted in a vocational training center in an industry zone in Ankara with a sample of 125 boys, whose ages vary



between 14 and 18, that good working conditions and satisfactory income has positive implications on the hopelessness scale that the study has used. They found that children expressed better hopes related to their future as they were satisfied with their conditions and pay.

Simsek (2012) has conducted a study in nine provinces in Southeast of Turkey, the least developed region of Turkey. The study was conducted with more than a thousand children from more than 50 high schools. The findings revealed that there are no significant differences in occupational aspirations in terms of gender, high school type, CGPA, level of mothers' education, fathers' occupation, family income level, the number of siblings, receiving pre-school education, and language spoken at home but differed in terms of city, where students being taught, grade level, corporal punishment, and tendency toward being a dropout. For example, children which no disciplinary measures at school had higher expectations compared to their peers with one or two disciplinary measures. More importantly, the study has found that high school students were more optimistic about their own personal, educational and occupational future but less optimistic about the economic, social and educational future of the society signaling the recognition of the difficulties to change the structural obstacles in a society.

### **3.7.Chapter Summary**

This chapter has introduced the context of Turkey at the time that this dissertation is written from 2015 to 2017. It provided background information of the influential political economy, socio-economic indicators, including those related to economic growth, employment, unemployment and human development. Then, it has introduced the education system in Turkey with a view to help the readers to understand the research methodology, to be presented in the next chapter, and to portray the basics of the education sector in Turkey. The chapter has also presented the official statistics about adolescent's' profile and reviewed the available literature on similar and relevant subject.

Turkey is a high middle income country, economically growing substantially since the last decade but with relatively high rates of youth unemployment and NEET

compared to other countries with similar economic standing. In relation to its economic standing, Turkey's human development is not matching with its economic standing and rankings in the worlds. HDI index shows downward trend when the inequalities across the country is applied.

Education is recognized as a right of all children as per the Turkish constitution. The system operating to realize this right, relies on several laws. As a result of the recent reforms and revisions in these laws, the current education system in Turkey which has 12 years compulsory schooling divided as 4+4+4. At the end of the 8th grade, students sit in a central exam, conducted by the state institutions, to be placed in the high school they prefer such as regular high schools, Anadolu high schools (higher ranked high schools), vocational schools, fine art high schools or open high schools. Schooling rates have risen significantly in recent years with almost 100% in primary schools and slightly over 70% in secondary education.

There is not much data available in Turkey with regards to the prospects of social mobility as the available research on this topic is very limited and mainly focuses on educational attainment across generations mostly with a quantitative methodology. This data shows that educational attainment of children is higher among the well-educated parents, similar to the findings in other researches in other countries. When asked about their aspirations, adolescents focus primarily on occupational aspirations followed by familial ones. Being a teacher, doctor and engineer are the most aspired occupations by adolescents from various backgrounds. They have positive perspectives towards life believing that they will be able to achieve their aspirations.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1. Introduction

This dissertation is a product of my interest in stratification and inequalities in the Turkish society and an attempt to provide an explanation from adolescents' perspective. I was born and grew up in a well-off family, which will be defined as a high socio-economic status according to the definitions I used in this dissertation. My father passed away when I was at the age of three, which changed our family's access to economic capital. My mother adopted, while raising me and my sister, a strategy to invest in our cultural capital to maintain our position in the social space. I have attended top ranked state schools in Turkey until I finished the university. I was highly encouraged to have master's degree from abroad so that I can compete in the labor market. Following the completion of master's degree abroad, I found a job that was satisfying mine and my mother's expectations. My mother's plan for my future came true. Since I started working, I have been working on the inequalities among children, which contributed to my interest in this topic in my academic life. I always had high ambitions with regards to my future and knew that my mother would do anything to support me morally and financially to realize my aspirations.

Then, I became curious to look at the society at large and wanted to provide an explanation how adolescents see their future with regards to their social standing and how they evaluate the capacity of their own agency vis-a-vis the objective structures. This dissertation is an attempt to understand the encounter between the structure and the agency on the basis of adolescents' aspirations for social mobility to contribute to the question whether aspirations and the perceived capacity of

agency, starting from early ages, can be a factor for the social standings later in life, which may affect the social stratification and inequalities.

In order to do this, I have conducted a research among the adolescents, boys and girls, from different socio-economic status in Ankara. This dissertation embraced a qualitative approach towards adolescents' aspirations and their capacity of agency to analyze the upwards or downwards movements in the social space. It does not aim to calculate a probability of moving upwards and downwards through the course of life as in the case of many social mobility research. Instead, it aims to provide a deeper understanding on the interplay between capacity of agency and objective structures behind formulation and realization of aspirations. It tries to see how adolescents set their goals and aspirations and how they evaluate the likelihood of their realization in a structure where objective structures may clash with the agencies.

This is a longitudinal panel research that has taken place among the same group of adolescents over a course of time. The first phase of the research has taken place in 2015, while the second phase took place in 2016 with the same group of adolescents in order to analyse how their aspirations and perceptions with regards to the objective structures has changed when faced with a structural obstacle, an directly and individually experienced event, namely the *TEOG* examination.

This chapter introduces conceptualization and operationalization of the research. First, it presents the basic concepts that are significant for this dissertation, the research objective and questions, the research methodology including the approach adopted, research design, planning process, data collection methods, research process and ethical considerations while conducting a research with individuals under age.

## 4.2. Conceptualization of the Research Question

The following concepts are used to define the research question:

*Adolescents*<sup>7</sup>: Adolescence is a transitional period in between childhood and adulthood, where physical, cognitive and emotional maturity takes place in preparation to adulthood. Adolescence have certain developmental tasks to accomplish at this stage to have a healthy transition. This includes adopting their gender identities and social roles, forming mature relationships with their peers from other genders, adapting to their physical developments, developing emotional independency from the authoritative figures and developing an identity for themselves while deciding on their occupational aspirations and social responsibilities. These tasks may create some challenges for the adolescents such as stress, anger, indeterminacy, introversion, clashes with the authority and anxiety with regards to future. It is a stage, where fantasizing for the future is extreme (Aysev, 2012 and Cuhadaroglu, 1986).

*Socio-economic status*: Socio-economic status (SES) refers to the position in the social space based on the social and economic characteristics and possessions of an individual. Kalaycioglu et al (2010) has highlighted that socio-economic status in Turkey relies on; i) occupation; ii) education; iii) income; iv) assets. Then, the socio-economic of an individual is higher as the possession of these elements increase. In this dissertation, adolescents' SES was categorized based on their parents' SES due to their dependency on their parents. To be more specific, monthly income, educational status, occupational status and belongings/assets was used to verify adolescents' SES, whose sampling, which will be further be discussed in the 'sampling' section, was designed based on a previous research categorizing Ankara with regards to SES based on neighbourhoods. In addition to these primary criteria, number of siblings in a family, adolescents' own working status, opportunities for free time are important indicators contributing to the understanding of socioeconomic status.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Adolescents' and 'children' have been used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. In legal terms, adolescents refer to a specific sub-group of children, based on their age.

*Capacity of agency:* Capacity of agency refers to the capacity of individuals against the objective structures through their personal characteristics and skills. The approach this dissertation adopts recognizes individuals with capacity to shape the objective structures. Vis-a-vis the paradigms with regards to the agency of children, which is often under-recognized compared to the capacity of adults, this dissertation admits that children are active agents contributing to the society and creating their peer culture, while recognizing the challenges such as structural obstacles that children faces in this process of reproduction. This approach is the best fit for this dissertation for placing children's perceptions in the center of research while comparing them from different socio-economic statuses.

*Aspirations:* Aspirations refer to the wishes or desires that one individual has for short or long run. Aspirations are different than expectations. Aspirations are idealistic hopes for future achievements, and expectations are realistic outcomes that one may expect from the future. This difference is critical in interpreting the existence and influence of the objective structures in a life course. Even though children may explain overambitious aspirations towards their future, they might emphasize what their real expectations are among these aspirations, which will help to understand how much emphasis they place to their capacity of agency and see structure as an obstacle.

### **4.3. Research Objective and Question**

The objective of this dissertation is to study the encounter between the structure and the agency on on the basis of aspirations for social mobility with a view to analyze social mobility from a different perspective in order to contribute to the social mobility literature.

This research also aims to provide an interpretation on the social mobility through the eyes of adolescents by placing them at the center of the dissertation.

The main question of this research is how structure and agency encounters on the basis of aspirations for social mobility. In order words, what are the dynamics

between structure and agency from adolescents' perspective in order to realize their aspirations for their future? In order to get there, sub-questions are asked:

- What do the adolescents from different socio-economic status aspire?
- What do the adolescents from different socio-economic status think vis-a-vis the role of structure and agency for realizing their aspirations?
- How does the aspirations and the perception on agency vs structure dynamics change when faced with a structural obstacle?

This dissertation adheres a life-course approach bringing “greater appreciation of temporality, process and contextual change to the study of people’s lives” (Elder and Giele, 2009, p.2). This approach underlines the need to investigate many types of individuals that have different experiences in the past in different situations.

Such an approach helps to obtain a lens that would analyze the agency and the structure dilemma and social mobility based on the individual stories, including individualized experiences in specific contexts and histories. Life course approach provides an understanding of the historical and geographical context, social ties to others, and the influence of human agency and timing of events. Historical and geographical context refers to the different positions of people in the social structure depending on when and where they are born. Different cohort has different specificities with a different range of life opportunities depending also on geographic location. Social ties refer to role change and relationship based approach emphasizing the role of significant others in socialization. Thirdly, human agency is the process of which individuals select themselves into roles and situations. Within the constraints, they form their own lives. Timing parameter indicates the timing of the occurrence of an event in one individual’s life (Elder and Giele, 2009).

#### **4.4. Research Design**

Thorne (1987) and Gillespie (2012) highlights that there is a need to place children in the center of inquiry in an era when they become the responsible agent for moving in the social space to elucidate how they see the social reality and can become part

of the social change. So far, children's experiences and agency have been obscured by adult standpoints. Thus, they are filtered by adults.

As much as feminists underlined "women's active presence and consciousness in the world, where agency rendered invisible in male centered knowledge", a re-visioning for children as well, to set their knowledge free from adult standpoints, is required (Thorne, 1987, p.98-99).

Considering the fact that all studies about children were done by adults, there is a possibility that experiences and forms of agency were suppressed by dominant adult ideologies. Instead of taking them as containers of socialization, granting children agency, seeking to understand the complexity of their experiences, while acknowledging the social structures, will help our knowledge to be re-centered (Thorne, 1987). This is what this dissertation aims.

Children and their experiences are most studied to understand how socialization occurs. This approach; however, comes with its limitation by taking children as passive agents sponging in the social values. While recent scholars became less deterministic, as outlined in the theory chapter, the requirement is there to find different ways to understand how children influence adults and the society at large. This research is designed to ensure that the findings are represented from adolescents' perspectives.

A longitudinal methodology was adapted. Longitudinal researches allow examination of features of people more than one time. It is a research design used to see changes over time. The group of research participants are followed and assessed at multiple points of time (McKinlay, 2011 and Neuman, 2000). A panel study was applied tracking the 40 adolescents, who were interviewed at initial stage in 2015, were re-interviewed in 2016 to see the change over the course of one year, during which adolescents are required to sit in an exam to be placed in secondary schooling (TEOG). Despite the fact that the time span of the research is short, it provides valuable data for comparison as this duration encompasses an important milestone in adolescents' lives.



In-depth interviews and focus group discussions have provided a wide range and in-depth information about adolescents' perceptions on the encounter between the agency and structure for realizing their aspirations. However, it should, no matter what, be noted that the data provided by adolescents might have been influenced as they were part of the research, which is a common limitation for a research, which includes direct interaction with the research participants.

#### ***4.4.1. Sampling***

Since representativeness was not sought in the research design, nonprobability sampling was followed throughout the research. Adolescents to be interviewed were selected randomly from the pre-determined schools and pre-determined grades in order to serve the purposes of the research.

The research was conducted in Ankara, the capital of Turkey. Ankara is second biggest city in Turkey following Istanbul and has a population over 5 million. Its population density is much higher than the Turkey average. The population density value is 206 for Ankara, whereas it is 100 for Turkey's average. Ankara is 15<sup>th</sup> highest city that receives migration with a rate 6.5 in one thousand (TURKSTAT, 2013). With these characteristics, Ankara is a suitable research site where a good variety of research participants can be found.

Within Ankara, there are 1430 neighborhoods, among which the socio-economic status varies to a great extent. The neighborhoods, where research took place is identified based on the research conducted by Yüceşahin and Tuysuz (2011) on the urban socio-spatial differentiation in Ankara. The above mentioned study on Ankara's socio-spatial differentiation provides information on various neighborhoods of Ankara by analyzing demographic, social, economic and morphologic variables. As a result, the research categorizes neighborhoods across Ankara in six clusters. The first cluster includes most 'developed' neighborhoods with two-three member households, houses with 5 or more rooms, owned by the occupants, high-school or university graduates with technical or managerial occupations. The second cluster shows similarities with the first block with slightly lower averages of the same variables mentioned above, but higher averages for

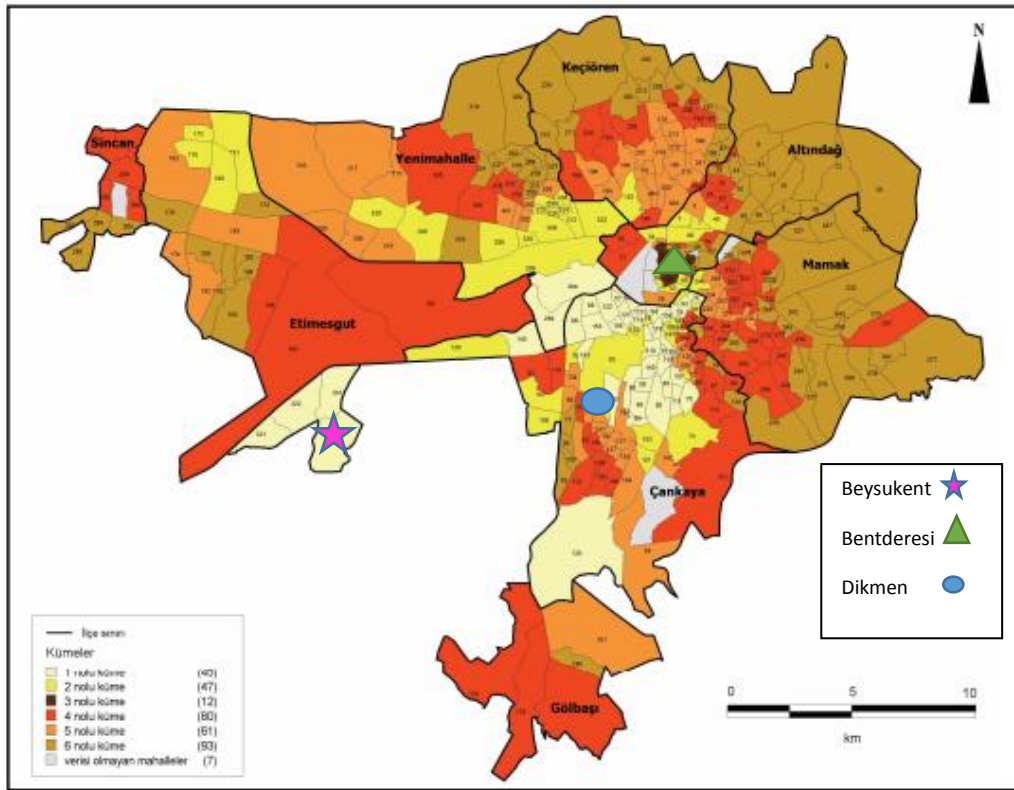
people not owning the house they live in and for people born in central and eastern Anatolia. It is the block with the highest number of administrative personnel. The third cluster represents the least developed neighborhoods of Ankara with highest number of illiterate or primary school graduates living in one to two room houses with six to seven members of the family as tenants and using coal stove as means of heating. It represents the region with highest number of unemployed. Fourth block has highest number of people working in service sector with high numbers of crowded households living in two to three bedroom apartments as tenants. This cluster is a transit between fifth and sixth cluster. The fifth cluster has high levels of household with four members living in four bedroom apartments as the owners of their houses. People employed in service sector has low averages. The sixth cluster represents highest numbers of households with five members working in manufacturing sector. The averages in this cluster is similar to the averages of third cluster with high numbers of illiterates and primary school graduates, living as tenants and heating with coal stoves.

Based on this mapping of Ankara, three neighborhoods were selected to conduct the field research for the dissertation. As indicated above, the clustering exercise conducted by Yüceşahin and Tuysuz (2011) has included social and economic indicators, majority of which coinciding with the socio-economic status indicators being used for this research as described under section 4.2. Three neighborhoods, where the indicators show the closest similarity in terms of socio-economic status, were identified as research zones. Accordingly, research was conducted in *Beysukent* (cluster 1) representing high socio-economic status; in *Bentderesi* (cluster 6) representing low socio-economic status; and in *Dikmen* (cluster 5) representing middle socio-economic status<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Kesgin (2016), departing from the earlier analysis on middle class in Turkey by Karpaz (2002), İnalçık (2006) and Mardin (2013), explains the heterogeneity among the middle class in Turkey. The middle class in Turkey has started to compose among the public officials and bureaucrats following the reforms during Tanzimat period in late 1800s, who later, towards mid-1900s turned their face, to western liberal values. While this group of educated professionals took the lead in terms of setting the values among the Turkish class, the middle class then, starting from the second half of 1900s, included artisans, small business community and local opinion leaders, as the result of economic growth and liberal economic reforms (Kesgin, 2016). This resulted in constant clash, which is still

**Table 14 – Socio-spatial Differentiation in Ankara and the Research Sites**



*Source: Yüceşahin and Tuysuz, 2011*

In these selected neighborhoods, three state schools, one from each, is identified in consultation with the officials from MONE considering the size, availability and convenience to conduct a research of this type. As a result of this consultations,

valid in today's Turkey, between seculars and conservatives. Kesgin underlines that this clash was most recently apparent in the Gezi movements in 2013, during which the secular and liberal segment of the middle class came in conflict with the conservative segment of the middle class, who is in favor of the political views of the current ruling party, thus, Justice and Development Party. Üner and Güngördü (2016) concurs this finding through the qualitative study they made among the middle class in Turkey. According to their findings, Turkish middle class is composed of well-educated urban people, mostly white collar professionals, who have gained their positions by education. The middle class is composed of two groups: seculars and conservatives, among which religious sensitivity and attachment to religious practices varies. While they have many things in common, such as interest in branded products, not only to increase their well-being but also as a symbol of their living standards, willing to invest in their children's education to build a better future for them, they differentiate to a great extent in terms of expectations. Conservatives are hopeful for the future, while seculars are desperate seeking for an opportunity to live abroad. Conservatives who were oriented to spend most of their time at home are now looking into having fun outside, going out to cinema, shopping mall etc, taking vacations, trying new products to catch up with seculars.

*Ayten Şaban Diri Ortaokulu, Abdrurrahman Şengel Ortaokulu and Seymenler Ortaokulu* was selected as research sites, from which respondents are identified. A private school could have been selected to represent the high socio-economic status; however, in order to ensure to have a commonality among the research sites; thus, being a state school, and to avoid extreme differentiations among the groups, the research was also conducted in a state school in a high socio-economic status neighborhood based on the classification made in Yüceşahin and Tuysuz's study, as mentioned above, to represent the high socio-economic status.

#### ***4.4.1.1. Description of Research Sites***

*Ayten Şaban Diri Ortaokulu:* This school is located in Beysukent, thus in cluster 1 as per the research summarized above. There are approximately 30 students in each class. Majority of the students come to school with private school buses or driven by the private car of their parents. There is a security guard in the entrance allowing the visitors in only in exchange of an ID card. The school has a big and nice sports facility with a swimming pool as well as a very well developed library and computer laboratory. The cleanliness of the school and particularly of the washrooms took a special attention during research.

*Abdrurrahman Şengel Ortaokulu:* This school is located in Dikmen, thus in cluster 5. The classes have approximately 20 students per class. An administrative personnel acts as a security guard during breaks. There is a combination of students taking private school buses, public transportation and walking to school. The school neither has any computer laboratory nor a sports facility. There is a small library with limited variety of books located in the photocopy room.

*Seymenler Ortaokulu:* This school is located in Bentderesi, thus in cluster 6, under urban transformation<sup>9</sup> project. The school approximately 20 students per class with very high rates of non-attendance as reported by the deputy principal. Students either walk or take public transportation to school. There is a computer laboratory at

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<sup>9</sup> The law No 6306 has entered into force in 2012. This law sets the principles to improve, rectify and renovate the the lands with buildings and structure under the risk, including disaster risk, in accordance with scientific and esthetic norms and standards to create secure and healthy living areas.

school. The heating system is based on coal and the heaters were not functioning at the time of the interviews, which took place in winter.

#### ***4.4.1.2. Selection of Grade***

Adolescents attending the eighth grade were interviewed for a specific purpose. Developmental level of adolescents as well as the eighth graders in the Turkish education system made the best fit for the universe of the research.

Developmental stages are important informants of the case selection for this dissertation to ensure reliability of the research. Erikson provided explanations on children's social and emotional development to explain how children's capacities change over time starting from their birth until the end of childhood especially in terms of making sense of the social structure (Evans, 2009). He has suggested that all individuals, starting from their childhood, passes through the following stages:

- *Development of the self-concept:* Self-concept is a combination of physical and psychological behaviors, attitudes, abilities, attributes and values that makes one person unique (Kostelnik et al., 2012). Children start differentiating themselves when they 18 months old. Until the age of one, they do not use any comparisons, between the ages of 2 to 4 their tendency to compare something is limited with the cases that fairness. From the age of 5 to 7, children start doing self-comparison thus they compare their abilities of today with those of last year. By the time when they reach 8, they start making social comparisons between themselves and the others and understand the social order (Kostelnik et al., 2012).
- *Development of self-esteem:* Self-esteem is composed of three elements: worth, competence and control. Self-esteem is important to assess how people feel about themselves and about the reactions of others towards them and what they think they achieve. By the age of 8, children become able to assess their abilities in several areas, thus having a multifaceted self-esteem. For example, they start feeling that they are good at mathematics but not necessarily so in gymnastics (Kostelnik et al., 2012).

- *Development of emotions:* Emotions start developing as early as the child is born and goes through different stages as the individual grows up and dies. Each stage is characterized with positive and negative emotions and a central emotional task. For example, from birth to one year, a child's emotions are characterized with trust versus mistrust and the key emotional task is to establish a trusting relationship with a primary caregiver. At this stage, the key social agents are parent, family and caregivers. For the adults above 65, ego integrity versus despair are the main emotions shaping the stage and the main emotional task is to look back at life as meaningful and productive and the main social agents are family, friends and society. At the stage of 6 to 12, industry versus inferiority forms the basis of the stage with a task to be productive and successful among family, teachers and peers.

Children only start comparing themselves with others and become aware of the social order at the age of 8; however, they only start establishing identities regarding social and occupational status when they are at the age of 12. Establishing social and occupational identities becomes the central task at the age of 12 with emotions of identity versus role confusion. Key social agents at this stage are the peers (Kostelnik et al., 2012). Children above the age 12 can think logically about abstract issues and hypothetical situations (Dehart et al., 2004). From 12 till 18 years of age, children start developing a sense of identity, particularly in relation to the society based on their previous experiences and failure to reach any goal may lead to confusion in identity, the choice of occupation and adult roles (Dehart et al., 2004).

Based on this key information, the universe was first narrowed down to age group of 12-15, to improve the reliability of the data gathered, and then to adolescents attending the eighth grade as eighth grade coincides with the final year of the second block of the education system which constitutes a turning point. As explained in previous chapter, the recently introduced education reform in Turkey, in 2012, structured the formal education as 4+4+4, the first four years for basic education, the second four as middle school and the final four as secondary school, extending the years of compulsory schooling from 8 to 12.

At the end of eighth grade, students are required to take the *TEOG* examination to be placed in the high school. Based on the exam results, they may be placed in various schools of their choice or the closets based on their address in case their scores do not meet their preferred schools. It may include state and private schools, such as vocational schools, art schools or Anadolu high schools, or open education.

In line with these developmental periods as well as the Turkish education system, children above 12 must have been interviewed in this research allowing them to have a sense of social order and occupational identities. Among the +12 years olds, the sampling was narrowed down to 14-15 years old, or more specifically 8<sup>th</sup> graders, who are at the turning point of taking the *TEOG*.

For the purpose of the research design, interviewing eighth grade students provides an opportunity to compare aspirations of children within one year, throughout which they pass an important milestone that affects the rest of their lives and provide an excellent opportunity to unpack the structure and the agency dynamic on the basis of aspirations for social mobility.

In the first phase of the research, 40 adolescents from different socio-economic backgrounds were interviewed. Adolescents from eight grade were selected randomly among those volunteered to be part of the research. Throughout the research, individual cases were cross-checked both against the geographical profiles, which Yüceşahin and Tuysuz (2011) have suggested, and SES categories, which Kalaycıoğlu et al (2010) have proposed<sup>10</sup>, to verify the sampling. Among the volunteered adolescents, special attention was given to gender distribution as equal as possible. As a result, 16 were boys and 24 were girls.

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<sup>10</sup> Provided in the Annex IV

## **4.5.Planning and Preparing for the Data Collection**

### ***4.5.1. Acquiring Official Permissions***

Following the identification of the state schools, where the research took place, official permission was requested from MONE<sup>11</sup>. To obtain the permission, the proposal of the research, the relevant forms to be used, the questions to be asked during the in-depth interviews, consent forms that will be filled and signed by the adolescents and their parents<sup>12</sup> were submitted to the MONE annexed to an official letter signed by myself and my supervisor requesting to conduct the research in the determined schools.

MONE has responded to my inquiry positively and gave permission to conduct the research by notifying the Middle East Technical University, Department of Sociology with an official letter<sup>13</sup>.

### ***4.5.2. Preparation for and Piloting the Research***

After obtaining the official permission to conduct my research in *Seymenler Ortaokulu*, *Abdurrahman Şengel Ortaokulu* and *Ayten Şaban Diri Ortaokulu*, I have visited the schools to introduce myself and my research to school principals and to receive their blessing for my research.

Together with the school principals, I have developed a timeline to conduct my research to respect to the special days and events, during which my presence may not be appropriate, and to avoid disruption in students' attendance to certain classes, as advised by school principals.

The research was piloted among 12 adolescent equally divided among genders and socio-economic status in two stages. In the initial stage, adolescents taking part in the pilot in each school were gathered in a room and were allowed 20 minutes to write a one-two pager on where they see themselves in 10 years. Following the completion

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<sup>11</sup> Provided in Annex I

<sup>12</sup> Provided in the Annex II

<sup>13</sup> Provided in the Annex III



of the essays, adolescents were interviewed one by one to elaborate on their essays, to pose follow up questions and to discuss the agency-structure dynamic to realize these aspirations. The questions were asked in fully open-ended format to provide extreme flexibility. This was repeated in each school from different socio-economic status. The findings revealed that 20 minutes was not sufficient for the adolescents to finish their essays on their aspirations for the upcoming ten years and it was not clear for adolescents what objective structures entail.

The pilot was repeated among 6 adolescents, equally divided among genders and socio-economic status, by extending the time allowed to write the compositions on future aspirations from 20 to 45 minutes and by providing cards, exemplifying the objective structures, such as education system, income, family, gender, ethnicity, to encourage mental stimulation following the open-ended questions.

The second pilot has proved to be successful in collecting the data that is necessary for this dissertation. Based on this pilot, the same methodology was applied during the actual research.

#### **4.6.Data collection**

A longitudinal methodology was adopted for data collection. Thus, the information regarding children's aspirations and their perceived capacity of agency was traced and data was collected at multiple points of time. These points of time, when data was collected on the same subject from same participants, was carefully selected to allow the participants to go thorough a structural barrier and to see the change, if any, in the intended information to be gathered. It was collected over the course of two years with the same participants. The first phase was composed of one-to-one interviews in three state schools, conducted in 2015. In the second phase in 2016, exactly after one year, the same adolescents were followed up through a combination of Facebook, phone, face-to-face interviews as well as focus group discussions. The focus of the interviews remained the same during the second phase, while focus group discussions focused on gathering data on gender.

In the first stage, adolescents, who agreed to take part in the research, were gathered in the same room in each school, were first asked to write a two-page essay on where they see themselves in ten years. Adolescents were given 40-45 minutes to respond to this question in a silent modality. The papers were then collected to continue with the second stage. Adolescents were interviewed one-by-one. Before the interview, adolescents were asked to fill out socio-economic status determination forms to make sure that each fall under the expected SES based on the selected school selected. Following that, adolescents were asked

- how they spend a day
- what were they aspiring for five years ago
- to what extent these aspirations came true and factors behind that
- where they think they will be next year
- what they have described in their two-page essays
- to what extent they think these aspirations will come true and factors behind that<sup>14</sup>

All questions were asked in open-ended format allowing adolescents to respond in free style. To facilitate the dialogue, they were shown cards, on which some structural and individual/agency factors were written. The cards were only shown after adolescents listed actualized and potential factors behind the realization of their aspirations five years ago and ten years after on their own. Once they have finished listing on their own, cards were shown to encourage mental stimulation and to see whether there is anything else they would like to add. The cards included the following elements representing the agency related and structure related elements:

- education system
- health system
- employment opportunities
- neighborhood
- material conditions

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<sup>14</sup> Provided in Annex II

- friends
- family
- personal traits and characteristics
- skills

They were asked to pick and choose the card that were/will be significant factors for the realization of their aspirations and rank them in terms of level of significance. For each adolescent, an empty card was provided in case s/he would like add any other factor that was not available among the cards provided.

All of the interviews were voice recorded and notes were taken during the interviews. At the end of the interviews, adolescents were reminded that they will be reached via phone, home visit or through Facebook (depending on the conditions next year) in a year to follow up where they are and what they are doing. Their contact details were verified to ensure means of follow up for the second phase of the research.

After one year of the initial interview, same children were approached by phone, Facebook or physically. Among the forty children who were interviewed in 2015, 31 of them were reached<sup>15</sup> and agreed to take part in the second phase of the research in 2016. They were asked:

- what they do now in comparison to what they have aspired to be at the time of the initial interview,
- why they think they are where they are now,
- where they want to be in ten years,
- why/why not they have changed their aspirations in ten years in comparison to last year,
- factors that they think will affect the realization of these aspirations.

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<sup>15</sup> Individual information on the 9 cases, who did not take part in the second stage of the interview is provided in the table on profile of the interviewees in the following section.

Additionally, focus group discussions were held to further inquire on the existence of social structure and their capacity of agency to overrule them and on the different experiences across different genders.

Focus group discussions have contributed to the interaction among adolescents and helped to gather further data especially on gendered agency.

#### ***4.6.1. Profile of the interviewees***

As mentioned, 40 adolescents from different socio-economic backgrounds were interviewed resulting that some of the characteristics were same or similar as expected and intended. A summary table is provided below showing the main characteristics of the respondents in addition to the narrative provided right below the table. A very detailed table is also provided among annexes<sup>16</sup>. The table below provides a snapshot on respondents' status on the participation in the second phase as well as on their educational continuity.

Among the forty children took part in the research:

- Fifteen were from the low socio-economic status, thirteen from middle socio-economic status and twelve from high socio-economic status,
- Sixteen were boys, whereas twenty-four were girls,
- Four of them were 15 years old, two of them were 13 years old, one of them was 16 years old and thirty-three of them were 14 years old,
- Thirty-one of them were born and raised in Ankara, whereas nine of them were born outside of Ankara.

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<sup>16</sup> Provided in Annex V

**Table 15 – Summary Table on the Profile of Research Respondents**

	Gender	Socio-economic Status	Mother's Education	Mother's Occupation	Father's Education	Father's Occupation	Possession of Valuable Assets in the household	Continuity to Secondary Education	Participation Status in the Second Stage Data Collection in 2016
1	F	L	Primary	Housewife	Primary	Construction Worker	None	Yes	Yes
2	F	L	Illiterate	Housewife	Primary	Works at Night Club	None	Yes	Yes
3	M	L	Illiterate	Housewife	Primary	Works at Grocery Shop	None	Yes	Yes
4	F	L	Illiterate	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Does not know	None	Dropped Out	Yes
5	M	L	Lower Secondary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Auto mechanic	No Internet, car and cell phone	Yes	Yes
6	F	L	Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Driver	None	Yes	Yes
7	M	L	Illiterate	Housewife	Primary	Street Vendor	No dishwasher, TV and cell phone	Dropped Out	Yes
8	F	L	Drop-out from Primary	Housewife	Drop-out from Lower Secondary	Tea man	No Internet and TV	Yes	Yes
9	F	L	Primary	Housewife	Primary	Barber	No dishwasher, Internet, computer and cell phone	Yes	cannot be reached
10	F	L	Drop-out from Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Birdman	No Internet and car	Yes	Yes
11	M	L	Illiterate	Housewife	Illiterate	Construction Worker	No to Internet, car, TV and computer	Yes	Yes
12	M	L	High School	Housewife	High School	Works at a supermarket	No car and cell phone	Yes	cannot be reached

**Table 16 – Summary Table on the Profile of Research Respondents (cont'd)**

	Gender	Socio-economic Status	Mother's Education	Mother's Occupation	Father's Education	Father's Occupation	Possession of Valuable Assets in the household	Continuity to Secondary Education	Participation Status in the Second Stage Data Collection in 2016
13	M	L	Illiterate	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Coffee man	No car, TV and cell phone	Yes	Yes
14	E	L	Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Porter	No car, TV and cell phone	Yes	Yes
15	F	L	Lower Secondary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Owens his business	No car and TV	Yes	Yes
16	M	M	Lower Secondary	Housewife	University	Civil Servant	All	Yes	refused to take part
17	M	M	X	Housewife	Doesn't know	Security Guard	All	Yes	cannot be reached
18	F	M	Lower Secondary	Housewife	University	Mechanical Engineer	All	Yes	cannot reached
19	F	M	University	Housewife	University	Electronics Engineer	All	Yes	Yes
20	M	M	Primary	Housewife	University	Manager at TGNA	No computer	Yes	Yes
21	M	M	Primary	Works at a supermarket	Primary	Owens a cell phone shop	No Internet	Yes	cannot reached
22	F	M	Primary	Cook	Graduate	Electrics Technician	No Internet	Yes	Yes
23	F	M	High School	Housewife	High School	Marketing Manager	All	Yes	Yes
24	F	M	High School	Housewife	High School	Mechanical Engineer	All	Yes	Yes
25	F	M	Lower Secondary	Housewife	Primary	Chief	No computer and cell phone	Yes	cannot be reached
26	M	M	Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Worker at Municipality	No car	Yes	Yes

**Table 17 – Summary Table on the Profile of Research Respondents (cont'd)**

	Gender	Socio-economic Status	Mother's Education	Mother's Occupation	Father's Education	Father's Occupation	Possession of Valuable Assets in the household	Continuity to Secondary Education	Participation Status in the Second Stage Data Collection in 2016
27	M	M	High School	Housewife	High School	Owns his business	No Internet	Yes	Yes
28	F	M	High School	Housewife	High School	Retired	No car	Yes	Yes
29	M	H	University	Teacher	University	Teacher	All	Yes	Yes
30	F	H	University	Retired Housewife	University	Agricultural Engineer	All	Yes	Yes
31	F	H	University	Housewife	University	Insurance Expert	All	Yes	Yes
32	F	H	Graduate	Secretary	University	Public Relations Manager	All	Yes	Yes
33	F	H	University	Teacher	University	Lieutenant	All	Yes	refused to take part
34	F	H	University	Teacher	Graduate	Senior Official at MONE	All	Yes	refused to take part
35	F	H	High School	Works at Digital Copy Centre	Open University	Owns a Digital Copy Centre	All	Yes	Yes
36	F	H	University	Housewife (Sociologist)	University	Civil Engineer	All	Yes	Yes
37	F	H	University	Housewife	University	Owns a jeans shop	All	Yes	Yes
38	F	H	University	Sales Manager	University	Judge	All	Yes	Yes
39	M	H	University	Civil Servant	University	Civil Servant	All	Yes	Yes
40	M	H	University	Banker	University	Owns a auto mechanics shop	All	Yes	Yes

Among the high socio-economic status adolescents:

- Only two of them have more than one siblings. five of them were single child and the remaining five has only one sibling,
- Eleven of them are living together with the exception of one case, whose parents are divorced,
- Eleven of them have their own rooms,
- All of them are living in apartments with three or more bedrooms,
- Only one of their fathers are high school graduate, while the rest has university diploma. One of the fathers has post-graduate degree,
- All of their mothers have university diploma, one of which has also post-graduate degree,
- All of their fathers are employed in regular jobs. Three of them own their own business, while the others are employed in technical occupations such as lawyer, specialists, teachers or engineers with social security,
- Three of the mothers do not work, while the remaining nine are working with social security,
- Majority of the adolescents do not know the income of their families, while few of them report over 5000 TL per month. However, all of them have dishwasher, laundry machine, LCD TV, internet, computer, car (with only one exception), and cell phones. On average, they receive 40 TL pocket money weekly, while few reported over 100 TL per week,
- None of the adolescents are working.

Among the middle socio-economic status adolescents:

- Five of them has one sibling, three of them has three siblings, four of them has two siblings and one of them is a single child,
- All of them are living with both of their parents, with one exception whose mother has passed away,
- Only two of them are living in apartments with two bedrooms, while the rest lives in apartments with more than three bedrooms,



- Three of them share their rooms with their siblings,
- Four of the fathers are university graduates, four are high-school graduates, one mid-school graduates and two primary school graduates. One is unknown and one has post-graduate degree,
- Four of the mothers have high-school diploma, whereas three has mid-school, four has primary school and one has university diploma. One is unknown,
- Apart from one retired, all of their fathers have regular jobs with less technical occupations than the fathers from high socio-economic status with social security except one. The group is mixed with fathers owning small businesses, engineers, civil servants, technicians,
- Eleven of the mothers are not working. Only two are employed with social security as unskilled workers; one as a cashier and the other as a cook,
- Almost half of the adolescents do not know the income of their families, while the rest report around 3000-5000 TL per month, with one exception at 6000 TL. However, almost all have dishwashers, laundry machines, LCD TVs, internet, computers, cars, and cell phones. Four of them do not have internet, two of them do not have computer and one do not have cell phone. The range of pocket money adolescents receive varies a lot. Children receive pocket money ranging from 20 to 70 TL per week,
- None of the adolescents are working.

Among the low socio-economic status:

- Nine of them has two siblings, three of them has one sibling and three of them four siblings,
- All of them are living with both of their parents, with one exception whose parents are divorced,
- Nine of them are living in squatter houses and only four of them has their own room,
- Six of the fathers are primary school, seven of them are mid-school, and one of them is high school graduates, while one of them is illiterate,

- Seven of the mothers are illiterate, two of them dropped out from primary school. Four of the mothers have primary school, two of them have mid-school and one has high-school diploma,
- All fathers are employed in unskilled occupations such as driver, worker, salesperson in groceries, waiters in teashops and coffee shops. Four of them have irregular jobs and eight of them do not have social security,
- Mothers neither have any occupation nor are they working,
- Few adolescents do not know their family income, while the majority report below 2000 TL. Three of them reported as low as under 500 TL,
- When asked about possession of dishwashers, laundry machines, LCD TVs, internet, computers, cars, and cell phones, none of them has all of them. Almost half of the adolescents have any of them, while the other half owns two to three of these items,
- adolescents receive daily pocket money, on average 3-5 TL per day,
- Five of them are working during summer breaks in barbershops, bakeries or restaurants.

A detailed chart regarding the characteristics of the respondents is provided in Annex V.

#### **4.7.Ethical Considerations**

Special considerations were given while interviewing adolescents as they are under 18 under the guidance of “Ethical Research Involving Children”, a guideline to assist researchers to plan and conduct an ethical research involving children and young people. It assumes that

“ethics is much more than procedural compliance with a prescribed set of rules or code of conduct that can deliver good or safe research in any given context”  
(Graham et al., 2013, p.11)

This guideline underlines the principles of i) benefits and harms, underlining the need to making informed decisions on involving children in the research that is justifiable for the sake of research and making sure that being involved in the research does not harm children, ii) informed consent, emphasizing the need to take

the child's and his/her parents' consent to be involved in the research, whose objectives and methodology and possible consequences are well explained to the participants, providing the option to withdraw at any stage of the research despite the provided consent to be involved at the beginning; iii) privacy and confidentiality, highlighting the criticality of allowing children to share as much as they like and ensuring that the information provided is safely stored and not shared beyond the limits of agreement between the researcher and the participant.

In line with this guideline, first of all, the necessary permissions were taken from the MONE to conduct field research in the selected schools. To receive permission, the research proposal and questions to be raised during the interviews were provided to the Ministry. The research has begun only after the written permission arrived, which is provided in annex.

In order to follow ethical guidelines to interview children, a consent form both for children and their parents were distributed at the schools, in which the research will take place, before starting the interviews. As a researcher, I have visited classes and introduced myself and my study and distributed the forms provided in the annex. In the forms, the aim of the study was introduced and terms of confidentiality were provided. Only adolescents with signed form by themselves and by their parents were interviewed.

During the interviews, children were asked to provide details on their private life as much as they are willing to share and were not forced to share more. Terms of confidentiality was repeated orally during interviews. In the second phase, only consented adolescents were interviewed. Therefore, nine adolescents who opted out from the research were not included.

#### **4.8.Limitations of the Research**

The main limitation of this research, as much as it is a contribution to the literature, is that it does not provide a probabilistic explanation on the movements across social space. The research only covers a short life span of adolescents to provide an explanation on the change of aspirations and sense of agency around the encounter

of a structural obstacle. Despite its longitudinal methodology, it does not cover the differences throughout the whole life span neither across generations. It focuses on the construction and re-construction of the sense of agency in a limited time frame. Thus, unlike the many other social mobility researches, this research is not in a position to provide probabilistic datasets across generations or within one's life cycle.

The second limitation is that the research was conducted among adolescents. The sampling was carefully selected in respect to the developmental levels of the children to allow reliable data for the research. However, children's and adolescents' evolving capacity should be kept in mind while interpreting the findings especially in terms of how the causal relationships are built among the adolescents in comparison to adults. The idea is to present their lens to a question for which they are the main subjects.

The third limitation is that, as in the case of many other panel studies, some difficulties were faced in terms of tracking every interviewee over the course of the research. Some respondents who were part of the research did not agree to join the second phase of the research, while some others could not be reached due to change of phone numbers and addresses resulting in attrition from the research. The sample size, which was 40 adolescents during the first phase of the research, has reduced to 31 during the second phase. The point of contact was lost for some of these adolescents and some opt out to be part of the research. Despite the fact that the sample size and the scope and the depth of data that was generated in the second phase was sufficient to analyse the change across years, it still resulted in the loss of some interesting individual stories.

The last limitation is that adolescents' engagement with social media and its influence their aspirations and their capacity of agency is not well studied in this dissertation. Given the fact that the adolescents who were part of the research are members of generation Z, which is also called the generation of digital natives, the use of social media should be important to study. This has not been factored in

during the research but it a strong recommendation for the future studies to be done in this area.

#### **4.9. Chapter Summary**

This chapter has introduced the research objectives, questions and methodology adopted during the research. This research aims to dwell upon the dichotomy between the structure and the agency based on the aspirations of the adolescents for social mobility from the eyes of adolescents as individuals whose aspirations and capacity of agency is still in the making.

This dissertation has applied a qualitative and longitudinal methodology. The participants, girls and boys, of the research was selected from three state schools from the neighborhoods with different socio-economic status based on a previous research done in Ankara on its socio-spatial differentiation.

Adolescents from different genders and socio-economic status have participated twice over a period of one year. 40 participants took part in the research before and they took the TEOG examination put in place by the Turkish state to organize the transitions and placements from primary to secondary schools. The methodology included face-to-face interviews, in 2015, and a combination of face-to-face and phone interviews as well as focus group discussions in 2016, when the participants were re-reached after one year.

The participants were adolescents from 8th grade for three main reasons; i) to reflect adolescents' lens on a topic for which they are the subject, ii) to gather reliable data by making sure that the participants have the capacity that is sufficient to be the subject of such a study in line with their physiological, psychological and cognitive development, iii) to allow the participants to experience a structural obstacle to observe the change over years.

The research was conducted with the official permission obtained from MONE and followed the ethical guidelines set forth by ERIC since participants were under age.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **THE PROMISE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PREVAILS: ASPIRATIONS AND THE SENSE OF AGENCY OF ADOLESCENTS PRIOR TO ENCOUNTERING A RECOGNIZED STRUCTURAL OBSTACLE**

#### **5.1.Introduction**

Erikson defines the psychological development of an individual in eight stages, fifth of which coincides with the adolescence, a stage in search for identity. Adolescents start changing their social roles in the society, which is being affected by cultural values and norms, socio-economic status, social class and family environment. Adolescents start questioning where they come from and where they are going to and the emphasis on the desire or need to achieve is very much linked to the expectations of the social class (Evans, 2009 and MoFSP, 2013)

This stage, when current and future positions in the society are being questioned, is important for social mobility studies as the prospects of being upward, downward or stable starts to be built in line with these aspirational questions. This is also what the current rhetoric on equality of opportunities is promising.

Adolescents evaluate their social standing in line with their socio-economic and cultural background and estimate, realistic or not, a destination to be in their future lives. This interpretation of the current standing and the estimation for the future standing is heavily linked with the assessment on the encounter of agency with structure. Adolescents' understanding and assessment of the limits of the structure and their capacity of agency to shape these structures influence this estimation and,

thus, aspirations. Thus, adolescents' *habitus* already plays its role as a mental filter to shape the socio-economy of aspirations not only in terms of type but also in terms of its likelihood for materialization.

This chapter analysis the findings of the field research conducted in 2015, when participants were at 8<sup>th</sup> grade, as the first phase of the research looking at the differences in aspirations and the sense of agency to realize these aspirations among adolescents across low, middle and high socio-economic groups in respect this the dilemma between structure and agency. That led to an existential discussion for the structure by agencies, where adolescents, thus, agents of the society, aspire to build a future for themselves while neglecting of the objective structures in an era when the promise of equal opportunities is highly promoted.

## **5.2. Socio-Economy of the Daily Practices**

Bourdieu underlines that individuals with similar dispositions in the social space have similar lifestyles, daily practices, perceptions and viewpoints.

“While it must be reasserted, against all forms of mechanism, that ordinary experience of the social world is a cognition, it is equally important to realize – contrary to the illusion of the spontaneous generation of consciousness which so many theories of the ‘awakening of class consciousness’ amount to- that primary cognition is misrecognition, recognition of an order which is also established in the mind. Life-styles are thus the systemic products of *habitus*, which perceived in their mutual relations through the schemes of the *habitus*, become sign systems that are socially qualified” (Bourdieu, 1984, p.168).

Daily practices, products of lifestyles, are reflections of *habitus*. Thus, *habitus* does not only operates to show the commonalities within groups; thus, the capacity to produce practices and works; but also the capacity to differentiate and appreciate practical products (Bourdieu, 1984).

Children who took part in the research are all at a turning point in their lives that affects their daily practices which is shaped around the *TEOG* exam that they are about to take, which supposed to influence the rest of their lives. However, the locus of this examination varies across the socio-economic statuses as a result of their *habitus*.

**Children of high socio-economic** status start their day with having breakfast at home. They go to school mostly by private school bus, followed by public transportation or taxi. They spend almost all day at school and they leave school around 3 pm. They have lunch mostly at the cafeteria at school.

After school, all high socio-economic status, who were interviewed, go to *dersane*<sup>17</sup>. Most of them arrive back to home around 8 or 9 pm. They finish their homework, some of them play with computer or iPad.

“I am coming to school after having my breakfast at home. From school, I go to *dersane* and stay for tutoring sessions after the classes are over. Once a week, I am attending violin class. We used to go theatre and movie-theatre more often but not this year” (HSES; 14)<sup>18</sup>

All high socio-economic status adolescents mentioned a hobby they are occupied with such as tennis, volleyball, violin or painting. In their spare time, they are taking private lessons in these areas. Majority of the children have stated that they gave a break to their hobbies because of the upcoming *TEOG*. They are planning to continue after *TEOG* passes. At the time of the interview in first phase, when they are 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, they do not have time to spare for their hobbies. They said they are fully booked preparing for the *TEOG*.

“I cannot go to dance classes anymore. I had to give a break because of the *TEOG*. I am planning to resume next year” (HSES, F)<sup>19</sup>

“I used to play football with my friend in the neighborhood but this year, I cannot go out. I am preparing for the *TEOG*. I am going to *dersane* 4 times a week and I spend all the remaining time by studying” (HSES, M)<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Dersane* is a private institution providing educational support for children in the formal schooling to succeed in the central examinations. These institutions operate under the authorization of Ministry of Education of Turkey as per the Law No. 5580 on Private Education Institutions.

<sup>18</sup> “Evde kahvaltı edip, okula geliyorum, okuldan *dersane*ye gidiyorum, soru çözümüne kalıyorum. Haftada bir gün keman kursuna gidiyorum. Eskiden daha çok tiyatro ve sinemeye gidiyorduk ama bu sene yok.”

<sup>19</sup> “Artık dans kursuna gidemiyorum, *TEOG* yüzünden bırakmak zorunda kaldım. Seneye devam edeceğim.”

<sup>20</sup> “Eskiden arkadaşlarımla mahallede top oynuyordum ama bu yıl dışarı çıkamıyorum, *TEOG*’a hazırlanıyorum. Haftada 4 gün *dersane*ye gidiyorum. *Dersaneden* dönünce de ders çalışarak geçiyor vaktim.”



It became obvious that future concerns became a lifestyle for children of high socio-economic status. They are fully occupied with *TEOG* with a view that they will be placed in a good high school which will lead them to a good university providing good job opportunities once they graduate. They have postponed all other activities that please them such as their hobbies or cinema etc., they are committed to prepare for *TEOG*, nothing else. Their daily practices is shaped by the future concern.

“We spend most of the time at home. I go to see my friends and they are coming over to me. Last year, we were also spending time in the neighborhood but not this year, because of the *TEOG*. I come to school at 8 am in the morning. I have breakfast at home and coming to school. I am at school until 4 pm and stay for tutoring as well. Then, I am going to Kızılay to dersane with subway and coming back home with subway. My parents pick me up from the subway station. I come home, eat dinner and study. When I am in bed, I read history textbook.” (HSES; F)<sup>21</sup>

“I am going to dersane 4 times a week and I am there until 10 pm.” (HSES, F)<sup>22</sup>

“I am going to dersane every day. During the weekdays, from 2.30 pm till 10 pm, during weekends from 8 am till 7 pm. If I had time, I would play computer games or would go out but I don't.” (HSES, M)<sup>23</sup>

**Children of middle socio-economic class** is as concerned of their future as the children of high status. Many of them attend a *dersane* that is close to their home. In contrast to the high status children, their families chose the *dersane* that their children will attend based on the proximity to their home not based on the quality and popularity of the *dersane*.

“Some days, I have to go to dersane and some days, I don't. If I am not going to dersane, I am playing games on my mobile and I do my homework. I watch a little bit of TV and go to bed. On the days, I need to go to dersane, I go directly from school. Then I return back home around 7 pm. On these days, I really don't feel like doing my homework. I watch TV and go to bed.” (MSES, M)<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “Daha çok evde vakit geçiriyoruz. Ben arkadaşlarıma gidiyorum, onlar bana geliyorlar. Geçen sene mahalleye de çıkıyorduk ama bu sene *TEOG* yüzünden çıkamıyoruz. Sabah 8’de okula geliyorum, evde kahvaltı ediyorum, okula geliyorum. Saat 4’e kadar okuldayım zaten etüte de kalıyorum. Sonra metro ile Kızılay’a dersaneye gidiyorum. Kızılay’dan gene metro ile eve geliyorum, indiğim yerden annemler alıyor, eve gelip yemek yiyip ders çalışıyorum, gece yatarken de inkılap tarihi kitabı okuyorum.”

<sup>22</sup> “Haftada 4 gün dersaneye gidiyorum, akşam 10’a kadar dersanedeyim.”

<sup>23</sup> “Hergün dersaneye gidiyorum. Haftaiçi 2.30’dan akşam 10’a kadar, haftasonu da sabah 8’den akşam 7’ye kadar. Zamanım olsa bilgisayar oynarım ya da sitede dışarı çıkarım ama yok.”

<sup>24</sup> “Dersane olan gün var, olmayan gün var. Dersaneye gitmiyorsam eve gidip biraz telefonda oyun oynuyorum, sonra da ödevimi yapıyorum. Biraz TV seyrederek, yatar uyurum. Dersane olan gün

“I ride my bicycle when I come back from home in the neighborhood. Some days, I go to Arabic classes. I didn’t want to go to the English classes for two reasons, first, I don’t like it and, second, I would like to attend a religious high school when I finish this 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Speaking Arabic would be an advantage.” (MSES, M)<sup>25</sup>

This group of children goes to school either by private school bus or by public transportation. Some have breakfast at home some buys *poğaca* (a Turkish pastry) at school. After the school, they go to *dersane* or come home. After they finish their homework, they spend some time on computer or mobile phone and some on TV. Majority stated that they spend some time in the neighborhood during summer time but their families do not let them go too much far away, especially for the girls, especially after the incident of *Özgecan*<sup>26</sup>. When they go to shopping malls, they are always accompanied by their family members such as parents or older siblings.

“My family don’t really let me go out anymore. Especially after the *Özgecan* incident. We live in a building complex. I only go out within the complex” (MSES, F)<sup>27</sup>

“We were hanging out outside last year but not this year because of *TEOG*. I spend all my time by studying. In the remaining time, I have, I look at Facebook and share photos on Instagram” (MSES, F)<sup>28</sup>

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okuldan çıkıp doğrudan dersaneye gidiyorum. O zaman eve akşam 7 gibi geliyorum eve. Eve gelince ödev yapasım hiç gelmiyor, TV seyredip yatıyorum.”

<sup>25</sup> “Okuldan dönünce mahallede bisiklete gidiyorum. Bir de Arapça kursuna. İngilizce kursuna gitmek istemedim çünkü hem sevmiyorum hem de İmam Hatip Lisesi’ne gitmek istiyorum. O yüzden dersane yerine Arapça kursuna gidiyorum. İşe yarasın diye.”

<sup>26</sup> This incident is particularly important for this dissertation as it was very influential the adolescents’ lives, who were part of this research as the chapters, fifth and sixth, on research findings will present. On 11 February 2015, a university student at the age of 20 was raped and killed by the driver of a public bus in Mersin, a province in the South of Turkey, while she was going back from university to her home. The incident was covered to a great extent in the news and by many columnists within the framework of violence against women in Turkey. The incident reenergized the public movement against the violence against women in Turkey with the participation of mostly women but also men who raised rallies in many parts of Turkey (Retrieved from <https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/ozgecan-aslan-davasi-sanigi-yeniden-hakim-karsisinda,CxBj19XmtUOOZjan817G7A> on 27 October 2017). According to Violence against Women Study in Turkey in 2014, 34% of women have experienced physical violence by their current or former spouses. 44% of women have experienced emotional violence at least once in their lives and 12% were exposed to sexual violence (MoFSP, 2016). There have been several women killings that was reported in the news, at least more frequently compared to previous years, taking the public attention to the subject.

<sup>27</sup> “Ailem pek dışarı çıkartmıyor artık. *Özgecan* olayı olduktan sonra özellikle. Sitede oturuyoruz. Site içerisinde çıkıyorum ama dışarı.”

<sup>28</sup> “Geçen sene dışarda geziyorduk ama bu sene yok. *TEOG* yüzünden. Bütün vaktim çalışmakla geçiyor. Geri kalan vakitte de Facebook’a bakıyorum, Instagram’dan fotoğraf paylaşıyorum.”

**Children of low socio-economic class** has more spare time despite the fact that the influence of *TEOG* can still be observed in their daily practices. In contrast to the medium and high socio-economic status, very few children attend *dersane*. They prepare for the *TEOG* on their own or through the support of the centers run by municipalities.

“There is a municipality center in our neighborhood. There are teachers out there. Couple of days a week, I go there after school. And sometimes also over the weekends. People over there help me out with the classes. I had a scholarship from *dersane* last year but I couldn’t get this year; therefore, I am attending this place at the municipality.” (LSES, F)<sup>29</sup>

The most influential dynamic for this group is the neighborhood. As specified in the description of research site, the neighborhood that Seymenler Ortaokulu is located is under urban transformation plan, according to which the slumber houses are being demolished. All children who were interviewed mentioned about the negative effects of the neighborhood on their lives. Due to the risks associated with abandoned houses, where weed is being produced and sold, children stopped spending time in the neighborhood with their friends<sup>30</sup>. Additionally, many of their friends have already left and moved to another part of the city. In addition to being a determining factor on the daily practices, neighborhood proved to be a major obstacle in front of the realization of the aspirations, which will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

“From home to school, from school to home. When I come home, I wash my hands and face and do my homework. I don’t do anything else. I do not have any friend left

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<sup>29</sup> “Bizim mahallede belediyenin şeysi var abla, merkez, orda hocalar filan var. Oraya gidiyorum okul çıkışı birkaç gün. Haftasonu da bazen. Ordakiler yardımcı oluyor işte derslere. Dersaneden burs alıyordum aslında ama bu sene olmadı ben de oraya gidiyorum.”

<sup>30</sup> Akalın (2017) finds out in his research on the effects of urban transformation projects on the crime rates that the district of Altındağ, where this school is located, is known with high rates of crimes due to economic, socio-cultural and spatial reasons. Despite the fact that the cleaning of the areas from crime is one of the reasons behind the urban transformation projects, his findings, based on an analysis of the crime types and rates across the years starting from 2010 to 2016, there has been an increase in the drug-related crimes in this area. While he explains that there are various reasons not to see the expected change in these areas, having demolished houses and limited lighting, which creates a suitable environment for crime, are one of the keys to understand the context of this statement.

in the neighborhood, this place will be demolished. We will move too, in April.”  
(LSES, M)<sup>31</sup>

Children of low socio-economic class start the day by walking to school. Despite the fact that majority of them live close to the school, few of them has stated that they walk at least 30 minute to get to the school, which becomes a non-attendance factor during the harsh weather conditions. They eat *poğaca* when they reach their school. For lunch, they either go home, do not eat anything or eat *poğaca* again at school. After the school they walk back to home to do their homework.

“I am walking half an hour to school. It is such as hassle.” (LSES, M)<sup>32</sup>

“Actually, I live in 10 minutes walking distance to school but we walk all together, we meet in the neighborhood. We wait for each other and then walk together, everybody is studying at this school.” (LSES, M)<sup>33</sup>

“I leave home around 8 and I arrive to school around 8.20. There are no other schools close by. There was one actually, Yahya Galip Okulu but it was demolished. So the closest middle school remains this. When I come back from school, I do some cleaning at home, then I do my homework. I read books a little bit and watch TV. I am going to bed around 10 pm.” (LSES, F)<sup>34</sup>

They spend time at home or at their relative’s places. As mentioned earlier, services provided by the municipality plays an important for this group as children spend their spare time in the community centers by the municipality. They benefit from cultural activities such as musical instrument classes and tutoring sessions. Some has also mentioned that they go to football club in the neighborhood or internet café after school or during weekends.

“There was a police officer here, he took us to the sports club. It is really nice. I go to the sports club after school. I spend time there.” (LSES, M)<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> “Evden okula, okuldan eve gidiyorum. Eve gidince de elimi yüzümü yıkayıp ödevlerimi yapıyorum. Başka bir şey yapmıyorum. Mahallede hiç arkadaşım kalmadı zaten, yıkılacak burası, biz de taşınacağız Nisan’da.”

<sup>32</sup> “Yarım saat yürüyorum okula.”

<sup>33</sup> “Aslında okula 10 dakika evim ama mahallede toplanıp öyle geliyoruz. Birbirimizi bekliyoruz hep birlikte yürüyoruz okula zaten herkes bu okulda okuyor.”

<sup>34</sup> “8de çıkıyorum evden, 8i 20 geçe filan okula geliyorum. Orda başka okul yok. En yakın Yahya Galip Okul vardı ama yıktılar okulu. En yakın ortaokul bu kaldı. Okuldan eve gidince temizlik yapıyorum sonra ödevlerimi yapıyorum sonra da kitap okuyup, TV seyredip yatıyorum, zaten 10 civarı yatıyorum.”

<sup>35</sup> “Polis abi vardı burda o bizi spor okuluna götürdü, iyi oldu, okuldan çıkıp spor kulübüne gidiyorum. Orada vakit geçiriyorum.”

The children in this group has mentioned during the interviews that they are preparing for the *TEOG*; however, it is not as influential in their daily practices as it is the case for middle and high status children.

“I am reading story books when I come back to home and listen to music. I listen to music at most. This is how I spend my day.” (LSES, F)<sup>36</sup>

### ***5.2.1. Gendered Daily Practices***

Influenced by the patriarchal structure of the Turkish society, as elaborated in the theoretical chapter, it was not necessarily surprising to see that girls and boys, irrespective of their socio-economic status, do not practice the same lifestyle or daily practices. As Thorne (1987) was underlining, the separation of the public from the private sphere and the occupation of the spheres by specific genders is very well observable from the early ages. The separation of the spheres are more visible among the adolescents from middle and low socio-economic backgrounds. The neighborhood they live in plays a discouraging role for girls’ participation in public sphere due to urban planning and landscaping in place which is not convenient for women. As a result, women and girls withdraw from public sphere and their movements in public sphere get restricted because of the fear to be exposed to sexual assault (Yüceşahin, 2016).

“Always women are considered when somebody mentions honor. Why only women? There are plenty of dishonored men around us. Why do women always need to watch out their back? So, I do not go out in Ankara. I spend time with my aunt and my cousin, here in Ankara. I go out when we go to our village. It is safe over there, I go out when I’m there.” (MSES, F)<sup>37</sup>

“I go to play football 4 times a week, my sister. I come from school, change and go to exercise. Entrance is 2 Turkish Liras. So I spend four days like this. During weekends, I go to Internet cafes or Gençlik Park. I hang out here and there.” (LSES, M)<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> “Okuldan eve gelince hikaye kitapları okuyorum ve müzik dinliyorum, en çok müzik dinliyorum.”

<sup>37</sup> “Namus denince hep akla kadın geliyor. Neden hep kadın? Etrafta bu kadar namussuz erkek varken. Neden kadınlar arkasını kollamak zorunda? Dışarı çıkmıyorum Ankara’da işte. Halamla ve halamın kızıyla vakit geçiriyorum. Yazın köye gidiyoruz, orası güvenli, orda dışarı çıkıyorum.”

<sup>38</sup> “Haftada 4 gün futbol oynamaya gidiyorum abla. Okuldan gelip, üstümü değiştirip gidiyorum antrenman. Girişi 2 TL. Zaten 4 günüm öyle geçiyor. Haftasonları da internet kafeye filan gidiyorum, Gençlik parkına gidiyorum, geziyorum yani.”

“I am more or less fine. I feel a little blue. This TEOG, etc. I am really bored. I am watching TV until dinner time or sleep. I am studying after dinner. I am not going to dersane. My family didn't want to send me. They did not like their system for some of them, and some others are in Kızılay. They don't want to send to those in Kızılay, because of the recent incidents like Özgecan.” (MSES, F)<sup>39</sup>

Tunalı (1996) underlines that children's daily practices are also shaped by their contribution to the household economy by freeing up the time of adult family member. This does not have to be direct participation in the labor market, rather sharing the responsibility for household activities can be an example. Thus, children's invisible and visible labor also tends to be divided by gender (Thorne cited from Medrich et al., 1987). Usually, this falls more heavily on daughters than on sons as in the case of this research. Girls from middle and low socio-economic backgrounds spend more time at home compared to their peers of other gender.

Similarly, in addition to the segregation among the public and private sphere experienced by adolescents from middle and low socio-economic backgrounds, girls from the low socio-economic background face an additional segregation of duties compared to their peers of opposite gender in the private sphere. Girls from the low socio-economic background have spare some of their time for helping out their mothers with household chores.

“I am walking to school, attending the classes and then walk back to home. I am taking care of my sibling and help with household chores. The day is almost over then. We watch movies in the evenings.” (LSES, F)<sup>40</sup>

“I help my mother when I am back from school. Do the dusting etc. I do my homework after that.” (LSES, F)<sup>41</sup>

“I cannot spend much time outside. My father doesn't let me. I hang out in the neighborhood. I have a dog, I walk with him. I can go out of my neighborhood with my sister or my uncle. He doesn't let me go alone. He doesn't make any explanation. He says no and the discussion is over. There are a lot of things to do at home during summer. During school time, they don't want me to do anything but summer is a

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<sup>39</sup> “Eh işte, iyi sayılırım. Canım sıkkın, TEOG filan. Sıkılıyorum. Akşam yemeğine kadar TV seyrediyorum ve uyuyorum, akşam yemeğinden sonra da ders çalışıyorum. Dersaneye gitmiyorum. Ailem de çok istemedi. Bazılarının sistemini beğenmediler, bazıları da Kızılay'da. Kızılay'da olanlara da ailem göndermek istemiyorlar, son zamanlarda olan olaylardan dolayı.”

<sup>40</sup> “Okula yürüyorum, derse giriyorum, eve geri yürüyorum, kardeşime bakıyorum, ev işlerine yardım ediyorum. Gün zaten bitmiş oluyor. Akşam film seyrediyoruz.”

<sup>41</sup> “Okuldan eve gelince anneme yardım ediyorum, toz filan alıyorum. Sonra ödevlerimi yapıyorum.”

misery. I do housework 3-4 hours a day. Shell the beans, wipe the windows, do the dusting, vacuuming etc.” (LSES, F)<sup>42</sup>

### **5.3.The Existence of and the Scope and Source of Knowledge on the Social Stratification and Mobility: An Analysis from Socio-Economic Status and Gender Perspectives**

#### **5.3.1. Existence of Social Structures**

Adolescents from different socio-economic status and genders had various perceptions with regards to the existence of the social structure. The common thing is that all adolescents from socio-economic status and genders were aware of the existence of stratified structure of the Turkish society as well as their own social standing, including the factors that shape these standings.

“People don’t like the Kurdish. They beat them. If you open a HDP<sup>43</sup> flag, for example, they immediately ask you whether you are Kurdish, they beat you, and I am telling you. As you understand, being a Kurdish is an issue.” (LSES, M)<sup>44</sup>

“In some places, girls are not even sent to school. How equal is this society? How can we say that the society is equal, when girls do not go to school? There is still few issues that didn’t really settled down in some societies.” (MSES, F)<sup>45</sup>

“My family gave me money and culture. Wherever I am now in the society, it is thanks to them. They helped me earn many things since my childhood.” (HSES, M)<sup>46</sup>

This must have been resulted from the previous experience with the structure, either enabling or disabling, that is incorporated in their *habitus* influencing how they filter their external world. Then, this filtering is also a product of the epistemological

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<sup>42</sup> “Fazla gezemiyorum dışarda, babam göndermiyor. Anca mahallede dolanıyorum, köpeğim var, onu gezdiriyorum. Mahalle dışına da ya dayımla ya da ablamla çıkabiliyorum, tek başına göndermiyor. Açıklama yapmıyor, yok olmaz diyor bitti. Yazın evde çok iş var, okul zamanı bir şey istemiyorlar da yaz ayrı dert valla. Hergün 3-4 saat iş yapıyorum evde. Yok fasulye ayıkla, yok cam sil, yok toz al, süpürge tut.”

<sup>43</sup> HDP is an abbreviation for Halkların Demokratik Partisi – People’s Democratic Party, a political party in Turkey associated with Kurdish people. Detailed information on the party can be obtained from <http://www.hdp.org.tr/en/who-we-are/peoples-democratic-party/8760>

<sup>44</sup> “Kürtleri çok kötü görüyorlar. Dövüyorlar. Bir HDP bayrağı açtılar diye, hemen Kürt müsün diyorlar, dövüyorlar adamı. Kürt olmak bir şey yani senin anlayacağın.”

<sup>45</sup> “Ya bazı yerlerde kız diye çocukları okula bile göndermiyorlar. Eşit mi yani şimdi bu toplum? Nasıl eşit deriz ki bu halde, kızlar okula gitmezken? Toplumun kafasında daha hala bir şeyler oturmamış.”

<sup>46</sup> “Ailem bana para verdi, kültür verdi, onların sayesinde olduğum yerdeyim sonuçta. Küçüklükten beri çok şey kazandırdılar bana.”

inquiry that the adolescents have on the externality, which will be further be discussed in the following section.

Among the many other social structures that exists, patriarchy seems to be the most visible one to all adolescents across different genders.

“Of course, gender influences many things. There are plenty of things that girls cannot do while boys do. Boys do some stuff that are considered as inappropriate when girls do. Boys behave as they please, they eat food however they wish, and they sit as they want. When it comes to girls, it is not possible. Be polite, sit appropriately, and dress up appropriately. I don’t want to be like that but it doesn’t work that way. They call me tomboy. I can’t really say that this has prohibited me becoming something but I get really mad when they make fun of me for being a tomboy.” (HSES, F)<sup>47</sup>

The existence on equality of opportunity became doxic, as Bourdieu that no one dares to question its existence and ultimately contributing to the existence of the possibility of social mobility. As equal opportunities for all individuals are given, social mobility is a natural result as much as individuals obey the rules of the game and works hard. Thus, the existence and possibility of social mobility reveals itself through the existence of equality of opportunities.

The ontological inquiry is influential for the aspirations and the perceived capacity of agency. It becomes the tool to overrule the potentially restricted movements within the social space as per the assigned stratas.

“Whatever the situation is, everything is in our hands. Imagine two equal people. One of them works hard and get to higher places, whereas the other stays where s/he is if s/he doesn’t work the same way. The gap between them will increase. There is nothing else that affects this. You need to work. There is no such thing as ‘I worked but it didn’t work’. If you work hard, you will achieve, you will go to higher status.” (MSES, M)<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> “Cinsiyetim tabi etkiliyor. Erkeklerin yapıp da benim yapamadığım bir sürü şey var. Erkekler bunu yapar ama kızlar yapınca bir garip oluyor. Kaba olmak bile dert. Erkekler istediği gibi davranıyor, kötü yemek yiyor, istediği gibi oturuyor. Kızlara gelince yok. Kibar ol, düzgün otur, cici cici giyin. Ben böyle olmak istemiyorum ama olma diyince olmuyor işte. Erkek fatma diyorlar. Bu beni engelledi diyemem ama ay niye erkek gibi davranıyorsun dediklerinde sinirleniyorum.”

<sup>48</sup> “Ne olursa olsun, her şey insanın elinde. İki insan var diyelim, eşit. Biri çalışıp kendini üst yerlere getirir, diğeri çalışmazsa kalır ve aralarındaki alt/üst farkı büyük olur. Bunu etkileyen başka şey yok. Çalışcan işte. Çalıştım da yapamadım diye bir şey yok, çalışsan başarır, üst yerlere gider.”



### ***5.3.2. The Scope and Source of Knowledge for Social Structures***

Analysis to understand what adolescents know, how they know what they know is required to properly interpret how their aspirations and their strategies to realize these aspirations are shaped. Bourdieu was suggesting that we know the things based on our social dispositions, which may change based on the volume and the composition of the capitals, economic, social and cultural, we possess. These dispositions give us a *habitus* allowing us to interpret the world surrounding us.

Adolescents who took part in this research diversify among themselves about what they know about the social structure, social stratification and their standing in the social structure and their sources of knowledge based on their socio-economic status and gender.

Adolescents' daily practices, presented in the previous section, have already portrayed some hints about adolescents' knowledge and how they acquire knowledge. A further analysis on this will show i) the level of specificity and sophistication of their knowledge on social strata, means and modes of social mobility ii) the sources of knowledge varying according to the socio-economic status and gender.

Among the high socio-economic status adolescents, the level of specificity and the sophistication of their knowledge are significantly higher than the middle and low socio-economic status adolescents. First of all, high socio-economic status adolescents are very specific about what they want in the future. They do not refer to field of study or the university they want to attend as 'a university' and 'a field of their interest'. They pinpoint the name of the university, the name of the department etc. It is not only the case in the occupational and educational aspirations but also in the daily life aspirations. They are very particular about the breed of the dog they want to buy and provide all the specifics of the house they want to live, including pool and glass doors. In terms of the sophistication, they have wide range of desires. Thus, the aspirations that have articulated by high income group adolescents are not limited and repetitive of each other, especially when it comes to educational and occupational aspirations. Their level of knowledge is quite rich in terms of what is

available in the market. The specificity they have is an attempt to at least maintain or preferably increase the status in the society by obtaining the elements of prestige such as having a degree from a reputable university that will distinguish themselves from others, possibly from abroad, that others will admire. They like to have elite life-style to showcase their socio-economic background even in daily life. As Appadurai was suggesting, the capacity to aspire is wide and stimulated by what they know.

“I would like to study Psychology and work at Madalyon Psychology Center. It is a big and nice place. One option is to work there, the other option is to become a counselling teacher at school. Of course, becoming a counselling teacher at a school is not what I want.” (HSES, F)<sup>49</sup>

“I think I will become a manager in a reputable firm and I will become a model at the same time. At the moment, I am having acupuncture therapy to lose weight. I dream of a house with glass walls all around with three floors and a pool. I will have a dog, golden retriever kind named Chivas. I will have a car with white leathers seats. I want to go to Europe, to Italy, France, Belgium and England. I will have a boyfriend called Aren with colored eyes and curly hairs. I really like this name. I hope to have a boyfriend called Aren.” (HSES, F)<sup>50</sup>

On the other hand, middle and low income group adolescents do not have the same level of specificity and sophistication. In terms of specificity, middle income group adolescents have ordinary aspirations. They mention about a socially imposed/expected order of events that one individual will go through. They would like go to a university, have a good job, get married and be happy without providing much information on the exact school they would like to attend or company they would like to work with. The level of sophistication was not as apparent as in the case of high income status adolescents not because they lack the knowledge, as they were able to sophisticate when probed, but since they were less “ambitious” than their high SES peers in terms of mobility. Their focus on being happy and maintain

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<sup>49</sup> “Psikoloji okuyup Madalyon Psikoloji Merkezi’nde çalışmak istiyorum. Orası çok büyük ve güzel bir yer var. Şimdi orda çalışmak var ya da okulda rehberlik öğretmen olmak var. Oranın ortamı güzel, okulda rehber öğretmen olmak istediğim şartlar değil.”

<sup>50</sup> “İyi bir şirkette yönetici olurum diye düşünüyorum, bir yandan da manken olurum. Akapuntur yaptırıyorum kilo vermek için şu anda. Üç katlı duvarları baştan başa cam olan bir evim ve havuzum var. Köpeğim olacak, golden retriever Chivas isminde bir köpeğim olacak. Beyaz deri koltuklu bir arabam olacak. Avrupa’ya gitmek istiyorum, İtalya, Fransa, Belçika, İngiltere’ye. Aren isminde bir erkek arkadaşım olacak, dalgalı ve kıvrıkcık arasında saçları var ve renkli gözlü. Aren ismini çok seviyorum, erkeklerde. Aren isminde bir arkadaşım olsun.”

the status they have at the moment created a relaxed sense of agency about their future position in the society. This led to the use of a language that is more class-neutral.

Surprisingly, level of specificity is higher among the low-income group adolescents than middle income ones, whereas the sophistication is the least limited. They were more specific about the type of jobs they want to have and the schools they want to attend and do with the money they earn. It seems that the specificity resulted from the limited opportunities and knowledge they have. They only referred the names of the schools that are nearby and they know of and the way they want to spend money is very repetitive, thus, to help their families, as a strategy to improve their and their families' socioeconomic status. For the same reasons, the level of sophistication in their knowledge is very limited due to the lack of sources to obtain knowledge. The specific information they provided on schools, occupations was very much repetitive and went around very ordinary and general information such as becoming a doctor or teacher.

Additionally, for the low socio-economic class, it was also obvious that they had limited knowledge on the means of social mobility and the knowledge they have was often contradicting in itself. During the interview, some children asked myself whether they can be a doctor if they go to a vocational high school, how much money they will be earning if they become a doctor and how long does it take to become a doctor. Thus, despite the fact that they had a scenario in their minds to save themselves, they were not fully informed how to go about it. Their aspirations were more like a wish list than plans for their future as compared to other groups of children as discussed above and often contradictory. For example, majority underlined the need to get the profession, preferably medical doctor, and be employed as soon as possible despite the fact that being a medical doctor requires the most prolonged education.

This brings us to second stage of analysis; thus, the source of knowledge. Burke (2006) was suggesting that one of the reason that adolescents from the disadvantaged background have lower aspirations as their access to knowledge on

what is available out there and for them may be limited. Adolescents with high socio-economic background, and middle too to a certain extent, seem to be exposed various sources of knowledge. They learn the options not only through their parents and teachers, who have wider range of knowledge compared to their peers from other socio-economic backgrounds with higher levels of education but also from the social environment they live in which presents a greater variety in comparison to the social environments that adolescents with middle and low socio-economic status. Many of the high-income group adolescents have referred to occupations that their parents' friend has. This exposure to different lifestyles lead to aspiration of these occupations. In terms of high schools and occupations, *dersane* appeared to be a powerful tool to provide knowledge on the available opportunities, where experts for career guidance is present.

“There are teachers in my *dersane*. I ask them about the good schools, get guidance for which one to go to be placed in the school I want. I get information from them, I also ask my mother but those at *dersane* knows everything.” (MSES, F)<sup>51</sup>

In contrast, adolescents from low socioeconomic status lack sources to obtain the knowledge they are looking for. On many grounds, they were confused and were looking for information from various sources. Their main source of information are their teachers at school, majority of which were only interested in providing this kind of knowledge only to the ‘promising’ students and did not want to waste their time with others. As mentioned, my presence was also appeared to be an opportunity for them to learn about their options, which they feel they are missing. Many from this group of adolescents have approached me to get answers to some of their questions such as how to become a doctor and to which school to attend to become a lawyer.

“I would like to go to a high school, after which I can study medicine. Which I should go? Should I go to Science High Schools or Vocational High Schools? I really need to study medicine, which one should I pick?” (LSES, M)<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> “Bizim dersanade hocalar var, onlara soruyorum mesela, hangi okul iyi diye, hangisine gidersem istediğim yeri kazanırım diye. Onlardan alıyorum yani bilgiyi, annelere de soruyorum ama dersanedekiler her şey biliyor.”

<sup>52</sup> “Tıp okuyabileceğim bir liseye gitmek istiyorum. Hangi liseye gitmeliyim? Fen lisesine mi gideyim? Meslek lisesine? Tıp okumam lazım, ona göre lise seçeyim.”

#### **5.4. The Socio-Economy of the Aspirations**

Aspirations are influenced from a complex set of factors linked to national and cultural identities and gendered experiences (Burke, 2006). Construction of aspirations need to take account of identity, context and social relations. They are not constructed exclusively at the individual level but tied to complex structural, cultural, discursive relations and practices (Burke, 2006). However, the focus and the emphasis on the agency has significant role in the refinement of the aspirations. Based on the ‘self-appraisal of capabilities’, individuals determine aspirations. Indeed, the stronger the perceived self-efficacy is, i.e. the belief in agency, the higher the aspirations people adopt and the firmer their commitment to them (Bandura et al., 2001, p. 189). The magnitude of the belief in agency is related with the ontological analysis of the social structure. Thus, aspirations are shaped based on the unconscious and spontaneous calculation of *habitus* about the likelihood of the aspiration to happen.

Bühler-Niederberger and König (2011) have highlighted among their findings that more than half of the children participated in their research has specified an occupational aspiration when they were openly asked to describe their future. Previous researches in Turkey has also showed that adolescents’ primary aspirations for the future run around occupation and family. The research conducted by the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policy has found out that 88% of the adolescents who took part in the research is aspiring ‘to obtain a prestigious occupation’, followed by ‘having a job that pays well with’ 55% and ‘going to a school of quality’ with 40% with an idea of having the tools at hand to achieve the first two. In addition to the occupational aspirations, familial aspirations came out very strongly especially in the groups apart from the high socio-economic status. 72.5% of the adolescents have mentioned to ‘being married’ followed by ‘allowing their families to live comfortably’ with 31% among their aspirations.

The same pattern can also be observed in the findings of the research conducted for this dissertation. Independent from their socio-economic background, adolescents’

future constructs rely on having a good education that bring them what they want in the future.

It is no surprise that adolescents from different socio-economic background have different aspirations for their lives. It is a result of subtle assessment of the current disposition and, based on that, a calculation of likelihood. Citing from McNay, Vijayakumar (2013, p.781) states that

‘actions constantly anticipate within a social field; the less ability one has in the social field, the more resignation, so that the most oppressed groups in society oscillate between fantasy and surrender. Aspirations are thus never unconstrained, passive reflections of elite lifestyles: They must be understood within specific social locations, and emerge from the interplay of desire and objective possibilities’.

This interplay is fed by the dilemma between agency and structure. Agency is in a constant anticipation of the tendencies of social structure; thus, this power relation between the agency and structure shapes and deforms the experience of hope (Vijayakumar, 2013, p.793). This is a reflection of what Bourdieu calls structuring structure. These aspirations are not only the products of their *habitus*, which is influenced by their dispositions but structures that will structure their dispositions in the social space in the rest of their lives.

#### ***5.4.1. Aspirations of Adolescents from High Socio-Economic Status: The future is a luxurious life***

The future means a more luxurious lifestyle for **high socio-economic status children**. All children from high socio-economic class have shown interest in luxury for their future. All children has constructed their aspirations around an occupation with accompanying element of luxury.

The commonalities found among the high socio-economic status children is that their aspirations are shaped based on potential financial gain. They would like to go to a good private high school or to an Anadolu high school<sup>53</sup> in order to be able to a good university, a graduate of which will be able to find a well-paid and prestigious

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<sup>53</sup> See Chapter 3 Section 3.4. for further explanation on Anadolu High Schools

job, most repeatedly engineering, fashion designer or psychologist. There were no children who showed interest in attending a vocational high school.

“Anadolu high schools are better than the vocational schools, I think, in terms of education. Therefore, I would like to go Atatürk Anadolu or Resulzade Anadolu High School. However, I was not able to get the score I wanted to get from the first phase of TEOG so I am thinking that I can go to Ümitköy Anadolu High School if worse comes worst.” (HSES, M)<sup>54</sup>

There is a strong desire to have a connection with Europe or USA, preferably to study university or just to learn a foreign language to improve the chances of getting a good job. This was associated with the lack of trust in Turkish universities teaching the level of language expected by the employers in the Turkish job market. They have mentioned that there is severe competition among graduates of Turkish universities graduates. They would like bring their niche in the labor market through advanced level of language skills and diplomas from abroad.

“My mom has a friend, who told me that there is not much gain in architecture. She said engineers earn more. Also, there are really lots of houses around, I don’t want to contribute to that by building another one. This is why I gave up from architecture.” (HSES, F)<sup>55</sup>

“I am spending time at METU since I am born, my parents are alumni. I know what a good place it is. I would like to study Computer Engineering there. I can be a tennis or football player. I can’t really earn money by being a tennis or football player. They are not valued in Turkey, engineering is better.” (HSES, M)<sup>56</sup>

“I am planning to study the university abroad. Of course, I can also study here but it better to be there to improve language skills. If you speak another language, everybody will recruit you.” (HSES, F)<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> “Anadolu liseleri meslek lisesinden çok daha iyi, eğitim açısından. O yüzden Atatürk Anadolu ya da Resulzade Anadolu Lisesi’ne gitmek istiyorum. Ama ilk *TEOG*’dan istediğim puanı almadım o yüzden en kötü Ümitköy Anadolu Lisesi’ne giderim diye düşünüyorum.”

<sup>55</sup> “Annemin bir arkadaşı mimarlıkta para olmadığını söyledi, mühendisler daha çok para kazanıyorlar dedi. Hem de etrafta çok ev var, ben de bir ev daha yapıp buna katkı sağlamak istemiyorum. O yüzden vazgeçtim.”

<sup>56</sup> “Doğduğumdan beri ODTÜ’de vakit geçiyorum, ailem de oradan mezun. Oranın ne kadar iyi bir yer olduğunu biliyorum. Orada Bilgisayar Mühendisliği okumak istiyorum. Yanında da tenisçi ya da futbolcu olabilirim. Tenisçi ya da futbolcu olarak çok para kazanamam, Türkiye’de çok değer verilmiyor, mühendislik daha iyi.”

<sup>57</sup> “Üniveristeyi de yurtdışında okumayı düşünüyorum. Tabi burda da olabilir ama orda olursa dil geliştirmek için yararlı. Dilin olursa seni herkes alır işe.”

There is a desire to learn a lot of money and chose occupation that would bring them this money. All children have specified a hobby they are good at and interested in such as playing tennis, playing violin, all of which requires financial means. However, none of them aspire to become a professional tennis player and violinist as they do not pay as much as an engineer or a psychologist. They highlight that they would like to continue their hobbies as hobbies, a side occupation to their main profession. This was even reiterated by one of interviewees who underlined that she wants to win the Wimbledon championship as “the main wish” of her life but she does not want to become a professional tennis player because this will not bring her the money she wants.

“The most I want in this life is to win the Wimbledon... I won’t become a tennis player but I will play tennis besides my main profession. I can join the tournaments, Wimbledon for example” (HSES, F)<sup>58</sup>

“I didn’t give up from becoming an actress but it can be a side occupation, being a lawyer is a main occupation though. At the end, I can act while I am a lawyer. I will have a better life this way.” (HSES, F)<sup>59</sup>

“I would like to go to a conservatory high school but I am a little bit undetermined. I can become a medical doctor and play violin at the same time. I cannot become a musician and be o doctor on the side.” (HSES, F)<sup>60</sup>

This is also partly the reason why adolescents would like to go abroad since what they want to do is not valued in Turkey, especially in the case of arts and sports. It is not valued and hence not well paid.

“I want to go to America. Nobody values art here in Turkey. There are very few who values art. It is not the case abroad, they really value art; therefore, I want to study there. I think the life is much better there, people are different, better. Here, people at my father’s age may harass but it’s not like that there. It is safer there.” (HSES, F)<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> “En çok Wimbledon kazanmak istiyorum şu hayatta... Tenişiç olmam ya, onu mesleğimin yanında yaparım, turnuvalara katılırım, Wimbledon’a.”

<sup>59</sup> “Tiyatroculuktan vazgeçmedim ama o yan bir meslek olabilir sonuçta, avukatlık ana meslek. Avukat olunca tiyatrocucu da olabilirim yanında sonuçta. Daha iyi bir hayatım olur.”

<sup>60</sup> “Konservatuvar okumak istiyorum ama tam kararsızım. Doktor olup yanında keman çalayım diyorum. Müzisyen olup yanında doktor olamam sonuçta.”

<sup>61</sup> “Amerika’ya gitmek istiyorum. Türkiye’de sanata değer verilmiyor. Çok az değer veren var. Yabancı ülkelerde sanat çok önemli o yüzden orada okumak istiyorum üniversiteyi. Bence oradaki hayat daha iyi, ordaki insanlar değişik, daha iyi. Burda babam yaşındaki adam laf atabiliyor. Orada olmaz. Daha güvenli.”



High socio-economic children would like to live in a villa with a swimming pool and a dog either on their own or with friends or with their significant others, but not in a wedlock, with frequent travels to abroad for work and leisure.

“I want to live in a house with a pool. This is what is popular these days.” (HSES, M)<sup>62</sup>

“I don’t want to live in a flat, I want a house. It is difficult to have a dog in a flat. My sibling is young; therefore, we couldn’t get a dog so that s/he doesn’t swallow any feathers but when I grow older, I want to have a dog and live in a house. I also want to have a mini cooper car, that car is cute. I would like to study at Galatasaray High School or Robert College.” (HSES, F)<sup>63</sup>

It is obvious through several statements that their focus is on financial gain to at least maintain and possibly increase their income status to construct a luxurious future for themselves and to distinguish themselves from others by their high-end luxurious possessions such as a big house with a pool and a garden, a dog with a breed etc. as well as hobbies such as playing sports and musical instruments that signals their taste of elites.

“I want a better life. It is also good at the moment but the better is the better I think.” (HSES, M)<sup>64</sup>

#### ***5.4.2. Aspirations of Adolescents from Middle Socio-Economic Status: The future is building a family***

Children of **middle socio-economic status** build their future aspirations based on the idea that they will build a family and provide good opportunities for their families. The focus is being happy and living in a peaceful family, not so much on the material possessions as in the case of adolescents from high socio-economic status.

All children, who were interviewed, highlighted that, ten years from now, they would like to marry and have children, all of which are very happy by spending time

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<sup>62</sup> “Havuzlu bir ev istiyorum, şu anda o gündemde.”

<sup>63</sup> “Apartmanda oturmak istemiyorum, bahçeli ev istiyorum. Köpek apartmanda zor oluyor. Kardeşim küçük, kıl kaçır diye almadık ama ilerde köpek alıp bahçeli evde oturmak istiyorum. Araba olarak mini cooper istiyorum, çok şirin bir araba. Galatasaray lisesi ya da Robert Koleji’nde okumak istiyorum.”

<sup>64</sup> “Daha iyi bir hayat istiyorum. Şu anda da iyi ama ne kadar iyi olursa o kadar iyi bence.”

together. Due to strong interest in a family life, the rest of their aspirations regarding the school they want to attend, the occupation they want to have, the house they want to live is shaped to secure these aspirations.

“I would like to get married after I start working. I will have a more organized life then.”<sup>65</sup> (MSES, M)

“I would like to get married with the girl I love. I want to go some places with my children and my father. I just want to spend time together.” (MSES, M)<sup>66</sup>

Occupations they chose will not pay the highest salaries but they will be providing a decent and organized life. The mostly repeated desired occupations for middle income status children is police and teacher, for which working conditions, especially the working hours, are more predictable allowing the families to spend time together and has job securities that will allow them to maintain their status in the social space.

There is a high interest among the middle SES adolescents to go to the vocational schools for several reasons. First, some of them see vocational schools as the best fit since they think they cannot do any better. They cannot make it to Anadolu high school and their families do not have the financial means for private school. Secondly, vocational schools are a preferred choice because of the strong linkage they have with the job market.

“The teacher at my dersane recommends us to choose vocational high school to have advantage at the university since it is easier to be placed in the relevant department at the university if you are a graduate from a vocational high school of the subject.” (MSES, M)<sup>67</sup>

Of course, this does not exclude the children who aims to be in an Anadolu high school with potentially better learning outcomes but this does not from the majority and even those with higher expectations regarding the high school has highlighted

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<sup>65</sup> “İşe girdikten sonra evlenmek istiyorum. Düzenli bir hayatım olur o zaman.”

<sup>66</sup> “Sevdiğim kızla evlenmek istiyorum. Babamla ve çocuklarımla bir yerlere gidelim, beraber vakit geçirelim istiyorum.”

<sup>67</sup> “Bizim dersanedeki hoca meslek lisesi seçin diyor. Üniversitede de avantajımız olur. İlgili meslek lisesinden mezun olunca üniversitede ilgili bölüm girmek daha kolay olabiliyor.”

the strong will to maintain a happy family life and do things that will make their family members happy.

The family is defined not only by their future husbands or wives but also by their mothers, fathers and siblings. Thus, there is noticeable difference between the high socio-economic status adolescents placing themselves at a distance from their parents, and adolescents from middle socio-economic status, who would not only have strong ties with their parents and siblings for the moral support but also to help them financially to pay back what their extended families have provided them when they were a child.

“My mother provided me a lot of things. Therefore, I want to buy her a house.” (MSES, F)<sup>68</sup>

“I would like to get a big house for my family. My parents, I mean. Right now, it gets quite difficult when my sister and her family comes in from out-of-town. If they had a bigger house, we would spend nice time all together with my sister, her children, thus, with the grandchildren.” (MSES, M)<sup>69</sup>

“All I want to do is related with arts and sports. These may not bring money but I don’t care. I do what I want to do and work in a café to earn more but I need to provide a better life for my family. My sibling is just three years old. I don’t want her/him to be deprived of anything; therefore, I gave up from some of my wishes. It looks like I need to deal with trade and earn money.” (MSES, F)<sup>70</sup>

These expectations on strong ties with their nuclear and extended families and on an organized life repeat itself in terms of expectations regarding possessions and daily practices. None of these children has specified details regarding their cars and houses that they would like to own when they are older.

Attention to social issues were also present in this group. Several children have mentioned that they would like to live in peace, where there is no war, where there

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<sup>68</sup> “Annem bana pek çok şey sağladı o yüzden ben de ona bir ev almak istiyorum.”

<sup>69</sup> “Aileme büyük bir ev almak isterim. Annemlere yani. Şimdi ablaımlar şehir dışından gelince zor oluyor, halbuki daha büyük bir evleri olsa ablaımlar ve çocukları geldiğinde hep birlikte torunlarla birlikte güzel vakit geçiririz.”

<sup>70</sup> “Yapmak istediğim şeyler hep sanatla ve sporla ilgili. Bunlar para getirmeyebilir ama benim umrumda değil. Ben istediğimi yaparım, bir yandan da kafede çalışır bir şeyler kazanırım ama aileme daha iyi hayat yaşatmam lazım. Kardeşim daha 3 yaşında. O para sıkıntısı çeksin istemem o yüzden aslında isteklerimden biraz vazgeçtim, ticaret yapmak, para kazanmak lazım gibi.”

is no violence against women, where there is no police violence and crime and better opportunities poor or crisis-affected populations.

“I wanted to be police officer but I gave up now. I didn’t want to become a police after the Gezi incidents<sup>71</sup>. I was exposed to pepper spray twice and I don’t want anymore.” (MSES, F)<sup>72</sup>

#### ***5.4.3. Aspirations of Adolescents from Low Socio-Economic Status: The future should be something different than this***

Adolescents from low socio-economic background aspire to be placed somewhere else in the social space. This reproach is an indication, on its own, of their understanding of where they are in the social hierarchy. They acknowledge the lack of economic and social capital they possess, less so of their cultural capital as it is the least visible to them and they are in the process of acquiring it.

“Well, my sister! Almost all our income comes either from the municipality or from the foundation. There is a place called Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation close to our place, this place gives us money. This is why I stopped doing napkins. I used sell napkins at the traffic lights with my mother to help her but they told us that they will not give us money anymore if they see me selling napkins. So I stopped. The municipality gives us coal and food like oil, bulgur etc. my mom also buys and sells blankets in Yenidoğan. This is how we earn money and how our status is.” (LSES, F)<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Gezi incidents refer to the public demonstrations that has started in May 2013 by a group of environmentalists protesting the pedestrianisation of Taksim Square and construction of a shopping mall on Gezi Park. The demonstrations were intervened by police on the same day by excessive force. To protest the excessive force used, the protests have quickly spreaded out to all parts of Turkey quite to take a stand against the excessive police force with the use of water cannons and tear gas. The report published by the Human Rights Association citing from the Ministry of Interior figures underlines that more than 2.5 million people from all over Turkey except Bayburt and Bingöl. 4,900 demonstrators were detained on suspicion, some 600 police officers and 4,000 demonstrators were wounded. Total cost of the damages alleged to be 140 million TL (Retrieved from <http://ihd.org.tr/en/index.php/2013/09/26/report-on-incidents-during-the-gezi-park-resistance-27-may-2013-10-july-2013> on 25 October 2017).

<sup>72</sup> “Eskiden polis olmak istiyordum ama vazgeçtim. Ama bu aralar gezi olayları olduğu için artık polis olmak istemiyorum. İki kere biber gazı yedim ve istemiyorum.”

<sup>73</sup> “Abla bizim nerdeyse bütün gelirimiz belediyeden ve vakıftan geliyor. Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Vakfı diye bir yer var bizim orda, orası para veriyor bize. Hatta o yüzden selpağı bıraktım. Işıklarda selpak satıyordum işte anneme yardım olsun diye ama dediler bir daha görürsek seni burda para vermeyiz dediler. Ben de bıraktım. Bir de belediye kömür ve yemek veriyor bize işte bulgur, yağ filan. Bir de annem Yenidoğan’dan battaniye alıp bizim orda satıyor. Böyle böyle paramız oluyor ve bu durumdayız.”

The children from the **low socio-economic status** has missioned to save themselves from the conditions they live now. They believe that if they save themselves, they will also be able to save their immediate and extended families. They describe it as bad and insecure conditions they are living in and they want to be out of this by moving out to a different neighborhood and by continuing their education.

“My father tells me that he will send me to school. Nobody, but me, has went to school in our family. My mother is illiterate, my sister and brother dropped out. He says I should save my life.” (LSES, M)<sup>74</sup>

All interviewed children link their future standards to live in a different neighborhood. The neighborhood they live in now does not provide an enabling environment. There are too much drugs and crime in the neighborhood. First, there is a need to move out and then to continue to a good high school which will allow them to go to a university, a graduate of which will make enough money to buy their own house and the car and to help their families and other poor people financially.

“I will take the exam for scholarship to go a private school. They have better teachers and better environment. Here, the school principal applies for these exams on our behalf, the teachers help us in the application process. They inform us on the date and venues of the exams. So, I will apply for this. However, it will be, it should be a good high school. Those who go out from good high schools comes in good places. To Middle East Technical University or Ege University, for example. I would like to go to a good university and integrate with the society, take the characteristics of that society, I will be in the same environment with the well-educated.” (LSES, F)<sup>75</sup>

“All the students in Ağrı were nasty. They all smoked cigarettes and weed. When I came to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I told my father to move to Ankara. My father was unemployed anyhow. I told him that there are better schools in Ankara. I also wanted to take the exam for voice training, this is also the partly the reason why I wanted to come to Ankara since I didn’t want to take that exam in Ağrı.” (LSES, M)<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> “Babam ben seni okutacağım dedi, benden başka kimse okumamış ailede. Annem okuma yazma bilmiyor, ablam ve abim de okulu bıraktı. Sen hayatını kurtar diyor.”

<sup>75</sup> “Burslu sınavına gireceğim, özel okula gideceğim. Öğretmenleri daha iyi, çevresi daha iyi. Burda müdür bizim için başvuruyor burslu sınavlarına. Hocalar yardım ediyor bizim başvurularımızı, haber veriyorlar bize, şurda şu gün diye. Öyle sınava gireceğim. İyi bir lise olsun da nasıl olursa olsun. İyi liselerden çıkanlar iyi yerlere gidiyorlar. ODTÜ’ye Ege’ye mesela. Üniversiteye gidip o topluma karışmak istiyorum, o toplumun özelliklerini almak istiyorum, iyi yetişenlerin çevresinde olurum.”

<sup>76</sup> “Ağrı’daki okulun öğrencileri çok pisti, hepsi sigara ve esrar içiyordu. 8.sınıfa gelince babama dedim, Ankara’ya gidelim dedim. Babam da orda işsizdi zaten. Ankara’da daha iyi okullar var dedim. Bir de ses sınavına girmek istiyorum o yüzden de gelmek istedim Ankara’ya, Ağrı’da girmek istemedim.”

The choice of the high school is based on the proximity, especially for the girls, both because of required financial means and security. Adolescents of low socio-economic status would like to a good but close high school. They need more money to go to a school, which is not nearby and not walking distance.

Despite the repeated emphasis on the proximity, there was a constant highlight on the quality of the school that they want to go. Majority of the children want to become a doctor or a nurse. For this, they need to be in a good state school, where there are good teachers and no drug addicted friends trying to pull them out. The focus is not necessarily on vocational schools. There were equal numbers of children who specified the desire to be in an Anadolu high school as the ones to be in vocational schools. The ones highlighting the vocational schools want to attend vocational school for health.

“Depending on my score, I will go the best high school possible. I will go to an Anadolu high school, not to these vocational high schools. To have a better job. I go out to have a look a month later. I will first go to high school near the place where we will move in soon but I can also go to places that are not nearby as long as it is a good one. It should be the best among the possible, I will have a better job and I will have a better life. I want to have everything, a car, a house. Everything comes with money, no money no nothing.” (LSES; M)<sup>77</sup>

“I want to go to a health high school, this is what my family wants. I used to like to become a police officer but I changed my mind now. Health sounds better, more advantageous. You go to a hospital and come back at the end, better conditions.” (LSES, F)<sup>78</sup>

Once they become a doctor or a nurse, they will be able to earn sufficient amount of money to stand on their own feet, not depending on any one financially but also helping out their parents and siblings. Therefore, children underlined the need to be employed as soon as possible so that they earn their own money.

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<sup>77</sup> “Puanımın tuttuğu en iyi liseye gideceğim. Anadolu lisesi’ne gideceğim öyle meslek lisesi değil. Daha iyi bir işimin olması için. Bir ay sonra gezmeye çıkıp bakacağım liselere. Seneye taşınacağımız evin yakınındaki liseye de bakacağım ama uzağa da giderim. Olabilecek en iyi lise olsun, daha iyi bir işim olur, daha iyi bir hayatım olur. Her şeyim olsun istiyorum, evim, arabam. Her şeyin başı para, olmadı mı olmuyor.”

<sup>78</sup> “Sağlık lisesine gitmek istiyorum, ailem de onu istiyor. Hemşirelik iyi. İlgim var. Eskiden de polis olmak isterdim ama şimdi vazgeçtim. Sağlık daha iyi geliyor, daha avantajlı. Hastaneye gidip eve geri geliyorsun sonuçta, daha iyi koşullar.”

“I would like to earn money to help my mom and siblings. I would like to provide a good life to the girl I will marry.” (LSES, M)<sup>79</sup>

“I would like to take my youngest sibling next to me so that s/he can study with me. I want him/her to have at least the conditions I have.” (LSES, F)<sup>80</sup>

“If I continue to university, if God allows, I will first save my family.” (LSES, F)<sup>81</sup>

“I will like to go to school and own a business. To have a life of quality. To stand on my own feet without depending on anyone. It is not the case at the moment. I would like to study and improve myself, learn more, I don't want to be an illiterate.” (LSES, F)<sup>82</sup>

All children have specified as an aspiration to have their own house, for which they do not pay a rent.

“I will buy the house in which we live in with my family now in 10 years. This is what I want.” (LSES, M)<sup>83</sup>

“I want to buy a house for my family, we pay 150 TL rent here in this place.” (LSES, F)<sup>84</sup>

In addition to the occupation, children of low socio-economic status many aspirations regarding their family life. There were many of them referring to their desires to live in a happier family relations. They wanted their parents to stop fighting, they wanted their parents to make peace and they wanted to be very happy with their wives without any interference from their own parents. For this, they also referred to bigger houses where there is enough space for everyone and not intervening in each other's business.

“My mom and dad have a lot of arguments. I want this to stop. I have a sibling, an illegitimate one. We have the same father but different mothers. My father did a child

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<sup>79</sup> “Para kazanıp anneme ve kardaşlerime yardım etmek istiyorum. Evleneceğim kıza güzel bir hayat sunmak istiyorum.”

<sup>80</sup> “En küçük kardeşimi yanıma aldırıp, yanımda okutmak istiyorum. En az benim kadar iyi imkanları olsun istiyorum.”

<sup>81</sup> “Allah izin verir de üniversiteye devam edersem önce ailemi kurtaracağım.”

<sup>82</sup> “Okuyup bir iş sahibi olmak istiyorum. Kaliteli bir hayat yaşamak için. Hiç kimseye muhtaç olmadan kendi ayaklarımın üzerinde durarak. Şu anda öyle değil. Kendimi geliştirmek istiyorum, bilgili olmak istiyorum, cahil insan olmak istemiyorum.”

<sup>83</sup> “Ailemle birlikte oturduğumuz evi satın alacağım 10 sene sonra, öyle istiyorum.”

<sup>84</sup> “Ev almak istiyorum aileme, burda 150 lira kira ödüyoruz.”

from another woman and that woman gave the child to us. My mom keeps yelling at my father, they keep fighting. I don't want to have this anymore.” (LSES, M)<sup>85</sup>

“I want to live in a separate house. Maybe my family will not get along with my wife, they will say something to my wife, which may become a problem. I don't want to have this kind of things. You never know.” (LSES, M)<sup>86</sup>

“We can live in the same building with my family but not in the same flat. The house shouldn't be crowded, everybody should act as they please. I want to be successful at my occupation and have a good life and provide a good life for my family.” (LSES, M)<sup>87</sup>

#### **5.4.4. Gendered Aspirations**

Aspirations cannot be expected to be gender-neutral. As much as patriarchy controls the daily practices, it also shapes the perspectives, the expectations and the knowledge. For example, Xu (2016) underlined that societal expectations towards girls was being artistic, emotional and dependent, and on the contrary, being sportive, technological, rational and independent for boys, which even shapes the investments made for children by their parents.

Similarly, career aspirations are not only shaped by the job-related factors, Muldoon and Reilly (2003) underlines, but also by the individual differences such as gender role orientation. Thus, the capacity to aspire is never equal among girls and boys. The knowledge influence and limit the capacity to aspire (Nathan, 2005, p.38) and this knowledge is socially contextualized and embedded in gender relations (Burke, 2006). Within the scope of this research, similar findings came out and it was most evident that the capacity to aspire was not equally distributed among boys and girls especially in terms of occupational aspirations. The findings showed that girls' and boys' occupational aspirations were heavily influenced with the gender norms.

Girls, tended to aspire for occupations that are popular among women such as teacher, psychologist or fashion designer, while boys were interested in becoming

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<sup>85</sup> “Annem ve babam çok kavga ediyor. Bu bitsin istiyorum. Benim kardeşim var, gayrimeşru. Babam bir ama annelerimiz ayrı. Babam başka kadından çocuk yapmış, kadın da çocuğu bize verdi. Annem de babama kızıp duruyor, hep kavga ediyorlar. Bitsin istiyorum artık.”

<sup>86</sup> “Ayrı evde yaşamak istiyorum, şimdi eşimle annem babam geçinemez, karıma bir şey derler, sıkıntı olur. Öyle şeyler olsun istemiyorum. Belli mi olur?”

<sup>87</sup> “Annemlerle altlı üstlü otururuz ama aynı evde değil. Ev kalabalık olmasın, herkes istediği gibi hareket etsin. Kendi işimde başarılı olayım, hem kendimi hem de ailemi iyi yaşatayım istiyorum.”



an engineer, football player. In that sense, the findings were not surprising as several other research conducted on this topic in other countries and contexts showed that girls and boys tend to aspire for different occupations that would be socially suitable for their gender (Murray and Cutcher, 2005; Aisenbrey and Brückner, 2008; Shapka et al., 2012; Burke; 2006; Purvis, 1967).

However, it is important to note that, in contrast to the earlier generations, where roles were segregated as male breadwinner and female caregiver, as Murray and Cutcher (2005) suggests, today's generation, with the focus on individualism and choice, imagine for themselves a future in which work and family coexists. Thus, girls irrespective of their socio-economic background and their mother's occupational and educational background aspire to work and specified occupational aspirations.

“I will start working after I finish my studies. My mother never worked but now it is a different era. I will work and earn my own money.” (MSES, F)<sup>88</sup>

This does not mean, though, aspirations are gender neutral outside of the occupations. In terms of the overall life aspirations, Murray and Cutcher (2012) citing from several other researches (Pocock, 2006; Munford and Sanders, 2008; Brannen and Nilsen, 2002) highlights that boys had focused on devoting more time on their work to have long and uninterrupted careers and less so to their families, while girls keep the attention to themselves as primary care-givers in need to balance their work life and family lives, perceived as competing demands.

Similarly, in this research, findings reveal that girls from all socio-economic backgrounds have specifically referred to their domestic responsibilities in terms of care of the elderly and/or the children in the household, including other household chores, whereas boys were concentrated on realizing their career aspirations and becoming the primary breadwinner of the household.

“It is ok if my wife doesn't work. She may if she wants to but not needed. I can work and look after her. There won't be any need for her to work. She can stay at home and look after kids, right? But I am not saying that she shouldn't work. She should

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<sup>88</sup> “Eğitimim bittikten sonra çalışacağım. Annem çalışmamış, çalışmıyor ama artık devir değişti. Ben çalışacağım, kendi paramı kazanacağım.”

take care of the children as she works. She should find such kind of job to be able to do this.” (MSES, M)<sup>89</sup>

“I think of a day in 10 years. I will come home from work, I will cook, then my husband will come, we will have dinner together, then we will spend time with children. If have a more relaxed job, it will be easier to do these.” (MSES, F)<sup>90</sup>

### 5.5. Neglecting the Social Structure in an Era of Equal Opportunities

*“The lure of individual success is increasingly emphasized, whilst available resources that are available to students have dwindled”*

*Gordon, 2006, p.12*

The dilemma between the agency and structure is everywhere and as explained in the theoretical framework chapter, this discussion dates back to the beginning of the sociological studies. It is never solved or came close to be solved as there is no single answer to this dilemma. This dilemma has been shifting tendencies based on the socio-political environment shaping our daily life relationships, practices, experiences, desires, wishes, expectations, aspirations for our future.

However, the influence of neo-liberalism underlining the individuality over community and society, with the promise of the availability of equal opportunities offered to be openly benefitted by the individuals, and the popularly pronounced global norms of freedom and independency has resulted in the under-recognition of the existence of social structures, which indeed limit them in many senses including the way they think and what they aspire for as well as the possibility to realize their aspirations.

The neo-liberal discourse on the equality of opportunities creates an *illusio* that everyone should be part of the social mobility as there is room to move upwards for everyone. Thus, social mobility is dependent on agents’ capacity calling each capacitated agent to be part of this movement. The emphasis on the individuals’

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<sup>89</sup> “Eşim çalışmasa da olur, isterse çalışsın tabi ama ben çalışır ona bakarım. Gerek olmaz yani onun çalışmasına. Evde kalsın, çocuklarımıza baksın değil mi? Ha çalışmasın da demiyorum ama. Çalışsın da çocuklara da baksın. Öyle bir iş bulsun, çocuklara da baksın.”

<sup>90</sup> “10 sene sonra bir günümü düşünüyorum da... İşten eve gelirim, yemek yaparım sonra eşim gelir, hep birlikte yemek yeriz ailecek, sonra çocuklarla vakit geçiririz. Rahat bir işim olursa bunları daha kolay yapabilirim sanki.”

responsibility and capacity creates a *doxic* relationship between the agency and the structure. Thus, the objective structures that may enable or impede the movements in the social space is not recognized as there is a misrecognition that the agency will be the main agent of one's faith. This doxa rejects a *fait accompli* and creates a finalist illusion that past conditions will not affect the future.

This discourse, developed and conceptualized at higher levels of the state apparatus, manifest itself among adolescents' future plans and strategies as *doxa*. It turns out to be attempts to neglect to the structural obstacles in front of the adolescents from different income groups for their movement in the social space and place higher emphasis on their agencies, thus the capacity to make decisions as well as a sense of being agentic, to facilitate these desired movements (Gordon, 2006).

As elaborated previously, the neo-liberal ideas has created an environment for the adolescents that the system provides them equal opportunities with the promise of overruling the structural obstacles by individual effort. This was a shift from placing the responsibility on the state to the individuals. In this neo-liberal era, individuals are held accountable for taking up the opportunities that are being provided equally to them and use them at most for their movements in social space. This idea of having equal opportunities, indeed, also created a promise that all social stratas are open to all individuals no matter their socio-economic, racial, ethnic or gender backgrounds are.

The study mentioned earlier by MOFSP conducted among the adolescents in Turkey has found out that 87% of the adolescents believe that they will be able to acquire the occupation they desire. As Bandura et al. (2001) suggests that the incentive behind act and be resilient against difficulties is the belief that they can produce the desired outcomes by their own actions. Despite the fact that they may be aware of the other factors that will influence the end-result, they still believe in the power they have as an agent to affect that. This is what changes aspirations and strengths and commitments to them. Similarly, in this research, adolescents' belief on the power of their own agency was very strong among all groups of adolescents irrespective of their socio-economic status.

### ***5.5.1. Internalization of Externality: A Common Belief on Equal Opportunities***

*“There are many things people accept without knowing, this is what I call doxa”*

*Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1992, p.111*

*Habitus* is an evolving structure. It makes it possible to produce new ideas, views and approaches in an unlimited scope based on historical, economic, cultural and technological context in which they are created (Murphy and Costa, 2015).

In his analysis of power, as explained in the chapter on theoretical and conceptual framework, Bourdieu refers to a concept called doxa to explain “the combination of both orthodox and heterodox norms and beliefs – the unstated, taken-for-granted assumptions or ‘common sense’ behind the distinctions we make”. When the limits that give rise to the unequal divisions in the society are forgotten, doxa occurs. Then, it is ‘an adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident’ (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 471).

The proliferation of the transnational media technologies and migration makes people to be exposed to a wider range of experiences that increase the perception on the possibilities. The variety of possible lives has increased dramatically as the limits are forgotten and possibility of realizing other lives becomes doxa. Appadurai calls this as “broken imagination” since people are set free from their restricted spaces leading to an increased sense of agency, a sense that the future can be different from the past” (Sellar cited from Appadurai, 2013, p.32).

The new generation is convinced with the idea that the market economy brings them the choices and the state is there to ensure that the choices are there and anyone can benefit from these opportunities. As discussed briefly in the previous chapters, the neoliberal ideology has introduced the idea that there are equal opportunities for everyone who is willing to, and works for, to take up these opportunities. Thus, among today’s adolescents, the existence of equal opportunities became a doxa.

It is adolescents' *habitus* that make them internalize the prospects of equal opportunities that are available to them. Through the evolving nature of their *habitus*, adolescents perceive the social world in line with the presented possibilities. As the dialectic between *habitus* and the fields takes place, an accommodation occurs, *habitus* modifies itself and internalize the legitimacy of the new field's structure despite the negotiation takes place within the restricted socio-economic positioning which influence how aspirations are perceived (Stahl, 2015).

Doxa can lead to common action. Despite the variety of the *habitus* of the adolescents who took part in this research, due to their different social dispositions, have internalized this externality as doxa, that no one questions its existence, possibility and practicality.

“The state gives everything, my sister. The textbooks are for free, for example. We also don't pay for the school.” (LSES, M)<sup>91</sup>

This unquestioned externality is internalized by the adolescents from different socio-economic backgrounds and genders steering their aspirations for their life. The scope of the aspirations are determined under the doxic relationship built with the externality that promise choices and equal opportunities. This doxic externality allows the adolescents to broaden the possibility of realizing the aspirations they aspire for freed from the potential constraints they may face resulting from their socio-economic and gender background.

“I can take my own decisions. I can do stuff on my own, I am courageous, I won't say 'oh, I won't do this, I can't do that'. I will give it a try. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. I am committed. When I can't do something, I even push more. I am skilled at many things, I can't say that I can't do this. Compared to many people, I am skillful.” (HSES, F)<sup>92</sup>

“I will follow my dreams. I am a hardworking person. My skills determine everything.” (LSES, F)<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> “Devlet sağolsun, her şeyi veriyor abla. Kitaplar bedava mesela, okula da para vermiyoruz.”

<sup>92</sup> “Kendi kararlarımı kendim verebiliyorum. Kendi başıma bir şeyler yapabiliyorum ve de cesurum, onu yapmayayım bunu etmeyeyim demem. Denerim, olmazsa da olmaz. Hırslıyım. Bir şey yapamadığım zaman üstüne daha çok gidiyorum. Bir çok şeye yetenekliyim, ay bunu da beceremiyorum demem. Bir çok insana göre daha yetenekliyim.”

<sup>93</sup> “Hayallerimin peşinden koşarım ben, çalışkanımdır da. Yeteneklerim her şeyi belirliyor.”

“My dreams that I had 5 years ago, came true since I worked a lot and achieved.”  
(MSES, F)<sup>94</sup>

“I am skilled, I am clever. I am good at everything, I am confident of myself.”  
(LSES, M)<sup>95</sup>

This idea keeps the focus on the individual, thus in the agency itself. Being convinced by the idea that the social structure provides an enabling environment for individuals to benefit from the widened possibilities of life experiences, adolescents are geared to maintain and strengthen their sense of agency leading to a neglect of the objective structure that may impede the realization of aspirations.

### ***5.5.2. Externalization of Internality: A Variety of Strategies to Realize Aspirations***

This idea leads the adolescents to keep their focus on themselves, their own agency to shape the rest of their lives. However, overemphasized role of the agency result in the neglect of the objective structure that actually have vital roles in shaping individuals' lives.

“I am determined hence I think I can do it. I can't do it through the way I think, I will find another way to do it but I will do it. I am skillful, I can do everything I try.” (HSES, M)<sup>96</sup>

“Everything is in my hands. If I study well, I can have a nice life, why not? And studying... it's also in my hands. Everything linked to this year and it's linked to me. The more I study, the more I achieve.” (LSES, F)<sup>97</sup>

“I am skilled at studying, I like it and I understand it to. I need to study in order to realize my aspirations.” (MSES, F)<sup>98</sup>

“The realization of all these depends on my work. If I work hard, they will come true.” (HSES, F)<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> “5 sene önce istediklerim hep gerçekleşti çünkü çok çalıştım ve başardım.”

<sup>95</sup> “Çok yetenekliyim, çok zekiyim hocam, her işi beceririm yani kendime güveniyorum.”

<sup>96</sup> “Kararlı olduğum için yapabileceğimi düşünüyorum. İstedğim yoldan olmasa da yapmak için başka yol bulurum ama yaparım. Hem de çok yetenekliyim, elimi attığım şeyi yaparım.”

<sup>97</sup> “Kendi elimde her şey, okursam kendime iyi bir hayat sunarım tabi ki, niye olmasın. Okumak da benim elimde. Her şey bu seneye bağlı. O da bana bağlı, ne kadar çok çalışırsam o kadar çok başarı elde ederim.”

<sup>98</sup> “Ders çalışmaya yatkınım, seviyorum ve de anlıyorum da ve hayallerimin gerçekleşmesi için ders çalışmam gerekiyor.”

<sup>99</sup> “Bunların gerçekleşmesi benim çalışmama bağlı, iyi çalışırsam olur.”

This is a result of *habitus* being a product of the interplay between free will and structures, which is influenced by the past events and experiences that shapes current practices and structures. The structures exist; however, they are not recognized as inputs shaping the future standings. Thus, for adolescents, the social standing is shaped by their own agency. However, influenced by their varying dispositions in the social space based on their socio-economic and gender backgrounds, externalization of this internality is manifested differently.

As presented earlier in this section, the idea of having a different future than the past is much more prevalent among the low socio-economic status adolescents. Therefore, the externalization of the idea of equality of opportunities turns almost into a disobedience with the objective structures which are expected to direct them to a certain life trajectory similar to their parents. They rely on a powerful agency of themselves to change this cycle.

“I will change the destiny of my whole family. The teachers also say so. They tell us to work hard and save ourselves. I will do so and I will change my life, my mother’s, my father’s and my siblings’. I will be different; my destiny will be different.” (LSES, M)<sup>100</sup>

The only objective structure that is not neglected by the low socio-economic status adolescents is the neighborhood they live in. By all adolescents from low socio-economic status, who participated in the research, their residential neighborhood, in which they also attend school, is the main obstacle that needs to be removed to realize the aspirations they have for their future.

“The only thing that can be an obstacle for me is our neighborhood. I need to live in a better neighborhood. A safer one.” (LSES, M)<sup>101</sup>

“There are bad guys here, selling drugs. Such a messy place. They shoot people in front of our eyes, there are fights. There was blood on the wall. There were people from Samsun here. They were nice people but they moved out because this is such

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<sup>100</sup> “Ben ailemin kaderini değiştireceğim. Hocalar da öyle diyor. Çok çalışın, kurtarın kendinizi bu hayattan diyor. Ben de öyle yapacağım, kendi hayatımı da değiştireceğim, annemin, babamın kardeşlerimin de. Farklı olacağım ben, kaderim farklı olacak.”

<sup>101</sup> “Bana engel olabilecek tek şey mahalle. Daha iyi bir mahallede yaşamam lazım. Daha güvenli.”

kind of a place. We will also move to Keçiören. It is more comfortable there. We have relatives. My father has siblings there.” (LSES, M)<sup>102</sup>

“I am satisfied with the school but the environment influences us really badly. One thinks ‘am I going to be like that?’ There are plenty of drug-dealers around. We watch it on the news, they teach the boys how to drug-deal. We shouldn’t go next to them. One look at and gets afraid thinking that you will become one of these bad guys, that you will get used to these drugs. Couple of days ago, I was coming to school, the guy told me to join them for 100 TL per day. I get scared thinking that I will find the offer attractive. There are kids younger than us smoking cigarettes in this neighborhood. If we have lived in a better environment, we could have been professors.” (LSES, M)<sup>103</sup>

On the other hand, adolescents from the middle socio-economic background opt to coexist with the objective structures. Thus, these adolescents, as stipulated by their aspirations built on ordinary elements aiming to maintain their statusquo, are not in a conflict with the objective structures that place them where they are. Then, the focus on agency is not contradicting, as much as it does with the low socio-economic group, with the objective structures. Their form of neglect of the objective structure takes the form of coexistence, where the existence of social structures is not perceived as an obstacle as it has not been so far.

“I am happy with my life. If there is an obstacle, let it be. If we can overcome, we will overcome. And we will overcome, why not? But if it’s something that can’t be overcome, we live accordingly. I don’t really care about these things. I am trying to be happy in this life.” (MSES, M)<sup>104</sup>

Lastly, adolescents from high socio-economic status take the social structures for granted. Their neglect of the social structures takes the form that they do not recognize the objective structures, such as the financial situation, that helped them

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<sup>102</sup> “Burda serseriler var, uyuşturucu satıyorlar, pislik bir yer. Gözümüzün önünde adam vuruyorlar, kavga oluyor. Duvarda adamın kanı vardı. Samsunlular vardı burda, çok iyi insanlardı ama taşındılar burası böyle olduğu için. Biz de taşınacağız Keçiören’e. Orası daha rahat. Akralar var, babamın kardeşleri var.”

<sup>103</sup> “Okuldan memnunum ama bunun çevresi bizi etkiliyor. İnsan ben de onun gibi olacağım diye düşünüyor. Etrafta br sürü uyuşturucu satanlar var. Haberlerde seyrediyoruz, erkeklere satıcılığı öğretiyorlar. Onların yanına gitmemek lazım. İnsan bakıp korkuyor, bunlar gibi pislik olacağım diye, bunlara alışacağım diye. Geçen gün okula geliyordum, adam gel bize katıl, günlük 100 lira diyordu, insan ya aklım kayarsa diye düşünüyor. Bu mahallede benden küçük çocuklar sigara içeriyor. İyi bir çevrede olsak bizden prefosör bile çıkardı.”

<sup>104</sup> “Memnunum ben hayatımdan ya. Engel varsa da var, aşabilirsek aşarız. Aşarız da niye aşamayalım? He yok aşılmayacak bir şeye de ona göre yaşarız. Ben böyle şeylere pek kafamı yormuyorum. Mutlu olmaya bakıyorum bu hayatta.”



to be where they are at the moment in the social space, which is relatively higher compared to their peers.

“Of course, my family is really important for the things I possess now but still I think that the most important factor is me. My family provided opportunities but I am the one who utilized them. There are plenty of people who have the opportunities but at the end they don’t use it. I think what I possess now is because of me.” (HSES, F)<sup>105</sup>

### **5.5.2.1. Gendered Forms of Neglect**

*“Gender, like race, is never absent, and ambiguities about gender are more or less poorly tolerated”*

*Whitehead, 1979, p.11*

As much as the idea of equal opportunities prevailed for adolescents from different socio-economic backgrounds with the promise of neutralizing the differences in the social strata, gender inequality among boys and girls was not experienced, except the adolescents from low socio-economic background. Alternatively, as Fordham (cited by Hubbard, 1999, p.365) suggests that girls may be better to ignore the limitations imposed upon them despite their awareness on their existence. Girls are "much more adept at appropriating the image of an 'other' while pretending that the social reality they experience every day is not real" as an accommodation strategy to exist in both social realms.

Among the middle and high socio-economic background children, adolescents from both backgrounds, both boys and girls, emphasized the equal experiences they have with their opposite sexes. Gender inequality was associated with adult life. Thus, both boys and girl adolescents from these two SES do not experience the influence of patriarchy in their current lives. When probed, it has its potential to appear in the future.

MSES, F: “My mom doesn’t let me study out of town, she does not want to get separated. I am girl, she doesn’t want me to have any problems?”

Interviewer: “Is your gender an obstacle then?”

MSES, F: “Yes, I actually realized it now when you asked. I thought that my gender doesn’t make any difference. When somebody says gender, I think of boys. My

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<sup>105</sup> “Ya ailem tabi çok önemli elimde olanlara sahip olmamda ama gene de en önemli şeyin kendim olduğunu düşünüyorum ben. Onlar olanak sağladı ama ben de kullandım. Bir sürü insanın olanağı var ama kullanmıyor sonuçta. Elimdekilerin kendi sayemde olduğunu düşünüyorum ben.”

mom said whether Ankara or Istanbul since we have family there, she wants me to be with a part of the family during university years.”<sup>106</sup>

Coming from more traditional families, the experience of gender among girls and boys is significantly different among the low socio-economic background adolescents. Gender inequality as an impeding objective structure was mostly referred by girls as they had a direct and negative experience with this objective structure in their daily lives, which made it clear to them that they do not benefit from the same opportunities that boys benefit, either their peers or siblings.

“My father would have let me do many other things if I was a boy. I am a young woman now, naturally, he doesn’t let me go outside.” (LSES, F)<sup>107</sup>

The famous Turkish proverb of ‘Kız evde, oğlan işte’ (“Girl at home, boy at work”) is the simplest reflection of the traditional roles, in the Turkish society, assigned to boys as breadwinners, head of households and protector of family honor, on the contrary, to girls as wives or mothers requiring little education (Rankin and Aytaç, 2006).

As Rotman (2006) puts; however, the ‘separation of spheres’ is not only valid for domesticity, thus ‘women at home’. It has its reflections to other social relations of many peoples across time and space. Hence, the manifestation of gender inequality experienced by low socio-economic girls went beyond their daily lives. It influences their aspirations, as discussed in the previous sections, and diminishing their sense of agency with a potential of leading to giving up from their aspirations.

“My mom didn’t want my sister to continue the school. She thought that her behaviors will change if she goes to high school. She dates with some guys. She thought that it will be worse at high school. Therefore, she wanted her to stay home to protect her being exposed to bad things.” (LSES, F)<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> MSES, F: “Annem şehir dışında okumamı istemiyor, ondan ayrılmamı istemiyor. Hani başıma bir şey gelmesin diye, kız çocuğum ya.”

Araştırmacı: “Cinsiyetin bir engel mi yani?”

MSES, F: “Evet, bak onu şu anda farkettilim siz sorunca. Cinsiyetimin bir şey farketmediğini düşünmüştüm. Cinsiyet diyince aklım hep erkeğe gidiyor. Annem Ankara ya da İstanbul dedi çünkü orda da anneannem var, yani aile yanında olmamı istiyor üniversitede.”

<sup>107</sup> “Erkek olsam babam daha çok şeye izin verirdi. Genç kız oldum tabi o yüzden babam dışarı çıkarmıyor.”

<sup>108</sup> “Annem istemedi ablamın okula gitmesini. Liseye giderse tavırları değişir diye düşündü. Birileriyle çıkıyor, lisede iyice kötü olur o yüzden evde kalsın, başına kötü şeyler gelmesin istedi.”

“My mom also thinks whether she should send me to high school but there isn’t any income. I may not go to high school because of this. Material conditions are important. That is the only obstacle. Sometimes, I can’t make it to school, my house is too far, I walk. Some mornings, my mom doesn’t let me go thinking that something will happen on the way. Especially after the Özgecan incident. I come more often during summer, but it gets cold during winter. The bus is not free. Sometimes, I ask the minibus driver ‘brother, can you drop me off to school, I don’t have any money’. We will see next year. If it turns to be a place far away, I can’t go. If I can’t make it to the school that is nearby, I will drop out. I hope I will get into the Anadolu high school that is close to my house. I am seeing myself there, I want to be there.” (LSES, F)<sup>109</sup>

Despite the fact that gender equality was an identified and recognized impeding structure among the low socio-economic girls, one boy from the low socio-economic has referred to gender as an objective structure that shapes the take up from opportunities. He has recognized that his gender, as a boy, was an advantage for him to continue his education and realize his aspirations.

“In Şanlıurfa, usually boys are sent to school. I have a sister. She is now at grade 6 but she doesn’t come to school. She helps my mom at home. My parents do not send to school since she has grown up now. She is registered actually but doesn’t attend. My gender allows me to be educated.” (LSES, M)<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> “Annem de düşünüyör liseye göndersem mi diye ama gelir yok, o yüzden gidemeyebilirim liseye. Maddi durum önemli. Tek engel o. bazen okula gelemiyorum, evim uzak olduğu için yürüyorum. Annem de sabah bir şey olacak diye göndermek istemiyor. Hele bir de Özgecan olayından sonra. Yazın daha çok geliyorum da, kışın soğuk oluyor. Otobüs de paralı. Bazen soruyorum dolmuşa ‘abi diyorum, beni okulun oraya kadar götürür müsün param yok’ diyorum. Seneye bakacağız. Uzak bir yer olursa gidemem, eğer yakındaki okulu kazanamazsam bırakacağım. İnşallah kazanırım da evin oradaki Anadolu Lisesi’ne giderim. Ben kendimi orda görüyorum, orda görmek istiyorum.”

<sup>110</sup> “Bizim Şanlıurfa’da genellikle erkekler çok okutulur. Kız kardeşim var 6. Sınıfa geçti ama okula gelmiyor evde anneme yardım ediyor. Annem, babam okula göndermiyor artık yaşı büyüdü diye, aslında kayıtlı ama gelmiyor. Benim cinsiyetim okumamı sağlıyor.”

### 5.5.3. Accumulating cultural capital

*“We had one TEOG examination to transit from primary to secondary school. I checked the profile of students who scored 120 out of 120, I believe that we have achieved equality of opportunities. Some people say that it is an exception but the examples I can give is far beyond an exception. One of the students who scored 120 is from Van Erciş. I didn't mention any city center. The other one is from van Edremit, the other is Ağrı Diyadin, from Muş Varto, Şırnak İdil or from Tunceli Çemişgezek. The child from Tunceli Çemişgezek is now studying at Robert College. This is what equality of opportunity is”<sup>111</sup>*

*İsmet Yılmaz, Minister of National Education of Turkey, June 2016*

In spite of their overemphasized role of agency to realize the aspirations and get to the desired point in the social space, adolescents, irrespective of their socio-economic background and gender, caused by the internalization of the externality emphasizing the existence of equal opportunities, adopted the strategy of accumulating cultural capital to realize aspirations since the ‘neoliberal opportunity bargain’ suggests that more learning will bring more earning (Sellar, 2013). This discourse welcomed schools as places to prepare for the opportunities, upon which success and failure depend on personal gifts independent of social condition (Bennett and Silva, 2006).

*“Schools, the education system, institutions, academies are all directly implicated in propagating a particular world view; one that is ‘consecrated’ and ‘legitimate’, but one which finally has to be understood as arbitrary in that it is relative to a particular way of doing things – one that advantages certain sections of the populace” (Grenfell, 2007, p.96).*

Education predicts continuity and discontinuity of income status across generations and educational attainments is a significant factor for a person’s adult economic status as accumulation of cultural capital change the composition and volumes of

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<sup>111</sup> Bir TEOG sınavımız oldu, orta okuldan liseye geçiş için. Bu sınavda 120 sorunun, 120'sini yapan öğrencilere baktım, fırsat eşitliğini sağladığımızı düşünüyorum. Kimisi istisna diyor ama vereceğim örnekler istisnanın çok ötesinde. 120 soruyu çözenlerden birisi Van Erciş'ten. Hiçbir zaman il merkezlerini söylemedim. Bir diğeri Van'ın Edremit ilçesinde, Ağrı Diyadin'den, Muş Varto'dan, Şırnak İdil'den, Tunceli Çemişgezek'ten. Tunceli Çemişgezek'ten TEOG'da birinci olan çocuk şimdi Robert Koleji'nde okuyor. İşte bu fırsat eşitliğidir"

capital that one individual possess facilitating the movements in the social space. (Lee et al., 2012).

Therefore, the internalization of the idea of equal opportunities, within which the channels to be educated is assumed to be broadened, is accompanied with the idea that education is key to take up these opportunities. The possibilities are wide open once the individuals educate themselves for these possible life trajectories.

Murray and Cutcher (2012) refers to previous studies that challenged the dominant discourse on choice and opportunities and found out that this discourse was only dominant among the advantaged young people whose background provided them resources and opportunities for choosing.

However, this was not the case among the adolescents participated in this research. As underlined above, adolescents from all backgrounds relied on accumulating cultural capital to ensure that they will activate the sense of agency and realize their aspirations.

“If I go to a good university, I can earn the life much easily.” (HSES, M)<sup>112</sup>

“It is the education system, which determines everything. Our future is tied to it but its future is not determined. The system has now changed, how is it going to be in the future? How is it going to affect us?” (HSES, F)<sup>113</sup>

“If I can go to a proper high school, there isn’t any obstacle in front me. If I can’t, there are plenty. If I cannot go to a proper high school, I will not be able to go to a good university and none of my wishes will come true.” (HSES, F)<sup>114</sup>

“Studying comes first. We should not remain illiterate. My aunt and grandmother also supports this idea. Employment opportunities increase after finishing the high school.” (LSES, M)<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> “İyi bir üniversiteye girersem hayatı daha kolay kazanırım.”

<sup>113</sup> “Eğitim sistemi her şeyi belirliyor. Bütün geleceğimiz ona bağlı ama gelecek belli değil. Sistem değişti şimdi, ileride nasıl olacak, bizi nasıl etkileyecek bilemiyorum.”

<sup>114</sup> “Düzenli bir liseyi kazanırsam önümde bir engel yok, kazanamazsam çok büyük bir engel var. Eğer iyi bir liseye gidemezsem iyi bir üniversiteye de gidemem ve isteklerim olmaz.”

<sup>115</sup> “Okumak her şeyden önce geliyor. Cahil kalmamak gerekir. Halam, babaannem de destekliyor bunu. Liseyi bitirdikten sonra iş imkanları artıyor.”

## 5.6. Chapter Summary

The findings of the first stage of the field research showed that daily practices are guided by the socio-economic status of the children. While preparations for the TEOG and, thus, future concerns, featured the daily practices of children from all backgrounds, it was obvious that how children manage their time within the day, how they access school, what and where they eat, the extent and the method of being involved in extracurricular activities mattered based on their socio-economic and gender background.

Children's perceptions and knowledge on the existence of social structures and how they acquired this knowledge was also affected by their socio-economic and gender background. While the specificity of their knowledge on social structures, feeding into the process of aspiration-building, was quite apparent in high and low income group children, the sophistication of that knowledge dropped as the socio-economic status decreased.

Capacity to aspire is affected by a variety of factors including the existing capabilities, social ties, economic capital, the access and control over resources, which all shape *habitus*, which in return shapes the aspirations.

The findings have revealed that based on the positions in the social space, adolescents from different socio-economic status and gender background have varying aspirations. These aspirations are affected by their *habitus*, in terms of social dispositions influencing what they aspire for as a result of externalization of internality. Adolescents from low socio-economic background aspire to change the trajectory that is designated to them and look for changing their lives and their families. On the other hand, adolescents from middle SES aspire to maintain the status quo and their main aspiration is to build a family and be happy. Finally, adolescents from high socio-economic status backgrounds aspire to expand their access to luxury in their future lives. It should also be noted that aspirations also do vary between girls and boys. Not surprisingly, both genders tend to select occupational aspirations that are socially accepted based on the gender norms but they differ when it comes to family obligations. Girls aspire to have stronger ties

with their immediate and extended families, whereas boys' focuses are heavier on their career compared to their immediate families and even less so for their extended families.

Irrespective of their background, it was an eye-opening finding to see that all adolescents have internalized the neo-liberal discourse on equality of opportunities and build their sense of agency based on this discourse. In terms of the agency and the structure dilemma, adolescents, based on the promise of equal opportunities, consider that their agency will be the main push factor to realize their aspirations. Accompanied with the idea that sense of agency should be strengthened by accumulation of cultural capital, they rely their strategies to realize their future aspirations to invest in their education. This lure created by the belief that there is equality of opportunities became so doxic that its existence is not questioned by adolescents. Rather, it leads to the neglect of the objective structures which play significant roles in shaping their future lives.

Despite the fact that the equality of opportunities is internalized by all, due to their different dispositions in the social space, adolescents' neglect of social space is manifested differently. Adolescents from high socio-economic background take the objective structures that helped them so far for being in the place where they are, for granted. These structures are not recognized, thus neglected in a way that their contribution for the current social disposition is not accounted for. On the other hand, adolescents from middle socio-economic background opt to coexist with the objective structures with a view that their existence is not as important for them as for the adolescents from other socio-economic groups. Adolescents from low socio-economic background are in disobedience with the life trajectory that is designated for them by the social structure. Finally, and most interestingly, when boys and girls are compared, benefitting from equal opportunities by both sexes were fully internalized by both girls and boys from middle and high socio-economic backgrounds. However, question marks remain especially for girls from low socio-economic status. Despite their concentration on the capacity of agency to shape their

lives, they were in recognition of the possibility of varying take ups from provided opportunities between boys and girls.



## CHAPTER 6

### ASPIRATIONS AND THE SENSE OF AGENCY OF ADOLESCENTS AFTER THE ENCOUNTER OF A RECOGNIZED STRUCTURAL OBSTACLE

*“I will argue that women strategize within a set of concrete constraints that reveal and define the blueprint of what I will term the patriarchal bargain' of any given society, which may exhibit variations according to class, caste, and ethnicity. These patriarchal bargains exert a powerful influence on the shaping of women's gendered subjectivity and determine the nature of gender ideology in different contexts. They also influence both the potential for and specific forms of women's active or passive resistance in the face of their oppression”*

*Kandiyoti, 1988, p.27*

#### **6.1.Introduction**

The previous chapter has analyzed the findings of the data gathered from the field in the first phase of the research and presented how socio-economic status shapes the socio-economy of daily practices, aspirations and perceptions for capacity of agency.

As mentioned in the research methodology chapter, adolescents who took part in the first phase of the interviews before they sat in TEOG examination were followed up in one year. This chapter focuses on the findings of the second phase of the research conducted in 2016. Out of 40 adolescents who were interviewed in 2015, 31

adolescents were reached again in 2016. Adolescents were re-interviewed on their current position, compared to their aspirations of last year, their future aspirations in order to allow an analysis of how the emphasis on capacity of agency changes after the encounter with an individually recognized structural obstacle. The findings of the second phase interviews showed that the introduction of another structural obstacle has led to a widened divide of daily practices among the adolescents signaling a wider dispersion across the social space. A vast majority of the children were not able to realize their short-term aspirations, thus, being placed in the high school they wanted to. This situation has resulted in a different assessment of the scope of the structure among the adolescents. While the primary emphasis remained on the agency to realize the aspirations, the recognition of the social structure that may assist or hinder the desired movements in the social space had contributed to development of different forms of agencies as coping strategies to maintain their agencies' position against the social structure.

### **6.2.A Widened Divide of Daily Practices**

Each class is characterized by certain configuration of capital, economic, cultural and social, and the distribution of these capitals corresponds to a certain lifestyle. Thus, lifestyles, daily practices as a product, are reflections of social class. They signal the socio-economic backgrounds and taste of the individuals and share similarities across the groups that have social standings close to each other. They are internal parts of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1984).

All individuals are born into the social space with a social standing based on their familial background, gender and ethnicity. While babies, it is harder to read these social standings. However, as individuals grow, they internalize the social norms and practices of the social class they belong to and start showing the characteristics of that social class. As the distance between the social standings increase, it becomes easier to read the social standing of the individuals. This distance gets wider as individuals are affected by the social institutions that place to specific positions in the social space.

Bourdieu has referred to different kinds of capital that determines the positions of the individuals in the social space. These capitals are economic, cultural and social. Individuals are dispersed in the social space based on the variety and the volume of the capitals they possess. Despite the fact that all individuals already have a combination of these capitals at birth, the composition and the combination change across the life-cycle depending on various reasons including political environment, economic conditions or individual achievements.

Following the transition to high school, a wider divide in terms of daily practices was observed among the adolescents from different socio-economic status as well as among males and females.

Compared to the previous year, there is not much difference in the daily practices of adolescents from high socio-economic status. All of them, who took part in the second phase of interviews have continued to high school. There are no drop-outs. All adolescents of high socio-economic status wake up around 7 am and take private school shuttle to go to school after having breakfast at home. They have their lunch at school and come back to home. They continue spending most of their time for studying and doing their homework.

“I wake up at 7.30 in the morning. The classes start at 9.20. I come back to home around 4.30. It gets 7-8 pm as I have my dinner and take a bath. I study and go to bed. I don't do anything else. The day is over.” (HSES, F)<sup>116</sup>

Future concerns are still part of their daily practices. Attention to *TEOG* is replaced with the central examination for the university entrance. They have already started preparing for the university and some of them have already started attending *dersane* for university entrance exam preparations.

“I wake up around 6 in the morning. At 7, the school bus arrives, I go to school. I am at school until 3. I come back to home around 4. From 6 to 10, I go to *dersane*”

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<sup>116</sup> “Sabah 7.30’da uyanıp hazırlanıyorum. Ders 9’u 20 geçe başlıyor. Akşam 4.30 gibi evde oluyorum. Yemek, banyo derken saat 7-8 oluyor zeten, ders çalışıyorum, yatıyorum. Başka bir şey yapmıyorum. Gün bitiyor.”

to prepare for the university entrance exam. My family wanted me to go to dersane.”  
(HSES, M)<sup>117</sup>

As reported in the first phase, they have resumed their extra-curricular activities following the *TEOG* examination.

“I go to volleyball practice on Mondays and Tuesdays. When it is finished, I come home to study. I learn French this year; therefore, I study a lot on French. On the days, when we don’t have quizzes, which is rare, I go out with my mom.” (HSES, F)<sup>118</sup>

Adolescents from high SES do not spend much time watching TV. They devote their time to studying during weekdays and going to shopping malls during weekends with friends, playing video games and surfing on Internet and social media. Despite the heavy emphasis on studying, they report to be more relaxed compared to last year.

“This year is really hard. Believe me that I work much harder than last year but still I am much more relaxed this year compared to last year. At least, my mind is relaxed. The concern of what am I going to be has decreased.” (HSES, F)<sup>119</sup>

“I come home, do my homework and I go to bed. I don’t have any other time left but still I am much more relaxed than last year. *TEOG* has really tired us out. We got really tired last year.” (HSES, F)<sup>120</sup>

Adolescents from middle income group had the most in-group diversity. It was already mentioned in the earlier chapters that some level of heterogeneity is expected among the middle socio-economic status adolescents based on the earlier researches done in Turkey. This heterogeneity becomes more obvious and apparent during the second phase of the research. It can be clearly observed that some of them are showing similarities with high income group daily practices, whereas some others are now closer to low income group daily practices. Thus, their daily practices

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<sup>117</sup> “Sabah uyanıyorum 6 gibi. 7’de servis geliyor ve okula gidiyorum. 3’e kadar okuldayım, 4 gibi evde oluyorum. 6’den akşam 10’a kadar dersanedeyim gene, üniversite hazırlıkları için. Ailem dersaneye gitmemi istedi.”

<sup>118</sup> “Pazartesi ve Salı günleri voleybol antrenmanım var. O bitince eve gelip ders çalışıyorum, Fransızca öğreniyorum bu sene. O yüzden bol bol Fransızca çalışıyorum. Quiz olmadığı günlerde, ki bu çok nadiren oluyor, annemle gezmeye dışarı çıkıyoruz.”

<sup>119</sup> “Bu sene gerçekten çok zor. İnanın bana geçen seneden daha fazla çalışıyorum ama gene de kendim geçen seneye göre daha rahat hissediyorum. En azından kafam rahat. Ne olacağım kaygısı azaldı.”

<sup>120</sup> “Eve gelip ödevlerimi yapıyorum sonra da yatıyorum. Başka vaktim kalmıyor ama gene de daha rahatım geçen seneye göre. *TEOG* bizi çok yıpratmış geçen sene, çok yorulmuşuz.”

has widened from each other and their daily practices as a group of middle socio-economic status, is not harmonized as it was last year. All of the middle-class adolescents have continued to high school and there were no drop-outs and attendance to school is regular. They spend almost all day at school. Some of the adolescents, especially those who were able to get into Anadolu high school, spend their time after school on studying and doing their homework. The rest have more relaxed daily practices, they spend time in the neighborhood with friends, watch TV and join extracurricular activities run by the schools such as guitar classes.

“I wake up every morning at the same time. I walk uphill for 100m then straight ahead for 100m, I take the school bus. I come back home and rest until 7 pm. Then I do my homework until 9. Then I watch TV until midnight and go to bed.” (MSES, M)<sup>121</sup>

“High school is very tough. I work a lot. But I am not going to a dersane. Private classes took dersane’s place. I am taking English and guitar classes at school.” (MSES, F)<sup>122</sup>

“I don’t spend time in the neighborhood. I don’t like it; therefore, I don’t want to spend time over there. There are thieves etc. During weekends, we go to the industrial zone together with my friend to his brother-in-law’s workplace. He has an auto-mechanic. We help him out. Only on Saturdays. He gives us pocket money. 40-50 TL every 2-3 weeks.” (MSES, M)<sup>123</sup>

The deviation compared to last year is most visible among the low socio-economic class children. Few adolescents have dropped out and started working full time, some others continued to high school but work during weekends. Low socio-economic status adolescents either walk or take public transportation to go to school. After school, they spend their time at home or in the neighborhood, most of which has moved from the neighborhood they used to live last year due to urban transformation project.

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<sup>121</sup> “Hergün aynı saatte kalkıp 100m yokuş çıkıp, 100m düz yol yürüyüp okul servisine biniyorum. Eve gelip saat 7’ye kadar dinleniyorum, sonra 9’a kadar ödev yapıp ders çalışıyorum. Sonra da gece 12’ye kadar TV seyredip yatıyorum.”

<sup>122</sup> “Lise çok zormuş, acayip ders çalışıyorum. Ama dersaneye gitmiyorum. Onların yerini kurslar aldı. Okulda gitar ve İngilizce kursuna gidiyorum.”

<sup>123</sup> “Mahallede takılmıyorum, mahallemi sevmiyorum o yüzden burada vakit geçirmek istemiyorum. Hırlısı var hırsızları var, haftasonları arkadaşım Aliş ile onun eniştesinin yanına sanayiye gidiyoruz. Araba tamirhanesi var, ona yardım ediyoruz. Sadece Cumartesi günleri. Cep harçlığımızı veriyor işte, 2-3 haftada bir 40-50 TL.”

“Sports is never missing from my life. After I come back from school, I spend my time by resting at home or playing football in the neighborhood. I also go to football classes provided near the 19 Mayıs stadium. It is for free. In addition, I also go to Yenidoğan Sports Club. I am planning to work during summer.” (LSES, M)<sup>124</sup>

“I go to school by bus. I walk to the bus station for 10 minutes. It is only one bus and I get off in front of the school. When I am back from school, I do my homework and do some tests. We have a target of finishing 1000 tests. Then, I watch TV-series from the internet. Game of Thrones and Love. I don’t really watch TV.” (LSES, F)<sup>125</sup>

“I come back from school around 3:30. I study and watch TV. I don’t go out too often, I spend time at home. I am a calm person. I am happy like this. I look positively at life.” (LSES, F)<sup>126</sup>

### ***6.2.1. Growing gender divide***

The experience of girls and boys with the patriarchy is different as they assume roles of dominated and dominator, respectively. The encounter of patriarchy starts from early years. The patriarchal norms are infused in child rearing practices imposing a gender divide as the individuals grow older contributing to the perpetuation of this divide in all spheres of life, from private to public sphere. However, this encounter becomes more visible as the different sexes penetrate in public life, especially for girls, since the public space is reserved for men. Thus, girls and women becomes more aware of the gender divide as they enter the public space, for which the rules are assigned by men for women and girls.

Similar to the findings of the first phase, this divide was mostly visible among the adolescents from low socio-economic status. Gender of the adolescents among the low-income group appear to be an important factor shaping the daily practices. Apart from one girl adolescent, there were no girls who dropped out of school. Girls, following their time at school, spend their time at home doing their homework,

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<sup>124</sup> “Valla hayatımdan spor eksik olmuyor. Okuldan geldikten sonra vaktimi, evde dinlenerek, mahallede futbol oynayarak geçiriyorum. Bir de 19 Mayıs Stadi’nın orda futbol kursuna giderek geçiriyorum. Ücretsiz. Bir de Yenidoğan Spor Kulübü’ne gidiyorum. Yazın da bir işte çalışmayı düşünüyorum.”

<sup>125</sup> “Okula otobüsle gidiyorum, durağa 10 dakika yürüyüp biniyorum. Zaten tek otobüs, okulunu önünde iniyorum. Okuldan gelince de ödevlerimi yapıp, test çözüyorum. Aylık 1000 test çözmeye hedefimiz var. Sonra da internette dizi seyrediyorum. Game of Thrones ve Love 309’u. TV pek seyretilmiyorum.”

<sup>126</sup> “Okuldan 3.30 gibi dönüyorum, ders çalışıp TV seyrediyorum. Dışarı pek çıkmam, evde vakit geçiriyorum. Sessiz sakin biriyim ben, mutluyum böyle. Hayata pozitif bakıyorum.”

watching TV and helping with household chores. They only go out during weekends with their families. On the other hand, boys spend lots of time in the neighborhood playing football either in the neighborhood or go to sports club in the close community. They go to the parks in the surrounding and outdoor areas as well as internet cafés to spend time with their friends. Boys who dropped out of school start working early in the day and spend 9-10 hours in the workplace, they spend time with their friends and families on Sunday.

This encounter with the patriarchy as the objective structure has started to be recognized by both gender at the moment they have finished the primary school and started to be perceived as young adults.

“I might not have continued my education if I was a boy. At the end, boys can work anywhere. My father now says that I am young woman, he doesn’t send me to the place where he used to send last year. Not only at night, even during the daylight. I can go to my sister’s and uncle’s place. He says you never know what is going to happen.” (LSES, F)<sup>127</sup>

The daily practices of the adolescents, both boys and girls, from low socio-economic background are drastically different than their peers who continued their studies with high school. Contrary to what was explained above, the dropped-out adolescents do not spend their days at school and in extracurricular activities as in the case of high school students. Rather, boys started working and spend six days a week in the workplace leaving no time for leisure.

“I am working at a curtain workshop. I am supporting my family. I am earning money. I earn 1300 TL a month but I don’t have social security. I am on holiday on Sundays. I am at the workshop in the other days.” (LSES, M)<sup>128</sup>

It should be noted that the gender divide is not only growing among the boys and girls from the low socio-economic background who dropped out of school. Being perceived as young adults by finishing the primary school, girls spend more time at home compared to their peers from opposite sex. The question of honor and the preservation of the body becomes much more prevalent for girls as they have started

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<sup>127</sup> “Erkek olsam okumazdım belki, sonuçta onlar her yerde çalışabilir. Babam genç kız oldun artık diyor, geçen sene gönderdiği yere de göndermiyor. Sadece geceleri değil, gündüz bile. Ancak dayımlara ya da ablalara gidebiliyorum. Belli mi olur ne olacağı diyor.”

<sup>128</sup> “Perdecide çalışıyorum şimdi, aileme yardımcı oluyorum. Para kazanıyorum. Ayda 1300 TL ama sigortam yok. Pazar günleri tatilim onun dışında hep atölyedeyim.”

to be perceived as women rather than a girl child. The preservation of the honor and the body influences their daily practices and life-styles putting more pressures to be protected from the violence that could happen in the public space.

On the contrary, boys have come to realize the freedom that is presented to them by being a boy. They spend more time in the public sphere without any fear of protecting themselves from gender based violence that might occur in the public space. Similarly, their appearance and clothing is less of a concern for them compared to their girl peers.

“Even in the work life, there is a difference between women and men. There is more discrimination than opportunities. They immediately ask ‘is this a women’s job?’ The same thing was discussed at my house when choosing the school. I meant the vocational high school. It is not woman’s job, woman cannot do that. They see the job that a woman can do different than what a man can do. Women supposed to work in securer places, for example.” (MSES, F)<sup>129</sup>

In addition to daily practices and life-styles, patriarchy is more concretely recognized as an impeding structure in front of the sense of agency among girls from low SES. For example, one girl has dropped out of school and did not continue with high school as continuing high school did not match with the gender norms that their families have adopted.

“She dropped out of school and did not register for the high school, got married. They have forced her to marry. Her family didn’t have the intention to send her to school anyhow, she is a girl. It is difficult to educate girls in this area. They force them to marry at early ages.” (Teacher of a LSES student)<sup>130</sup>

This girl has completed the “expected” level of education, by their parents, as a girl and is expected to remain at home, in the private sphere, both to take care of the household chores and to be protected from the male violence that can potentially occur in the public sphere. The expectation of having a preserved honor overruled the expectation vis-à-vis the education outcomes.

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<sup>129</sup> “Meslek hayatında bile farklı kadın ve erkek. İmkandan çok ayrımcılık var. Hemen o kadın işi mi sorusunu soruyorlar. Okul seçerken de aynı şey konuşuldu bizde. Meslek lisesini yani. O kadın işi değil, onu kadın yapmaz. Kadının yapacağı iş ile erkeğin yapacağı iş ayrı olarak gözleniyor. Kadın daha güvenli yerde çalışmalıymış mesela.”

<sup>130</sup> “O okulu bıraktı, liseye de kayıt yaptırmadı, evlendi. Evlendirdiler. Ailesinin onu okutmaya niyeti yoktu zaten, kız çocuğu işte. Bu bölgelerde zor, kızları okutturmak. Evlendiriyorlar erkenden.”



“I told you that my sister didn’t continue. When you are young woman, school is a little problematic. There are plenty of people around. She takes care of my young sibling at home.” (LSES, F)<sup>131</sup>

“I am going to an Imam Hatip<sup>132</sup> high school. My mom wanted it to be so. Boys and girls are in separate classes” (LSES, F)<sup>133</sup>

Similarly, the drop-out after the completion of primary school, by few boys, was also affected by the gender norms. These boys were expected to contribute to the household income as soon as possible. Therefore, the drop-out after the primary school seemed to be a better investment than prolonged education by their families to realize their boyhood.

“I couldn’t do it, my sister. My performance was bad anyhow. Therefore, I dropped out. I thought at least I won’t become a burden for my family. Instead of becoming a burden, I could work and earn money. I wasn’t doing well, I was not going to be able to finish it anyhow.” (LSES, M)<sup>134</sup>

### **6.3.Shift in the Existence of and the Scope and Source of Knowledge on Objective Structures and Social Mobility**

The direct experience faced with the *TEOG* examination has brought a mental shift for the adolescents on the existence of social structures and the prospects of social mobility. Social structures are individualized. It becomes an understanding beyond stratification that exists in the larger society. It reduces the dilemma between the structure and the agency to individual level. It takes the form of an individual story.

The diversity vis-a-vis the existence of social structure is based on the type of experience the adolescents had with the objective structure, the education system in this case. Thus, a shift occurred among the adolescents who were able to realize

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<sup>131</sup> “Dedim ya ablam da gitmedi diye, genç kız olunca okul sıkıntı. Etrafta bir sürü insan var. Evde küçük kız kardeşime bakıyor.”

<sup>132</sup> İmam Hatip High Schools are schools are established to raise imams and preachers rooting from the the Law No. 430 enacted in 1924 and took its current format based on the decisions made in Commission of Principals No. 601 dated 1951.The schools are regulated under the Ministry of Education Religious Education Directorate General and includes science, mathematics, social sciences, linguistics in its curriculum as per Law No. 1739 dated 1973 and LawNo. 6287 dated 2012, in addition to religion classes.

<sup>133</sup> “İmam Hatip Lisesi’ne gidiyorum, annem öyle istedi. Kız erkek ayrı okuyoruz.”

<sup>134</sup> “Yapamadım abla olmadı, zaten derslerim de kötüydü. O yüzden bıraktım okulu. Bari aileme yük olmayayım dedim. Yük olacağıma çalışır para kazanırım diye düşündüm. Derslerim kötüydü abla, ben okuyamayacaktım zaten.”

their short-term aspirations and those who have not. Their diversified experience led to diversified interpretation of existence of the objective structures and prospects for social mobility.

Adolescents who were able to be placed in their aspired high school continue neglecting the objective structures that has and could continue to shape their standing in the social space. Their interpretation on where they currently stand and where they will be standing is explained by their own agency, their personal traits and skills. The possession of capitals is a consequence of their own characteristics and hard work, freed from their socio-economic background and gender.

On the other hand, adolescents who failed to realize their short-term aspirations started realizing that there are objective structures shaping the individuals' lives despite the perpetuation of the idea that it is the individual responsibility to overcome these structural obstacles to reach the aspired destination in the social space.

“Everything depends on what we want. I live this life not anyone else. I am the one who is responsible for everything that will and will not happen. The only person that helps me is myself, I can help myself. Of course, it is very difficult to be a soccer player without anyone helping me but there is no one who can hold my hand. Meaning that whatever I will do, I will do it myself.” (LSES, M)<sup>135</sup>

This shift, on the existence of social structures, stems from the a shift occurred in adolescents' minds relying on *a posteriori* knowledge, thus a knowledge based on previous experience. Direct encounter with the objective structure, the exam imposed by the education system in Turkey, has created a knowledge among the adolescents that there are structures that could interfere with their capacity of agency. This knowledge is acquired by their past experience with the *TEOG* examination, irrespective of their socio-economic background. However, based on the negative experience for low SES as well as for girls, the shift was radical.

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<sup>135</sup> “Her şey insanın kendi isteklerine bağlı. Hayatı ben yaşıyorum başkası değil o yüzden ben sorumluyum olacıklardan ve olmayacaklardan. Bana yardım edecek tek kişi gene benim, ben kendi kendime yardımcı olabilirim. He kimse sana yardım etmeden futbolcu olmak çok zor o ayrı, elimden tutacak kimse de yok. E yani gene neyi yaparsam ben yapacağım.”

“I couldn’t go the school I wanted because we don’t have money for the public transportation, for example. I go to the one which is walking distance. Can this be an example? At the end, I go to a school and I believe that I can do the things I want to do but I am giving this as an example since you asked whether I had any obstacles.” (LSES, M)<sup>136</sup>

“I think things would have been different if I was a boy. My father would have more relaxed. Now he takes decisions based on my gender, being a girl.” (LSES, F)<sup>137</sup>

This shift in the existence of and scope and source of knowledge on social structures yields to a recognition of the potential encounter with other objective structures, which may be creating an impeding or enabling environment for the adolescents to realize their future aspirations, triggering a revisit to their future aspirations.

#### **6.4. Widened Positions in the Social Space**

*“Oft expectations fail, and most oft there where most it promises”*

*Shakespeare*

As described in the methodology section that adolescents’ socio-economic statuses are based on their families’ socio-economic background, which is determined through their education level, occupational status and income. Throughout the research, both in its first phase and the second, it was assumed that the socio-economic background of the families remained stable and adolescents’ SES were determined based on that. However, during the second phase of the research it became clearer that positions of the adolescents from different socio-economic background are moving away from each other in terms of their prospective standing in the social space in the future.

This interpretation is fed by the statistics provided by the MoNE. 2015 data shows that 19% of the high school graduates are placed in an undergraduate programme. There are striking differences among the rates of being placed in the undergraduate programmes across the types of the high schools that adolescents are graduated. 59%

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<sup>136</sup> “Dolmuş paramız olmadığı için istediğim okula gidemedim mesela. Yürüme mesafesindeki gidiyorum. Bu bir örnek sayılır mı? Gene bir okula gidiyorum sonuçta, istediklerimi de yapabileceğime inanıyorum ama hani engel var mı diye sordunuz diye söylüyorum.”

<sup>137</sup> “Bence erkek olsam farklı olurdu. Babam daha rahat olurdu. Şimdi kız olmama göre kararlar alıyor.”

of the graduates of Science High Schools are placed in an undergraduate programme, whereas this figure drops to 51% among private colleges teaching in foreign language, to 50% among Anadolu high schools, teaching in foreign language, graduates and to 16% among regular high school graduates and to 9% among vocational high school graduates.

Despite the fact that individual cases might have different trajectories, the data shows that the likelihood of pursuing in higher education is heavily influenced by the type of high school attended.

Turkish Statistical Institute data, in 2015, reveals that 27.2% of illiterates and 23.7% of literates with no degree were poor, based on a poverty threshold set as 50% of median equivalised household disposable income. This rate goes down to 12.8% and 5.6% among less than high school and high school graduates, respectively, and to 1.6% among high education graduates. The statistics show that only 29% of those with less than 60% of the median income can afford having food containing fish, chicken or meat, whereas it is 56% among those who have 60 to 120% of the median income and 92% among those who have more than 120% median income.

This is to say that the type of high school attended might have a domino effect in the rest of the lives in terms of social standing and living conditions and influences other determinants of socio-economic status, such as income.

Among the adolescents who were reached in the second phase of the research after they have completed the primary school, a trend on the type of school attended can easily be observed. Apart from two adolescents from low socio-economic status, who dropped out after primary school, all low socio-economic status adolescents have continued to high school. Among those, only two of them is currently attending an Anadolu high school, the rest continued in either vocational or regular high schools.

Among the middle socio-economic status adolescents, all of them continued pursuing their education with high school. Only five of them are attending an Anadolu high school and one of them is attending a private high school, the

remaining have pursued their education in regular high school or vocational high school.

On the other hand, as expected, all adolescents from high socio-economic status have continued with high school and they are either attending an Anadolu high school or a private high school, both of which are teaching in a foreign language.

This variety across the type of high school attended shows us that socio-economic is a critical factor in the quality of education received. As the official education statistics of Turkey showed, adolescents' future education and living conditions are dependent on the high school they attend since it has a strong correlation with the possibility of attending higher education, occupational status and income they will be generating, which will compose their future socio-economic status. This is to say that, already at the age of 15, adolescents' socio-economic status starts to be widened and they are dispersed across the social space.

### **6.5.Revisiting the Aspirations**

*“Failure to achieve (bad enough in itself) then gets magnified  
into a loss of faith in one’s self”  
Philipps, 2006, p.22*

“*Habitus* is both the shared ‘cognitive and volitional structure’ and the ‘socially structures situation’ in which the agents’ goals, interest and positions are defined. Even when agents are trying to achieve their own strategic aims, the desires which they have and the situation in which they find themselves are simply ‘a variant’ of this shared *habitus* (Bohman, 1999, p.133). Thus, *habitus* intervenes as a mediating mechanism that embodies the possibilities-within-limits of given social-structural positions (Stahl, 2015).

Among the adolescents, who have participated in this research, majority reported of not having realized their aspirations that they had for this year, which is to attend the high school of their choice. They were not able to be placed in the high school they had aspired for apart from few of them. However, despite the fact that they were not able to attend the high school they aspired for, for several reasons to be

explained further in this chapter, they have continued their studies in a high school, apart from two adolescents from low socio-economic background. The encounter with the structural obstacle leading to the failure of achieving the short-term aspirations have led the adolescents to question their capacity of agency to overcome the structural obstacles they face. This questioning of agency has not led to the demise of the agency; however, the neglect of the structure by the agency has started to fade away. The social structure is recognized as an element of authority that potentially will influence the position the adolescents occupy in the future.

Consequently, adolescents who took part in the research have revisited their aspirations. Before dwelling into the socio-economy of revised aspirations, due to the variety of past experiences in realizing their aspirations, the cases will be analyzed separately; i) adolescents who have realized the aspirations in short term, ii) adolescents who have continued with high school in a different high school than what they have aspired for, iii) adolescents with a major deviation from their aspirations, those who dropped out of school.

Apart from the third group, adolescents have not revised their long-term aspirations, thus the aspirations of their social standing in ten years. Educational and occupational aspirations continue to be the primary aspirations for the whole life-cycle as they are considered to be the lead mechanisms to be adopted for upward mobility not only within ten years but also further in their lives.

To start with the first group, few adolescents, irrespective of their socio-economic and gender background, who were able to attend the specific high school they aspired, have kept the same aspirations for the rest of their lives. In relation to the aspirations they have described during the first phase of the interviews, no changes were observed in the overall aspirations for their future lives. Having realized their short-term aspirations became an assuring factor for them not only to maintain the focus on the power of agency but also to keep the original aspirations.

“I told you last year that I will study law. I remember what I said. I still want the same thing again. I never gave up on this and I will never do. I also got into the high school I wanted. I will go to the university after I finish high school and I will

become a public prosecutor. The world is too unjust. I will bring some justice by being a public prosecutor.” (MSES, F)<sup>138</sup>

“I went to a dersane and studied regularly. This is why all my wishes come true. It all depends on me. If I decide and work hard, my family will support me, they will not hinder anything. If I say I worked and gained what I wanted, I will study university out of town, they would agree. Thus, it depends on me.” (HSES, M).<sup>139</sup>

Adolescents who continued a high school of not their preference became more suspicious about the prospects of realizing other aspirations for the future. By keeping the responsibility at the individual level, the failure not to be able to attend the high school of their choice is explained as personal failure.

“Yes, I wanted to go to an Anadolu High School but I could not. I couldn’t get the required score. Actually, I got into another Anadolu High School but it was too far. Therefore, I am going to the one nearby. It could have happened if I studied harder. It would, I am sure of it. Probably, I didn’t study hard enough, I couldn’t do. It’s because of me I mean. What else could it be?” (MSES, M)<sup>140</sup>

This resulted in challenging the sense of agency in shaping the current and future lives. Failure to realize short term aspirations signaled the possibility of not realizing the others they have for their future. This failure, resulting in a frustration, results in either revising the aspirations by aligning them with the current standing, re-analysis of the prospects for the future according to the current social standing or in keeping the same aspirations as described in the previous year but becoming more open to the possibility of not realizing them.

“To be honest, started to suspect a little bit. I was surer last year about what I can do in the future. Now, I am thinking whether I can do it or not. Of course, I say I

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<sup>138</sup> “Ben hukuk okuyacağım demiştim ya geçen sene. Hatırlıyorum yani. Gene aynı şeyi istiyorum. Bundan asla vazgeçemedim ve de vazgeçmeyeceğim de. İstedğim okulu da kazandım. Liseyi bitirdikten sonra hukuk okuyacağım ve savcı olacağım. Dünya çok adaletsiz. Ben savcı olup, adalet getirmek istiyorum.”

<sup>139</sup> “Dersaneye gidip, derslerimi düzenli bir şekilde çalıştım ben. Bu sayede oldu tüm isteklerim. Her şey bana bağlı. Ben karar verir çalışırsam ailem de beni destekler, hiçbir şeye engel olmazlar. Dersem ki ben çalıştım kazandım üniversiteyi şehir dışında okuyacağım, tamam derler. Bana bağlı yani.”

<sup>140</sup> “Evet, Anadolu Lisesi istiyordum ama olmadı, tutturamadım puanını. Başka bir Anadolu Lisesi oldu aslında ama orası da çok uzaktı. O yüzden buradaki okula gidiyorum. Belki daha çok çalışsam olurdu, kesin olurdu. Çok çalışmadım herhalde, yapamadım. Benden kaynaklı yani, başka niye olsun ki?”

hope I will do it but I cannot know now whether it will happen. I couldn't get into the school I wanted, for example." (HSES, M)<sup>141</sup>

On the other hand, few adolescents, from the low socio-economic background, who dropped out from the education system and not continued with their high school studies as opposed to what they were aspiring the year before have completely revised their aspirations for the future.

"That idea has changed, of course. I told you that I dropped out and working in a curtain workshop. Now, when I dream of future, I aspire to open a curtain workshop. I want to own my place. I am learning the job at the moment and I will have my own workshop in the future." (LSES, M)<sup>142</sup>

In terms of the socio-economy of aspirations, among the *high socio-economic status adolescents*, apart from the few, majority of the adolescents were not able to receive the required points from the *TEOG* to allow them to be placed in the high school they wanted to attend. However, their aspirations in terms of what they want to become and what kind of life they would like to have has not changed significantly. The aspiration towards a luxurious with brand-new cars, villas with pools still reveal themselves in their aspirations.

In terms of occupational aspirations, with no variation across genders, all high socio-economic status adolescents still aspire to attain prestigious occupations, which will bring them the respect and material conditions they are seeking for.

"I would be in Ankara in 10 years but I would have a summerhouse in Alaçatı or Marmaris. I think of becoming an architect. I would have a house that I have designed, with a garden and a changing room and a dog. I would have my own firm. I would both do architecture and management. I would be married but not have children." (HSES, F)<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> "Şüpheli duymaya başladım biraz vallahi, geçen sene daha emindim ilerde neyi yapabileceğimden. Şimdi düşünüyorum, olur mu olmaz mı diye. Olur inşallah diyorum tabi. Olur yani inşallah, ama ben şimdiden bilemem ki olur mu olmaz mı. Bak istediğim okul olmadı mesela."

<sup>142</sup> "O fikir değişti tabi. Dedim ya okulu bıraktım, perdecide çalışıyorum. Şimdi geleceği hayal ettiğimde de perdecide açmak istiyorum. Kendi atölyem olsun istiyorum. Şimdi işi de öğreniyorum. İlerde de kendi yerimi açarım."

<sup>143</sup> "10 sene sonra Ankara'da olurum, ama tabi Alaçatı ya da Marmaris'te bir yazlığım olur. Mimar olurum diye düşünüyorum, kendi tasarladığım büyük bahçeli bir evim olur, içinde de büyük bir giyinme odası ve bir köpek. Kendi firmam olur, hem mimarlık hem de yöneticilik yaparım. Evlenmiş de olurum ama henüz çocuğum olmamış olur."



“I gave up from the idea of becoming a teacher. People don’t respect teachers, especially children. I see it at school that they disrespect their teachers. I would have a more respected occupation.” (HSES, F)<sup>144</sup>

However, they became more suspicious about their futures. The encounter with a structural obstacle that kept them away from their aspirations have illuminated them about the availability of another structural obstacle they may face later on. This is indeed a manifestation of the recognition of the social structure.

“I am aspiring for more realistic things compared to last year. Things that have higher possibilities to come true. I feel like there is little time left for YGS and LYS<sup>145</sup>. I need to make up my mind and study accordingly. I was planning to become a manager at a firm but I am now more inclined towards becoming a medical doctor. It is prestigious and always is. I never lose its prestige.” (HSES, F)<sup>146</sup>

“I don’t think I will make it to METU anymore. I was surer last year but now I look at the situation and I am not as sure as I was last year. I am not sure whether I will be able to get there.” (HSES, M)<sup>147</sup>

Like the adolescents from high socio-economic status group, majority of the *middle socio-economic status adolescents* were not able to be placed in the high school they wanted to attend. However, unlike their high socio-economic group peers, middle SES adolescents seems to be much less concerned about their future and relaxed in terms of their sense of agency.

This is mostly due to the socio-economy of the aspirations that was discussed before. Their aspirations are broad in terms of occupation and they do not have aspirations

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<sup>144</sup> “Öğretmen olmaktan vazgeçtim, insanlar öğretmenliğe saygı duymuyor özellikle de çocuklar. Ben görüyorum okulda çok saygısızlık yapıyorlar. Daha saygın bir meslek seçeceğim.”

<sup>145</sup> ÖSYM (Öğrenci Ölçme, Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi Başkanlığı- Presidency for Student Measurement, Identification and Placement) conducts ÖSYS (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Sistemi - Student Identification and Placement System) to organize transitions from secondary schools to higher education. YGS and LYS are two examinations held under ÖSYS for over 2 million students each year (Retrieved from <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,9306/osys-anasayfa.html> on 25 October 2017).

<sup>146</sup> “Geçen seneye göre daha gerçekçi hayaller kuruyorum sanki. Olma olasılığı daha yüksek hayaller yani. YGS ve LYS’ye az vakit kaldı gibi hissediyorum. Kafamı toplayıp, karar verip ona göre çalışmam gerek. Şirket yöneticisi olmayı planlıyordum ama şimdi doktora kaydım gibi, o daha saygın bir meslek yani hep saygın. Saygınlığı bozulmuyor.”

<sup>147</sup> “ODTÜ olmaz sanki artık. Geçen sene daha emindim kazanacağımdan ama şu anda bakıyorum duruma ve eskisi kadar emin değilim kazanıp kazanamayacağımdan.”

over scarce resources such as luxurious products or high-level, executive positions. Their aspirations are ordinary and general such as finishing a university to obtain an occupation, find a regular job, get married and be happy and dynamic which is being shaped along the way of life cycle. Their aspirations remained not to be not as specific as the high income group, which reduces the stress on the sense of agency for the things to be achieved.

“In ten years, I would have completed my military service and have finished a 4-years university. I would get married when I am back from the military service. I would enjoy my occupation and be living the life I planned for. I could become a technician in the emergency room, for example.” (MSES, M)<sup>148</sup>

“I can’t think of many options but I guess I would like to study law. I would like to use one room at my house as library, I don’t want to leave any book unread on earth. I would spend my days by wondering around cities and new places. I would try to learn new things.” (MSES, F)<sup>149</sup>

As mentioned in the previous section on the daily practices of children, a vast diversity on the current status in the society can be most visibly observed among the *adolescents with low socio-economic background*. Apart from the drop-outs, low socio-economic status adolescents have maintained their aspirations for future life despite of their recognition of not meeting the requirements currently due to not attending the school they want either because of their own failure or external reasons.

## **6.6. Building Coping Mechanisms to Maintain the Sense of Agency**

Despite the recognition of social structures as a factor on the realization of aspirations as well as the revisit of the aspirations, the individualist interpretation promoted by the neo-liberal discourse through personal traits such as hard work, being ambition etc. maintains its emphasis.

“Is there any place in life where we don’t have any obstacles? There is an obstacle everywhere in front of everything. We can solve it by saying there is an obstacle.

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<sup>148</sup> “10 sene sonra askerliğimi yapmış ve 4 senelik bir üniversiteyi bitirmiş olurum. Askerlikten gelince evlenirim. Mesleğimi severek yapar, planladığım hayatı yaşıyor olurum. Acil Tıp Teknisyeni olabilirim mesela.”

<sup>149</sup> “Aklıma pek bir şey gelmiyor ama hukuk okumak istiyorum herhalde. Evimde bir odayı kütüphane olarak kullanmak istiyorum, okumadığım kitap kalmasın istiyorum. Günümü de şehirleri, yeni yerleri gezerek geçiririm, yeni şeyler öğrenmeye çalışırım.”

Seeing this obstacle, working to remove it is in our hands. The most important thing is willingness. If we want to overcome, we can overcome. If we don't want, we cannot. Nothing is simple but everything is in peoples' hands." (MSES, F)<sup>150</sup>

The accountability on the consequence is not transferred to the structure. It is kept with the agency. Thus, the sense of agency is challenged, because of the result being a failure that it is resulted from the individual weakness of the agency. It does not lead to a questioning of the structure for the social order.

This should not be interpreted as a lack of adaptability to the conditions by the adolescents. Rather, it is a revival of the neo-liberal politics to keep the individual at the center to determine the destiny in the social space. The ongoing emphasis on the agency shifts the focus from social structures as impeding factors to the agency as the enabling factor as the opportunities are out there if and when the agency is able to keep its agency dynamic and fresh to take up these opportunities.

However, the continuity in the internalization of the externality triggers development of coping mechanisms by the agents to maintain their sense of agency. Coping strategy is, indeed, a psychological term to refer to the tools and instruments to get over a situation that causes stress to the individuals. Thus, individuals develop means to remove or tolerate the element that causes this stress and discomfort. In the context of social mobility, according to Bourdieu, individuals refine and revise their aspirations based on their anticipation in their current social standing. As Stahl (citing from Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu and Accadro, 1993, 2015, p.32) underlines *habitus* does not only influence aspirations to be aligned with the objective structures but also 'generates strategies which can be objectively consistent with the objective interest of their authors without having been expressly designed to that end'. They use their *habitus*, a pre-strategic basis of strategy (Bohman, 1999).

Despite its roots going back to psychology referring to the means, or channels, for overcoming a situation that causes stress or discomfort for the individuals, coping

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<sup>150</sup> "Hayatta nerde engel yok ki? Her yerde, her şeyin önünde bir engel var. Engel var demekle olmaz ki. O engeli görüp farkedip aşmak ya da aşmak için çalışmak bizim elimizde. Yani önemli olan isteklilik. Aşmak istersek aşarız, istemezsek aşmayız. Hiçbir şey basit değil ama her şey insanın kendi elinde."

strategy is widely used in sociology to explain the individual and collective acts within the social order in specific situations when the casual social order has challenged triggering the individuals applying strategies to find equilibrium. Accordingly, adolescents from different socio-economic groups and genders came up with coping strategies to maintain their agencies which will allow them to move in the social space as they aspire. The recognition of social structures combined with the internalized emphasis on agency lead agents to find a way to come to an agreement with the social structure.

Stahl (2015) has found out among the adolescents, he interviewed, that they were using ‘middling, arbitrariness and ordinariness’ as a strategy to cope with the neoliberal conceptions of respectability. Similar to these findings, based on the former experience and current standing in the social space, adolescents, participated in this research, have also applied coping strategies to maintain the emphasis on agency over the structure. However, the coping strategy they applied differed based their re-reflection on the equality of opportunities, on the immediate availability of the resources and the risks associated with the failure of reaching the targeted point in the social space.

The doxic internalization of the equality of opportunities discourse have modified within a year and adolescents’ past experience played a significant role to re-reflect on this discourse. The internalization of this discourse was challenged among the high and middle socio-economic status children, whereas it has maintained its internalization among the low socio-economic status. High socio-economic status adolescents continued internalizing the concept with a de facto misapplication in the context of Turkey.

“The opportunities are equal of course but I am not really sure anymore hat it is the case in Turkey. It is better abroad. They value whatever you study there. And you can study whatever you want. It seems to me like that. I didn’t see myself but my parents tell me so. There are lots of opportunities there. They tell me to go there and I believe them.” (HSES, F)<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> “Fırsatlar tabi eşit ama Türkiye’de bunun böyle olduğuna emin değilim artık. Yurtdışında daha çok, orda ne okursan oku değer veriliyor, hem de ne istersen okuyabiliyorsun. Bana öyle geliyor. Ben gidip görmedim ama annemler anlatıyor. Orda çok fırsat var, oraya git diyorlar bana, ben de inanıyorum.”

Along the same line, adolescents from middle socio-economic status echoes the lack of equal opportunities in Turkey, whereas they still see that they are on the advantageous end of the spectrum. For them, it is unjust for other groups in the society.

“My sister was unable to get to the school she wanted. My father called here and there and he fixed it. My brother was dismissed from his school and no other school accepted him. My father again found some people and he was back to the school he was dismissed. This year, I also was unable to go to the school I wanted. Again, my father fixed it. What would happen if I didn't have my father? None of these was going to become real. What it means is that I have more opportunities than others. They may not have the same opportunities. The opportunities are not equal. It is such a nonsense.” (MSES, M)<sup>152</sup>

On the other hand, though, the doxic internalization of the discourse continues among the adolescents from low socio-economic status. This group of children, despite the various negative experiences they had in the course of a year, have kept their belief on the promise of equal opportunities that are provided to them in comparison to their peers from other socio-economic status.

“Of course, there are equal opportunities. Now, we moved out from that neighborhood. That old neighborhood was really bad. Nothing could have happened in that neighborhood but the new place we live in is nice. I know that everything will be all right. I know it. There opportunities, thanks God. My family, the state gives everything.” (LSES, M)<sup>153</sup>

The immediate availability of the resources and risks associated of not achieving the targeted point depends on the socio-economic background of the adolescents. The immediate availability of the resources is scarcer as the socio-economic status goes down. These resources are indeed the capitals that Bourdieu referred as economic, social and cultural. Based on the current standing in the social space, the adolescents', from high socio-economic background, possession of these capitals are richer both in terms of variety and volume. Thus, when agency is in need of

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<sup>152</sup> “Ablam istediđi okula giremedi, babam aradı taradı halletti. Abim okuldan atıldı, başka okula almadılar, babam gene buldu birilerini, ilk atıldıđı okula geri girdi. Ben de şimdi bu sene istediđim okulda yer bulamadım, gene babam halletti. He babam olmazsa ne olacaktı? Bunların hiçbiri olmayacaktı. Demekki neymiş, benim imkanım daha çok, başkalarının yok, olmayabilir. İmkanlar, fırsatlar eşit filan deđil. Tam bir saçmalık.”

<sup>153</sup> “Var tabi fırsatlar, şimdi mahalleden de taşındık. Bak o mahalle çok kötüydü, ordan bir şey olmazdı ama şimdi oturduđum yer de çok güzel. Her şey çok güzel olacak biliyorum ben, imkanlar da var çok şükür, ailem olsun devlet olsun, veriyor yani.”

support, they can activate their economic, and social resources, less so for the cultural capital, to support their agencies. The lack of capital to support the agency leaves the agency alone with its personal traits, which are the main ingredients of the sense of agency, in the social space.

The risks associated with the failure of reaching to the targeted point is not linear as in the case of immediate availability of the resources. The risk, and the stress or discomfort, associated with the failure is minimal in the case of middle socio-economic status adolescents as they are relatively well positioned in the social space from both sides, upward and downward. Despite the fact that there is the desire to move upward among the middle-income group adolescents, it is not as drastic as in the case of other groups. For them, the risk of maintaining their status quo do not have devastating consequences as in the case of low socio-economic status group.

“I was more worried last year and this year I am more relaxed. I would go to a university. I could study law in a university, where my score suffices.” (MSES, F)<sup>154</sup>

As a result, adolescents from high and low socio-economic group are in a much-heated struggle to at least keep their status and move upward, respectively. The possibility of failure to do so creates a major discomfort among the high and low income groups. Adolescents from high socio-economic background will be ‘losers’ who were not able to benefit from the vast amount of opportunities provided to them at birth.

“Where I am now, what I have in my hands is obvious. My family did a lot of things for me so that I possess these. They put a lot of efforts. I should not waste these. I need to pay their efforts back. I need to study in a good place and be in good places. I would be very sad if could not do justice to what they gave me.” (HSES, F)<sup>155</sup>

On the other hand, adolescents from low socio-economic group feels this discomfort due to prospects of collective mobility as a family if they succeed to move upward.

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<sup>154</sup> “Geçen sene daha büyük kaygılarım vardı, bu sene daha rahatım. Bir üniversiteye giderim. Puanımın tuttuğu bir yerde hukuk okuyabilirim.”

<sup>155</sup> “Yani şu anda olduğum yer, elimdekiler belli. Ailem bunlara sahip olmam için çok şey yaptı, çok emek verdiler. Bunları boşa çıkarmamam lazım. Emeklerinin karşılığını onlara vermeliyim. İyi bir yerde okuyup, iyi yerlere gelmeliyim. Onların bana verdiklerinin hakkını veremezsem çok üzülürüm, gerçekten.”

Their failure will result in a vicious cycle of poverty due the lack of capacity to benefit from the so-called equal opportunities.

“I will continue my education if God allows, for sure. I am determined. Whenever I look at my siblings, I say I should work harder. I say I am the one who is going to change all this. I have to do this for my own life and for theirs.” (LSES, M)<sup>156</sup>

Thus, the availability of resources and the discomfort associated with mobility, as a means and end of the current social standing, leads to development of various coping strategies by adolescents from different socio-economic backgrounds and gender. This is the time, when *habitus* is activated to mediate between objective structures and practice, to overcome the alternative between consciousness and unconsciousness (Grenfell, 2007, p.589).

### ***6.6.1. The socio-economy of coping strategies against the social structure***

The coping mechanisms vary based on the gender and socio-economic background. The logic behind these coping strategies is to keep the agency powered against the structure, while the encounter with the objective structure is happening and indeed shaping the individual future to help them to achieve their aspirations and reach the desired point in the social space.

Adolescents from different socio-economic backgrounds applied different copying strategies to keep up with their aspirations and maintain the sense of agency to realize these aspirations. Trying to cope with releases the tension experienced by *habitus* (Stahl, 2015).

#### ***6.6.1.1. High Socio-Economic Status: Building an alternative agency***

All adolescents from high socio-economic status have continued with high school and they are either attending an Anadolu high school or a private high school, both of which are teaching in a foreign language. However, as mentioned earlier, only few were able to be placed in the high school of their choice.

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<sup>156</sup> “Allah izin verirse okuyacağım, kesin. Kafama koydum. Kardeşlerime baktıkça daha çok çalışayım diyorum, onları gördükçe bu işi ben değiştireceğim diyorum. Yani hem kendi hayatım hem de onların hayatını kurtarmak için yapmam lazım bunları.”

The explanation behind this failure remained at the agency level. Adolescents accused themselves and their personal characteristics that led them in ending up in the current position.

“I couldn’t get to the high school I wanted. There are classes that I cannot succeed although I study. I feel worse when I fail to succeed despite my efforts. My family has high expectations from me but they also want me to do things that I can’t. They don’t force me but they push into things that I am incapable of. There aren’t many things that I am capable of anyhow. They say it will work if study but it doesn’t work.” (HSES, F)<sup>157</sup>

Despite the fact that adolescents from high socio-economic status were not able to achieve their aspirations in the short-term, aspirations within a year, they appear to be the least affected by structure, not because they were able to achieve what they aspired of but simply because they were able to eliminate some of the structural obstacles through their families’ networks and material means.

“I can’t really say that I was able to be placed in this school solely as a result of my hard work. My mother’s acquaintances helped me out. Actually, my score didn’t suffice but they showed some flexibility. I was lucky, I would say.” (HSES, F)<sup>158</sup>

This is an example of the application of immediately available resources. Family turned to be an even more powerful factor, than recognized, influencing adolescents’ lives. As discussed earlier, families were always recognized as allies that will support them in their journey within the social space by supporting their decisions, providing guidance and moral support. However, the external nature of this ally turned into an internalized provision or discharge of social capital.

The discharge of the economic and social capital through their families became a significant element of their coping strategy against the social structure to maintain their agency. The economic and social capital, provided them through their families, supported them to move in the same direction of the movement they were looking for. Adolescents from the high socio-economic status have recognized their

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<sup>157</sup> “İstediğim okulu kazanamadım, çalışsam da yapamadığım dersler var. Yapmaya çalışıp yapamayınca de kendimi iyice kötü hissediyorum. Ailemin benden beklentisi çok ama yapamadığım şeyleri de yapmamı istiyorlar ama olmuyor. Bir şeye zorlamıyorlar ama yapamadığım şeylere zorluyorlar beni, zaten pek yapabildiğim bir şey de yok. Çalışınca olur diyorlar ama olmuyor.”

<sup>158</sup> “Buranın tamamıyla çalışarak girdiğim bir okul olduğunu söyleyemem. Annemin tanıdıkları yardımcı oldu. Aslında puanım tutmuyordu ama annemden dolayı biraz esnek davrandılar. Şansım yaver gitti yani.”



families' enabling powers to realize their aspirations. Beyond the moral support, adolescents refer to concrete examples on how their families made things happen for them.

“My family did a lot of things for me. Since I was placed in Saint Michel High School in Istanbul, my mother moved to Istanbul with me. She changed all her life. My father had to stay in Ankara because of his job. We are split into two just so that I can go to the high school I am going now so that I can get a good education. My father labors day and night so that I can study here comfortably.” (HSES, F)<sup>159</sup>

“I was able to get to this school because of my mom. They helped us since my mom works at METU. My score was lower in reality. I was lucky because of my mom. I should never leave to my chance again. If I didn't have my mom, my dreams would come true. I wouldn't be here.” (HSES, F)<sup>160</sup>

The combination of not achieving what they hoped for but yet moving ahead in the desired direction has resulted in the development of an alternative agency, an agency that can alternate to realize future aspirations. Actually, at this point, an unconscious delegation of the accountability towards the structure starts. Adolescents from high socio-economic maintain the agency in the driving seat to determine the pathways of their lives; however, this agency can only keep the wheel in the right direction if the environment is enabling.

The strong emphasis on studying and living abroad is a manifestation of this attempt. Turkey shares the accountability to shape adolescents' lives or destinies by being incapable of providing such an enabling environment to allow the agents to realize their capacity.

This group of adolescents are already positioned in the higher levels of the social hierarchy due to their familial background. This leaves them little space to move upward; thus, the even higher positions are scarce and highly competitive. Additionally, these positions are not justly distributed in Turkey due to the lack of meritocracy. Then, agents can only realize their capacity first if they can add up to

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<sup>159</sup> “Ailem benim için çok şey yaptı. Ben İstanbul'da Saint Michel Lisesi'ni kazandım diye annem kalktı benimle İstanbul'a taşındı. Bütün düzenini bozdu, babam işi yüzünden Ankara'da kaldı. İkiye bölündük ben istediğim okula gidebileyim, iyi bir eğitim göreyim diye. Ben burda rahat okuyayım diye de babam orda tek başına çalışıp didiniyor.”

<sup>160</sup> “Valla annem sayesinde girdim bu okula. Aslında puanım yetmiyordu. Annem ODTÜ'de çalışıyor diye yardım ettiler. Şansıma yani, annem olduğu için. Tabi bir daha böyle işleri şansa bırakmamak lazım; annem olmasa olmayabilirdi işte istediğim yer. Burda olmazdım.”

their distinguishable skills, such as advanced language skills, that will free up more of these competitive positions for themselves and second if they live in a place where these positions are justly distributed based on the actualized capacity of agency, instead of connections with powerful people.

“It is impossible to realize these things in the Turkish conditions. I need to go abroad. It is very difficult in Turkey for people to get somewhere by their own efforts. You need to have somebody who will push you forward but it is not the case abroad. I am sure some things happen there too but I believe that it will be much less than what is happening here.” (HSES, F)<sup>161</sup>

“I would be close to finishing the university in 10 years and I would be working to build some connections abroad.” (HSES, M)<sup>162</sup>

This group of adolescents think that their aspirations can only be realized in Turkey if they have access to people in power and other useful networks and channels. Therefore, they think that they will not need to be in contact with these channels if they live abroad and realize their aspirations only by the power of their own agency. To maintain the powerful role of their agency to determine their life trajectories, they develop an alternative agency which will keep their agency alive at all times but active only when the context of social structures alternate.

#### **6.6.1.2. Middle socio-economic status: Building an adaptive agency**

Among the middle socio-economic status adolescents, all of them continued pursuing their education with high a school. Only five of them are attending an Anadolu high school and one of them is attending a private high school, the remaining have pursued their education in regular high school, or vocational high schools. This is not what was aspired last year.

Accordingly, their sense of agency is not challenged by a failure. To be more accurate, the failure to attend the school they wanted is not perceived as failure of the self, first, because they were not that specific for the school they wanted to

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<sup>161</sup> “Bu söylediklerimin Türkiye şartlarında gerçekleşmesi mümkün değil. Yurtdışına gitmem lazım. Türkiye’de insanların sadece emek ve el gücüyle bir yerlere gelmesi çok zor. Seni ön plana çıkaracak bir isim lazım ama yurtdışında böyle değil. Orada da oluyordur tabi ki böyle şeyler ana buradan daha az olacağına inanıyorum.”

<sup>162</sup> “10 sene sonra üniversiteyi bitirmeye yaklaşmış olurum ve yurtdışı bağlantıları kurmaya çalışıyorum.”

attend; and second, they have other things in mind to achieve if one does not work out. In other words, what they have achieved or not achieved so far is not perceived to have a vital role in the achievement of future aspirations. The sense of agency, then, remains relatively stable. They were able to achieve one of their aspirations and they are open to reconstruct their future aspirations based on that and their sense of agency acts, yet again, an enabling factor to achieve one of these scenarios for the future. 'Middling' mediates between fear of success and fear of failure. Determined by their *habitus*, their aspirations are very dynamic and adaptive with the probability of achieving a desired goal (Stahl, 2015).

Adolescents from middle socio-economic status have, then, developed an adaptive agency, an agency that keeps the lead at all times. They are lead actors of their lives since their families' networks and material conditions are not as powerful as of the high-income group to overcome the structural forces affecting their children's lives but they have sufficient number of tools to maintain the status. The relative scarcity of immediately available resources to help them jump over the structural obstacle reproduce the idea of relying on their own agency to move along the social space according to their desired direction. However, recognition of the existence of the social structure triggers a need to develop an adaptive agency, as a coping mechanism, which will adapt to the social obstacle that affect their movement in social space.

Their position in the social space is relatively secure compared to their peers from other socio-economic groups. Their adaptive agency is activated to maintain this position which again relatively less stressing due to the abundance of positions in the closer circle. They are born into this position and worked hard to maintain this position. They have never encountered with an obstacle, strong enough, to shake their social position. The failure to be placed in the desired high school do not pose a risk for their future attainments. It may still lead them to a university or to an occupation that will suffice to maintain their status quo. The accountability is rested on the agency, which is kept alive and changing based on the changing circumstances.

“I couldn’t go to health vocational school. We had a funeral at that time. I missed the registrations. Therefore, I am registered at this school for the moment but I will transfer myself next year.” (MSES, M)<sup>163</sup>

“I was unable to get score for the school I had in mind last year but I went to my 3<sup>rd</sup> preference. My mathematics teacher told me that this is a good place.” (MSES, F)<sup>164</sup>

“I couldn’t get the score for the school I mentioned last year. I am going to a vocational high school for girls. My father showed me this place. He told me to go to this place and we will change it if I don’t like it. I preferred this since I want to some stuff to acquire a vocation. I am content now.” (MSES, M)<sup>165</sup>

What is interesting among the adolescents from middle socio-economic status is that, few of them, who were able to be placed in the high school they want to attend, especially those who are placed in Anadolu high schools have lost their relaxed way of approaching the future. They became more ambitious for their future aspirations, showing similarities to high socio-economic children such as aspiration to live and study abroad for similar reasons mentioned in the previous section. Studying university became a more dominant aspiration, portrayed as a must to be successful in life.

“I think the nurses the judges are more valued in other countries. An individual who grew in these places would find an employment no matter what. Here, you need to be a known person to do work or you need to have a distinguishable characteristic. Having studied abroad might do this. There are plenty of people who would like to study law. If I study abroad, I can distinguish myself among them and be able to find a better employment.” (MSES, F)<sup>166</sup>

Having broadened the options in the social space has contributed to the lure of equal opportunities that one could have achieved despite of the socio-economic background and pumped the power of agency in the determination of one’s destiny.

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<sup>163</sup> “Sağlık meslek lisesine gidemedim, tam o tarihte cenazemiz vardı, kayıtları kaçırdım o yüzden şimdilik bu okula yazıldım seneye naklattireceğim kendimi.”

<sup>164</sup> “Geçen sene aklımdaki okula puanım tutmadı ama olsun 3. Tercihime gittim, matematik öğretmenim buranın da iyi olduğunu söyledi.”

<sup>165</sup> “Söylediğim okula puanım yetmedi. Şimdi kız meslek lisesine gidiyorum. Babam söyledi burayı, git dene beğenmezsen değiştiririz dedi. Ben de mesleki anlamda bir şeyler yapmak istediğim için meslek lisesini tercih ettim. Memnunum şimdi halimden.”

<sup>166</sup> “Başka ülkelerde bir hemşireye bir hakime çok daha fazla önem veriliyor bence. Orda yetişen bir birey her türlü iş bulur diye düşünüyorum. Burada iş yapabilmek için tanınmış biri olman gerekiyor ya da diğerlerinden seni ayıran farklı bir özelliğinin olması. Yurtdışında okumuş olmak bunu yapabilir diye düşünüyorum. Hukuk isteyen çok kişi var zaten, yurtdışında okursam onların arasından sıyrılır daha iyi bir iş bulabilirim sanırım.”

The inflated agency now acts as the lead guide and should further invest in itself to benefit more of these opportunities.

### **6.6.1.3. Low Socio-Economic Status: Building a resistant agency**

Apart from the two adolescents from low socio-economic status, who dropped out after primary school, all low socio-economic status adolescents have continued their education. Among those, only two of them is currently attending in an Anadolu high school, whereas the rest continued in either vocational or regular high schools.

They maintained the sense of agency behind their failures. Thus, they did not attempt to transfer accountability of failure to external factors. By being the leaders of their own life, they took full responsibility of the developments last year.

“I was unable to do it. I was not performing well. Therefore, I dropped out.” (LSES, M)<sup>167</sup>

However, they recognized the lack of the availability of immediate resources that could have helped them to achieve their short-term aspirations. The scarcity of the economic and social capital is acknowledged as significant variables in determining individuals' lives.

“I was going to another İmam Hatip high school. My mother wanted to be a İmam Hatip and I didn't want to offend her. But the place that I went first was a bit too far away. I moved to the one close by since bus was getting too expensive. This is not a good high school but let it be. I want to be a literature teacher.” (LSES, F)<sup>168</sup>

Surprisingly, despite the limited resources, this group of adolescents do not aspire for more money, stated deliberately. They would like to acquire an occupation which they will like and be happy while performing and stand on their own feet without being a burden on their families' shoulders and help their families financially to live in better conditions.

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<sup>167</sup> “Yapamadım abla olmadı, zaten derslerim de kötüydü. O yüzden bıraktım okulu.”

<sup>168</sup> “Daha önce başka bir İmam Hatip Lisesi'ne gidiyordum. Annem istedi imam hatip olmasını, ben de onu kırmadım. Ama ilk gittiğim yer biraz uzaktı, dolmuş parası çok oluyor diye yakındakine geçtim. Burası iyi bir okul değil ama olsun. Ben edebiyat öğretmeni olmak istiyorum.”

“The most important thing is to do what you like. I am not looking for more money. This is enough. The money we have now is enough for me.” (LSES, M)<sup>169</sup>

“I don’t care about the money at all. It is important to work at a place where you are happy. Therefore, I want to be a soccer player. If that doesn’t happen, I want to be a doctor, if that doesn’t happen, I want to be a police on motorbike.” (LSES, M)<sup>170</sup>

Despite their recognition of structural obstacles, i.e. the lack of capitals that is available in the members of other social strata, overruling their agency to shape their lives, as a way to cope with the social structure, they develop a resistant agency to realize their aspirations. This resistant agency will facilitate the realization of aspirations at a later stage when they are older and freed from the structural obstacles they encounter now. Thus, agency remains as the primary determinant of adolescents’ lives. Being resistant now creates a potential which will be fulfilled later.

“I wanted to go to health vocational high school but there aren’t any close by and the minibus fee becomes an issue. Therefore, I am going to the high school nearby now but I will go to health department when I go to university.” (LSES, M)<sup>171</sup>

“Things have changed since I was not able to take the fine arts examination. I didn’t buy an instrument for now not to create additional expense but I practice at home on my own. I try to improve the parts I do not sing well. I can deal with music in 10 years. Now I am studying auto mechanics at high school. I would continue the same at university, I would earn money and deal with music.” (LSES, M)<sup>172</sup>

The risk associated with not moving upward is too high for the adolescents from low socio-economic background. They cannot afford to give up from resisting the social structures. Their mobility is expected to be a collective one. They will move up together with their families. Their achievements will have significant impact on the well-being of the rest of their families. Thus, with the resistant agency they

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<sup>169</sup> “Önemli olan sevdiğin işi yapmak, daha fazla para istemem ben. Yeter bu kadar. Şu andaki paramız bana yeter.”

<sup>170</sup> “Para hiç umrumda değil valla önemli olan mutlu olduğun bir işte çalışmak. O yüzden en çok futbolcu olmak istiyorum, o olmazsa doktorluk o da olmazsa yunus polis olmak isterim.”

<sup>171</sup> “Sağlık lisesine gitmek istedim aslında ama yakında yok. Dolmuş parası da sıkıntı oluyor açıkçası o yüzden şimdi bu yakındaki liseye gidiyorum ama üniversitede sağlık bölümüne geçeceğim inşallah.”

<sup>172</sup> “Güzel sanatlar lisesinin sınavına giremedim öyle olunca şimdi işler değişti. Şimdi boşuna masraf olmasın diye enstrüman almıyorum, evde kendi kendime pratik yapıyorum, yanlış söylediğim yerleri düzeltmeye çalışıyorum. 10 sene sonra uğraşırım müzikle. Otomotiv okuyorum şimdi lisede, üniversitede ona devam eder para kazanır müzikle uğraşırım.”

maintain the accountability on their agency with a collective responsibility of their families.

### ***6.6.2. The Gendered Coping Strategies against the Social Structure***

‘The patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection’ (Facio cited from Pateman, 2013). This is significant to understand the encounter between the agency and the structure across genders. Patriarchy adds another layer on the sense of agency across genders.

As discussed in the chapter on theoretical framework, patriarchy is the social institution resting on the idea of male domination across all spheres of life including family, school, labor market and society at large. Patriarchy not only affects the aspirations but also the sense of agency for boys and girls. While it builds a more powerful agency among boys, it limits girls’ agency.

Previous chapter has underlined that gender played a different role in shaping the aspirations of adolescents from different socio-economic backgrounds. While aspirations were not significantly shaped by the gender roles among the high and middle income groups, socially assigned gender roles were more prevalent among the adolescents from low socio-economic group. However, patriarchy was not chosen as an element for struggle for none of the girls or boys regardless of their socio-economic background. Gender divisions are doxic experiences which are seen as natural and self-evident thus containing full recognition of legitimacy, as Bourdieu suggests (Arnot and Naveed, 2014).

During the second phase of research, however, girls and boys from low socio-economic status acknowledged the existence of patriarchy as a social institution that assigns specific roles to different genders. For girls, it became evident that “embodiment and use of space as well the voice and the noise of girls are more controlled than the embodiment and use of space than of boys” (Gordon, 2006, p.2). Adolescents from low socio-economic background faced with patriarchal control practices creating a tension between their gender and agency.

This tension has led to the development of a special coping mechanism among girls from low socio-economic background that is different than the boys from the same socio-economic background and different than the girls from other socio-economic status groups. This includes building aspirations within the limits of patriarchy. By doing so, they maintain their agency within their patriarchally limited aspirations. Thus, the options and choices were products of inegalitarian sexist norms (Philipps, 2006).

Girl adolescents among the low socio-economic status have faced with obstacles to realize their aspirations such as not attending the school they wanted due to the distance of the school to their house for monetary and security reasons. Also for future aspirations, they curtail their aspirations and refer them as unrealistic as their fathers would not let them do simply because they are girls such as going to a university in another province.

“I actually want to study either in Ankara or in Mugla. Muğla is really a nice place. We want there for holidays couple of years ago but that probably won't work. My father will tell me that I am a girl and would not send me. I would study here in Ankara. He would send me here. I won't be an obstacle.” (LSES, F)<sup>173</sup>

This, by no means, may mean that girls from other socio-economic backgrounds are not facing with patriarchal elements in the social structure. As Gordon (2006) suggests, girls' subjectification may work both at conscious and unconscious level for their desires, wishes and anxieties (Gordon, 2006). This may mean that the encounter with patriarchy as a social structure may be more obvious among the low socio-economic status group, whereas it may appear in different forms in the later stages of their lives for the adolescents from other status groups. Indeed, for now, it is only apparent when it comes to female body.

“It is much more difficult to be a girl. I would spend more time outside if I was a boy. Now my father calls me back home when it is dark. The same thing about our clothing. You need to pay more attention if you are a girl. I would have a more relaxed life if I was a boy. But for example, my father doesn't object the idea for

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<sup>173</sup> “Ya aslında ya Ankara'da ya da Muğla'da okumak istiyorum. Muğla çok güzel bir yer, birkaç sene önce tatile gitmiştik ailecek ama herhalde olmaz orası. Babam kız çocuğusun der göndermez. Ben Ankara'da okurum. Ama burda gönderir, engel olmaz yani.”



me to study out of town. I spoke with him. He said why not if I can get in.” (MSES, F)<sup>174</sup>

“There are disadvantages to be a girl. Don’t do this, you are a girl, don’t do that, you are a girl. Everybody repeats the same thing. People in my surrounding more than my own family. My family is not closed minded. They never say anything about my clothing but they put pressure for me to study. They tell me to study and get an occupation. They tell me that I could go and work in industry zones if I was a boy but they tell me that I don’t have such an option, therefore, I should get an occupation. I need to get my occupation, my job at my hand.” (HSES, F)<sup>175</sup>

The gender dimension does not only reveal itself among the girls. Rather, the gender dimension appears from a different perspective among the boys, especially again among the low income group. Among the boys, as mentioned earlier, few of them have already given up from their aspirations and started to work to help to their economic conditions. In the current conditions, with the revised aspirations, they have developed a new sense of agency not only for themselves but also for their families.

“I won’t be a burden for my family. I can work and study at the same time. If I can become a judge, I can help my whole family.” (LSES, M)<sup>176</sup>

They feel responsibility for their parents and siblings and place their well-being in front of their aspiration as being the grown-up boy in the household. Thus, sense of agency is being promoted by other family members not as a child but as a grown up.

“I feel responsibility. There isn’t anyone else in my family apart from who has studied. My brothers dropped out. The smartest one was my sister but my father didn’t send her after we came from Diyarbakır to Ankara. She dropped out either at 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade. She came to that grade in Diyarbakır. Thus, I am the only one who is left studying. I will finish and go to a university. For sure. I will save my family. Myself and my family.” (LSES, M)<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> “Kız olmak daha zor tabi. Erkek olsam dışarıda daha fazla vakit geçirirdim. Şimdi babam hava kararınca eve gel diyor. Giyim, kuşam deseniz de öyle. Kız olunca daha dikkat etmek gerekiyor. Erkek olsam daha rahat bir hayatım olurdu bence. Ama mesela üniversiteyi şehir dışında okumama bir şey demiyor babam. Konuştum ben onunla kazanırsan olur tabi neden olmasın dedi.”

<sup>175</sup> “Kız olmanın çok dezavantajı var. Sen kızsın onu yapma, sen kızsın bunu yapma. Herkes aynı şeyi söylüyor. Ailemden çok çevredekiler. Annemler hiç geri kafalı değil benim, kıyafatime filan bir şey demiyorlar ama onlar da okumam için baskı yapıyor. Oku meslek sahibi ol diyorlar. Erkek olsan gider sanayide bile çalışır para kazanırsın ama kız olarak öyle bir şansın yok o yüzden meslek edin diyorlar. İşimi, mesleğimi elime almam lazım benim.”

<sup>176</sup> “Aileme yük olmam ben hem çalışır hem okurum. Hem hakim olursam tüm aileme yardım da edebilirim.”

<sup>177</sup> “Sorumluluk hissediyorum tabi hocam. Benden başka okuyan yok ailede. Abilerim bıraktı. En akıllımız ablamdı, onu da Diyarbakır’dan geldikten sonra babam okula göndermedi burda Ankara’da.

Among the middle and high socio-economic status adolescents, a gender disparity is not evident neither in terms of aspirations and nor in terms of the sense of agency. Girls and boys aspire the same type of occupations such as engineering or architecture, have similar daily practices in terms of usage of public sphere and same level of expectations by their parents for level of education and entry to labor market.

“I don’t see any difference neither I feel it. My family doesn’t treat me differently because I am girl. I am the same with my brother. I don’t think that I am being treated differently than my brother. But things may be different outside. Many girls are being suppressed in other areas.” (HSES, F)<sup>178</sup>

“I do not feel any additional responsibility by being a boy. The responsibility is with my family. I don’t feel responsible to take care of parents. The only thing they say is to score high, go to a good school, and study well. That is it. It would have been the same if I was a girl.” (HSES, M)<sup>179</sup>

## 6.7. Chapter Summary

Findings of the second phase of the research showed that the daily practices of children differentiates to a greater extent, based on the socio-economic background, as they grow older. The daily practices of the children, who dropped out, from the low socio-economic status, is significantly different than those, who continued to high school. On the other hand, adolescents’ daily practices, from high SES, continued to be shaped around the future concerns, focused now on the university, while middle SES adolescents are experiencing a relatively relaxed adolescence.

The change observed in aspirations depend on the experience that the adolescents have with realizing their previous aspirations. Adolescents from the low socio-economic group who dropped out and not continued their studies with high school, have changed their aspirations towards their future. Their aspirations for the rest of their lives is aligned with their social standing which is different compared to the

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6 ya da 7. Sınıfta bıraktı. O kadar okudu Diyarbakır’da. Bir ben kaldım yani okuyan. Okuyup bitiricem, üniversiteye de gidicem kesin. Ben kurtaracağım ailemi. Hem kendimi hem de ailemi.”

<sup>178</sup> “Ben bir farklılık görmüyorum da hissetmiyorum da, ailem de kızım diye farklı bir şey yapmıyor. Abim ne ise ben de oyum. Abimden farklı bir muamele gördüğümü düşünmüyorum ama dışarıya baktığımızda bu böyle olmayabilir, başka yerlerde kızlar eziliyor sonuçta.”

<sup>179</sup> “Valla erkek olarak ayrıca bir sorumluluk hissetmiyorum ben. Sorumluluk ailede bizde. Ben aileye bakmak gibi bir sorumluluk hissetmiyorum. Tek söyledikleri iyi puan al, iyi okula git, dersini çalış. O kadar. Kız da olsam aynı şey.”

previous year mainly due to the lack of cultural capital, both for the current status and the prospects for the future.

For other groups of children who continued their education either with a high school, either what they have aspired for or not, their long-term aspirations vis-à-vis their educational outcomes and occupational aspirations remained more or less the same. For those who had a negative experience in realizing their aspirations, thus, those who were not able to get in to the high school of their choice, long-term aspirations became a subject of question. The previous negative experience brought the possibility of not realizing the others. Thus, despite the fact that the long-term aspirations have not changed, the certainty in their realization is challenged.

With the hegemonic discourse on the individuality, adolescents kept the reasoning of the consequences on themselves. Those few, who were able to realize their short-term aspirations, thus being placed in the high school of their choice, reported to be very proud of receiving fruits of their hard work. On the other hand, the remaining majority who failed to realize their short term aspirations accused themselves for failure due to the incompletion with the required personal traits.

Despite these changes, the discourse on equality of opportunities remained to be internalized, even among those who dropped out of the education system. Based on the variety of their experience, this situation yielded them to development of coping strategies to maintain the sense of agency to benefit from the equal opportunities provided to them.

Adolescents from low socio-economic background develops resistant agencies. Thus, their focus and belief in the power of agency against the social structure remains but resisting to the expected to the expected trajectory to realize aspirations a later stage in their lives, if not now, when conditions could be riper for the agency to reveal itself. On the other hand, adolescents from middle socio-economic status have adopted an adaptive agency. Their *habitus* is in constant change to keep up with the changing parameters in the environment. Adolescents from high socio-economic status, brings an alternative agency on board by pulling their alternative social settings together.

These coping strategies have also varied among the boys and girls. Similar to the findings of the first phase, the difference was most visible among the adolescents from low socio-economic background. Patriarchal constraints became much more apparent to girls as patriarchal norms have intervened with their aspirations in the short term and will possibly continue to do so in the mid and long term. Girls from low socio-economic group came to an agreement with the patriarchy as an objective structure. The internalization of sex differences as a natural phenomenon, as a doxa, not to be questioned but to be taken as default, is strongest compared to others. Similarly, boys from low socio-economic background maintained their sense of agency as a powerful tool against the social structure with a view for collective responsibility for their families as the boy, thus the future breadwinner, of the household.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

*“Whenever I prayed I asked to be on the honor list. These dreams come true because I studied hard.” (LSES, M)<sup>180</sup>*

This dissertation has studied the encounter between the structure and the agency on the basis of adolescents’ aspirations for social mobility. It has analyzed the sociological dilemma between agency and the structure from adolescents’ perspective in the context of movements in the social space. The dichotomy between structure and agency is one of the major ones among others in sociology. It is a question of what constitutes society. This question is even debated in contemporary sociology. On the one hand, structuralists favor the idea that human beings are products of society. Their actions are determined as the result of system of relationships that exist in society and its structures. On the other hand, individualists treat the society as a sum of actions of the individuals, thus agents of their own actions (Walsh, 1998, p.9). In addition to the structuralists and individualists, some other theorists, such as Giddens or Bourdieu, attempted to find the middle ground for this dichotomy focusing on the reflexive relationship between the structure and the agency. This dissertation has chosen Bourdieusian articulation as a theoretical framework.

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<sup>180</sup> “Her namaz kıldığımda takdir almak istedim, o hayaller gerçekleşti. Çünkü ben çok çalıştım.”

The dichotomy between the structure and the agency has its implications on many other social theories, as much as it is influenced by the political discourse, as it comprises the roots of how social structure is perceived. Consequently, social mobility theories rely on either side of this dichotomy. Social mobility refers to the movements in the social space, which are dependent to ascribed or achieved factors causing social stratification. Social stratification is considered to be the most rigid when ascribed factors are predominant, whereas more mobility is expected when there is room for movement with the achieved factors. Neo-liberal politics highlight the need to rely on achievement factors placing more emphasis on the individuals for movements across the social strata. Thus, with the paradigmatic shift placing the higher emphasis on individual agents' responsibilities for social mobility, it is perceived that social mobility is possible, regardless or ignorant of the characteristics of social structure, based on individual effort. This perpetuates the individualist explanation of how social structure is composed. Despite the fact that Bourdieu's primary attention was not social mobility, his interpretation on the composition of social structure as well as the encounter of the agency with the social structure brings insights to reflect on this encounter for social mobility, providing a framework to study social mobility based on aspirations.

This research was inspired from the rhetoric placing the accountability for social mobility on children's shoulders by encouraging them to aspire high and work hard to realize their aspirations. Focusing on the young individuals to foster upward mobility started to take my attention especially in the last decade in policy papers, journal articles and political speeches. It seems to me that aspiring for moving in the social space has been introduced as a mechanism to overcome the inequalities in the society.

This dissertation has searched for a qualitative explanation behind the encounter of adolescent agencies with social structures in relation to aspirations for social mobility. This dissertation did not intend to provide a probabilistic calculation on the prospects for social movements based on adolescents' aspirations or their capacity of agency. Rather it has adopted a qualitative methodology focusing on the

differentiations on the aspirations, the perceptions and knowledge of the social structures and the perceived capacity of agency in interplay with social structure of adolescents from various socio-economic and gender backgrounds and monitored the change over time. It is designed as a longitudinal panel study. The research was conducted among 40 adolescents, both boys and girls, attending 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the time when research was initiated, in Turkish state schools from placed in neighborhoods with different socio-economic status in Ankara. The research was conducted through face-to face interviews with adolescents in 2015, during its first phase, who were reached again in one year time in 2016, after they took the TEOG examination, a central level examination for transition from primary to secondary school at grade 8. The second phase included a combination of face-to-face and phone interviews as well as limited number of focus group discussions to dwell upon some points that was raised during interviews.

### **7.1.Main findings**

The findings of this research have suggested that adolescents from different socio-economic and gender backgrounds have different daily practices. Being in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of the Turkish education system, their daily practices are influenced by the future concerns as they are at the edge of taking an exam to be placed in a high school, which will, in turn, affect the university and employment outcomes. Girls' daily practices are restricted, especially for adolescents from low and to a certain extent for middle socio-economic background, by the incidents of violence against women in Turkey, primarily by the Özgecan incident, which was quite recent at the time of the research.

Similar to the daily practices, a socio-economy of the aspirations also exist. Adolescents from different socio-economic and gender background have different aspirations. The focus of the adolescents from high socio-economic background is to have a luxurious life by moving status even higher. On the other hand, adolescents from middle socio-economic status aspire to have a happy family life, in which they maintain peace and stability within their families. Adolescents with low socio-economic status have aspirations to change their and their families' destiny. No

major differences were found among the aspirations between boys and girls as in the case of socio-economic background. The findings show that adolescents tend to aspire for occupations that are suitable to their gender roles, which is a repeated finding in many studies looking at children's occupational aspirations. What is more interesting is that girls start incorporating the domestic responsibilities expected from them by the social norms in their daily lives. These come out as part of the descriptions of their aspired future lives.

While their aspirations as well as what and how they know about the social structures and the social mobility vary, their strategies to realize their aspirations stay very much along the same line. Adolescents from all socio-economic backgrounds internalize the discourse on the equality of opportunities as an externality, on which their aspiration realization strategies rely. With the internalization of this discourse, their sense of agency is pumped and considered as the key channel for movement across the social strata. This internalization leads to the neglect of the social structures in different ways, except one key social structure, namely patriarchy. Patriarchy is a recognized social structure, impeding for girls and enabling for boys, especially among the low income adolescents. It is acknowledged as a structure to live and adapt with, not to be struggled against. In the case of other social structures, the neglect takes the form of disobedience among the adolescents from low socio-economic background. Despite the recognition of the social mobility, ontologically, they opt to disobey the life trajectory imposed by the social structures. Adolescents from middle socio-economic background choose to coexist with the social structures meaning that they are not disturbed by the existence of the social structures. They build a path for their future within the limits of the social structures. On the other hand, adolescents from high socio-economic background take the social structures as granted with a view that their existence, which is mostly supportive in their case, is not essential for their movements in the social space.

The findings of the second phase of the research in the aftermath of the TEOG examination reveal that the positions in the social space already start to be widened. The daily practices of the adolescents, who dropped out from education among the



low socio-economic background, change significantly, compared to their peers who continue their education. The daily practices remained more or less the same among the rest spending most of their time at school. One interesting finding is that future concerns, which is replaced by the university entrance exam, continue shaping the daily practices of the adolescents from high socio-economic background.

The change in the aspirations were dependent on the experience, positive or negative, they had with the TEOG examination. While long-term aspirations had not changed dramatically, short-term aspirations were adapted with the new conditions. What remained unchanged was the internalization of the discourse on the equality of opportunities. Despite the fact that majority of the adolescents, regardless of their socio-economic background, were not able to be placed in the high school they aspired at the time of the first phase of the research, they kept the responsibility to realize the aspirations at individual levels. They continued pointing the agency out as the main source of realizing the aspirations. The failure to meet the short-term aspirations, the aspirations related to high school, was explained by individual weaknesses. This was also the case for those who were able to actualize their short-term aspirations. In that case, the achievements were attributed to personal skills such as intelligence, determination and hard work.

Maintaining the focus on the agency was interpreted as signs of coping mechanisms with the social structures. Adolescents from high socio-economic background have *resistant agencies*, which kept their agency empowered to resist the social structures that may potentially impede their movements towards the upper social strata. Their agencies resist to the structures with a view that the agency will be able to overcome them one day if not today. On the other hand, adolescents from middle socio-economic background build *adaptive agencies*. These agencies adapt to the changing conditions, which enable them to keep the focus on the agency. Agency remains to be the key to realizing the aspirations, which are being adapted. Finally, adolescents from the high socio-economic status develop *alternative agencies*. This type of agency allows them to alternate based on the social structures, or contexts to be more specific, where they will be able to realize the potential of their agencies.

Finishing the lower secondary school, adolescents started to be considered as young adults which has contributed to an increased recognition of patriarchy as a social structure. Again, this was more evident among the adolescents with low and middle socio-economic background. While patriarchy was repeatedly mentioned as an impeding structure for girls, it was an element to grow the sense of agency among boys by taking responsibility of the household.

## **7.2. Making Sense of Data: Reflection on the Theory**

Based on the findings of the research, it is unrealistic to expect a fairer social stratification system and a more equal society based on adolescents' aspirations. While structuralists would expect the social structures to provide equality, the individualists would rest the responsibility on individuals to obtain equality. In contrast, or as middle way, Bourdieu's theory would explain these inequalities through a reflexive sociology, where both social structures and individuals would contribute to a certain extent. The reflexivity; thus, the encounters between the agency and the structure, results in the cycle of inequalities.

In respect to Bourdieu's theory on the encounters between the agency and the structure, the findings of this research leads to three main conclusions. The first one is that his theory of habitus and the fields acts *as a convener* for adolescents from different socio-economic and gender backgrounds. Adolescents from low, middle and high socio-economic status have a variety of aspirations based on their position in the social space. It should not be a coincidence that their aspirations for future differ from each other. Rather, it should be the role of habitus, acting as a mental filter, which affects the aspirations. Adolescents' habitus, changing based on the field and influenced by their past experiences, kicks in, almost unconsciously, to guide their aspirations. The neo-liberal political discourse as well as the institutions built to support the discourse, such as the education system, highlights the need to have high aspirations to move upward in the social space and to break free from the imposed by the societal order. It places the emphasis on individuals to aspire regardless of their social standing. However, the findings show that the influence of

their background, what they see and hear within their families, at their schools, from their parents and peers, is inevitable.

Education and family proved to be important fields feeding their habitus. The actions and the consequences of actions in these fields constantly help habitus to revise itself. As the dynamics within these fields change, the habitus adapts to the situation and produce new aspirations that are aligned with the new situation within these fields. For example, as mentioned among the findings of the research, adolescents' aspirations have been revised by their habitus to adopt to the new field conditions. Their aspirations were revised based on their expectations from their families and the new school they are attending in, learned from their past negative or positive experience with TEOG.

Habitus is like binoculars. It provides a vision. However, this vision changes based on the technical specifications of the binoculars and based on where the individual stands in the social space. In terms of the technical specifications, the binoculars provide a wider vision as much as their specifications advance. These technical specifications are like capitals, social, economic and cultural, which compose the habitus. Secondly, in terms of the position of the individual, the vision changes based on what is available to see as the individual looks through the binoculars. As it cannot be expected from everyone to see mountains or forests once they look through binoculars, it cannot be expected from the individuals to see the same in the social space. Depending on the position in the social space, what they see and what they would like to see is different. Thus, their aspirations are also different.

No matter how well their binoculars, thus their habitus, are equipped, what they see and what they aspire will be different. The investments made in the technical specifications, i.e. capitals, may help to have a clearer or wider vision. However, their social positions will inevitably shape the vision and the aspirations. Thus, it is almost unfair to expect from all adolescents, especially from those with low and middle socio-economic status, to aspire the same with their peers with high socio-economic background. It was obvious from the findings that adolescents aspirations and their sense of agency to realize these aspirations were shaped by their socio-

economic class, mostly by the economic capital, and linked to that social capital, of their parents. The same rule applies for girls and boys too. Their aspirations will, inevitably, be different based on their exposure from their surroundings. Then, the habitus acts as a convener for social stratification, where perception, definition and targeting of social stratification is different.

Having different aspirations lead to have different plans to realize these aspirations, which brings us to the second conclusion of the research. The conclusion that habitus acts *as a facilitator*. It is mentioned among the research findings that adolescents neglect the social structures in their plans to realize their aspirations. These findings can be perceived as social blindness especially for the adolescents from low socio-economic background for failing to see the objective structures that force them to be where they are with limited resources. However, this cannot be the case since adolescents from all socio-economic backgrounds and genders were aware of the social strata and its rules as evident from their aspirations.

Alternatively, the neglect of the objective structures may be interpreted as a result of *habitus*, which is significantly shaped by past experiences and since past experiences of adolescents are limited compared to adults, the current *habitus* may not suffice to do a thorough evaluation of objective structures' influence on the social order. However, I suggest, by deriving from adolescents' capacity to form their social environment, it is a result of symbolic violence created by the faith in equal opportunities. This symbolic violence is invisible, silent and very difficult to resist as it comes from inside through *habitus*, accepted as doxa (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1992). *Habitus* facilitates its invisibility.

'Naturalness is inscribed in the habitus. The schemes or perception and apprehension of both dominant and dominated is inscribed within habitus in a natural way. By committing in the acts of symbolic violence, the social world, which is misrecognized, is legitimated (Appelrouth and Edles, 2008, p.693).

Through habitus's facilitation, the externality is internalized and neoliberal discourse underlining the existence of equal opportunities became a doxa among the adolescents. Adolescents have opted to maintain the responsibility on their agency to realize their aspirations since it is believed that external conditions are somehow

equalized. Then, this facilitation keeps the focus on the individual. A neoliberal subject is successfully constructed under the promise of equality of opportunities providing a 'cruel optimism' (Zipin et al cited from Berlant, 2015, p. 241).

Even before an individually experienced social structure, they all have adopted strategies, which rely on their own agency. This situation has not significantly changed after the TEOG examination. The conditions for neglect of the social structures have changed with the negative or positive experience they had with the social structure. While the social structures that may enable or impede adolescents' movements in the social space are neglected, patriarchy appeared to be the only social structure that is recognized and not to be struggled against especially among the low socio-economic status girls. While girls opt to move within the limits of the patriarchal norms, preliminary negotiations takes place with patriarchy as the gender ideology started to decipher.

As a cause and result of this neglect, adolescents were made to believe that their movements in the social space is tied to individual factors, hence, their merits, encouraging them to collect as much cultural capital as possible, which would translate into other capitals such as economic and social capital, in the future. They choose to accumulate cultural capital to realize their aspirations, however, it should not be forgotten that educational selection is also socially organized and depends on parents' wealth or wishes more than children's abilities and efforts signalling the importance of parentocracy over meritocracy (DeWiele and Edgerton, 2016).

This situation then becomes advantageous for high socio-economic background adolescents as their achievement is celebrated as individual achievement, even it is supported by objective structures in which they are born in, since the objective structures became invisible by the discourse of equal opportunities, fueling their sense of agency. On the other hand, for low socio-economic status adolescents as their failure contributed by the objective structures is portrayed as individual failures. Thus, social order, as is, is facilitated as habitus appropriates experiences and internalize the externality. This, indeed, reproduces the stratified social order with the complicity of the dominated (Appelrouth and Edles, 2008, p.693).

The third conclusion is that then habitus, by being a convener as well as a facilitator of the existing social order, eliminates the tension between the structure and the agency. The encounter between the agency and the structure is a reflexive, hence a peaceful one. The first reason behind that is related to its capacity to internalize the externalization. Habitus prevents all individuals to have the same vision of the social order. The externality varies. Then, there are different images of the social order based on the social position of the social space. This means that if one attempts to change the social order, it is not the same social order that is being targeted. Moreover, with the internalization of the discourse on equality of opportunities as well as the neo-liberal discourse on the individual responsibilities for life trajectories, put forward by the externality, social order is individualized. The achievements and failures within it is individualized. The agents are shifted from the terrain of social crisis and critique to the terrain of personal critique and crisis (Bourdieu, 1984, p.152-153).

Second reason is related to the capacity to externalize the internalization. Habitus is the means, through which the agency shape the social structure as much as it is shaped by it. Thus, the agency is a contributor to the existing social order. Then, the social structures are not fully imposed and external; rather, they are created with the contribution of the agents. As mentioned above, habitus supports the internalization of the discourse on equality of opportunities. With this internalization, it is assumed by the adolescents that the structures are equalized. Thus, aftermath of this equalization, the social conditions are consequences of the agents' aspirations and sense of agencies. As Zipin et al. (2015) have underlined, suggesting to overcome structural obstacles by raising aspirations increase the obstacles rather than to eliminate by ideologically simplifying the complexities and making the historical conditions invisible in which the adolescents in low and middle class positions struggle to aspire and pursue future endeavors.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: Official Request from MONE

9 Ocak 2015

Ankara

Ankara İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü'ne,

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyoloji Bölümü'nde yapmakta olduğum doktora çalışmalarım kapsamında farklı sosyo-ekonomik statüye sahip 8. sınıfa giden çocukların gelecek beklentileri üzerine bir araştırma yapmaktayım. Bunun için Ankara'da bulunan sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi farklı üç okulda çocuklarla görüşmeler yapmak istemekteyim.

Araştırmamın önerisi, amacı, metodolojisi ekte sunulmuştur. Ayrıca ekte araştırma sırasında sorulacak sorular ve veli/çocuk rıza formları da bulunmaktadır.

Yukarıda bahsi geçen çalışmayı

- ✓ Çankaya ilçesi Beysukent'te bulunan Ayten Şaban Diri Ortaokulu
- ✓ Çankaya ilçesi İlker'de bulunan Abdurrahman Şengel Ortaokulu
- ✓ Altındağ ilçesi Ulus'ta bulunan Seymenler Ortaokulu'nda

yapmak istiyorum. Bu okullar uzmanlarla görüşmeler ve daha önce yapılmış çalışmalar vasıtasıyla farklı sosyo-ekonomik statüyü temsil edecek şekilde seçilmiştir.

Gereğinin yapılmasını bilgilerinize arz ederim.

Saygılarımla,

İraz Öykü SOYALP GÜLCÜGİL

## APPENDIX B: Research Tools

### Hikaye yazım sorusu:

1. Bana bundan 10 sene sonraki hayatını hayal ederek kendini nerede gördüğünü anlatan 1-2 sayfalık bir kompozisyon yazabilir misin?

### Derinlemesine mülakat soruları:

1. Bana bir gününü anlatabilir misin?
2. 3-5 sene önce hayaller bugün gerçekleşti mi?
3. Buna ne engel/yardımcı oldu?
4. Elimdeki kartlara bakarak bu kartları sana engel olan, yardımcı olan ve etkilemeyen olarak ayırabilir misin?
5. Bu kartları önem sırasına sokabilir misin?
6. Başından seni üzecek, yıpratıcı, travma niteliğinde bir olay geçti mi?
7. Önümüzdeki sene sence nerede olacaksın?
8. Kompozisyonda yazdığın hikayeyi bana anlatabilir misin?
9. Bu hikayede gerçekleşmeyeceğini düşündüğün bir yer var mı?
10. Neden böyle düşünüyorsun?
11. Hangi etkenlerin sana yardımcı ya da engel olacağını düşünüyorsun?
12. Buna göre kartları yeniden değerlendirebilir misin? Kartlara eklemek istediğin başka bir şey var mı?
13. Bu kartları önem sırasına sokabilir misin?



*Socio-Economic Status Determination/Verification Form*

1	Kaç yaşındasın?	
2	Cinsiyetin	
3	Doğum yerin	
4	Ne zamandır Ankara'dasın?	
5	Ailede kaç kişi var?	
6	Annen ve babanla beraber mi oturuyorsunuz?	
7	Kaç kardeşin var?	
8	Kardeşlerinin arasında kaçincısın? (yaş olarak)	
9	Evinizin kaç odası var?	
10	sana ait bir odan var mı?	
11	Babanın mesleği ne?	
12	Babanın düzenli gittiği bir işi var mı?	
13	Annenin mesleği ne?	
14	Annenin düzenli gittiği bir iş var mı?	
15	Babanın işi sigortalı mı?	
16	Annenin işi sigortalı mı?	
17	Evinize giren aylık gelir nedir?	
18	Annenin en son mezun olduğu okul nedir?	
19	Babanın en son mezun olduğu okul nedir?	
20	Evinizde çamaşır makinası, bulaşık makinası, internet bağlantısı, Lcd TV , otomobil, var mı?	
21	Bilgisayarın var mı?	
22	Cep telefonun var mı?	
23	Haftada kaç lira cep harçlığı alırsın?	
24	Okul dışında bir işte çalışıyor musun?	
25	Okul dışındaki vakitlerini nasıl ve nerelerde geçirirsin?	
26	Okulda bir arkadaş grubun var mı? Varsa , onlar kimler, nerelerde otururlar, neden onlarla arkadaş oldun? Beraber neler yapar nerelere takılırsınız? Nelerden hoşlanırsınız?	

## *Consent Forms*

### **ÇOCUK RIZA FORMU**

Merhaba,

Ben İraz Öykü Soyalp. Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyoloji Bölümü'nde doktora öğrencisiyim. Doktora tezimi yazmak için çocukların gelecek beklentileri üzerinde çalışıyorum. Bunun için de 8.sınıfta okuyan yaklaşık 45 çocuk ile görüşmeler yapmaktayım. Sana gelecekteki hayallerinle ilgili ve şu anda içinde bulunduğun durum ile ilgili bazı sorular soracağım.

Bundan bir sene sonra seninle tekrar buluşup konuşmak istiyorum. O yüzden de aşağı adresini ve varsa senin yoksa ailenin ya da sana ulaşabileceğim yakın bir kişinin telefonunu yazabilirsen çok sevinirim.

Çalışmada ismin ve adresin kesinlikle kullanılmayacak. Sana söz veriyorum. İsmi ve adresini önümüzdeki sene seni tekrar bulabilmek için soruyorum.

Eğer bu çalışmanın bir parçası olmak istiyorsan ya da olmayı kabul ediyorsan bu formu imzalamanı ve ailene imzalatmanı rica edebilir miyim?

Teşekkür ederim.

#### **Çocuk için:**

İsim ve Soyisim:

Adres:

Telefon:

İmza:

## **VELİ İÇİN AÇIKLAMA YAZISI VE RIZA FORMU**

Sayın Veli,

Ben İraz Öykü Soyalp. Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyoloji Bölümü'nde doktora öğrencisiyim. Doktora tezimi yazmak için çocukların gelecek beklentileri üzerine bir araştırma yapmaktayım. Bu araştırma kapsamında Ankara ilindeki 3 farklı okulda Ankara İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü'nden alacağım izin ile 8.sınıfta okuyan yaklaşık 45 çocuk ile görüşmeler yapacağım.

Araştırmaya katılan çocuklara gelecek beklentileri, hayatlarına ilişkin hayalleri ve şu anda yaşadıkları hayat ile ilgili bazı sorular soruyorum. Bir çocuk ile olan görüşmem en fazla 1.5 saat sürüyor. Araştırma kapsamında çocuğunuza soru sormak, sohbet etmek ve anket kağıdı doldurmak dışında hiçbir araç kullanmayacağım.

Şu anda bu araştırmaya katılan çocuklarla bundan bir sene sonra tekrar görüşmek istemekteyim. Bu nedenle çocuğunuzu bir sene sonra bulabilmek için isim, adres ve telefon soruyorum. Bu bilgiler bir sene sonra size tekrar ulaşmak dışında asla kullanılmayacaktır. Çocuğunuzun ismi, telefonu ya da adresi çalışmada asla kullanılmayacak, siz ve benim aramda gizli kalacaktır.

Bu çalışma kapsamında sizin çocuğunuzla da görüşmek isterim. Buna rıza gösteriyorsanız aşağıdaki kısmı imzalamanızı rica ediyorum.

Çok teşekkür ederim.

Saygılar,

### **Veli için:**

İsim ve Soyisim:

Çocuğa yakınlığı:

Adres:

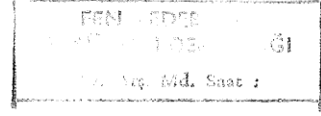
Telefon:

İmza:

## APPENDIX C: Permission Letter from MONE



T.C.  
ANKARA VALİLİĞİ  
Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü



Sayı : 14588481/605.99/1017687  
Konu: Araştırma izni

29/01/2015

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİNE  
(Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi-Sosyoloji Bölümü)

İlgi: a) MEB Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğünün 2012/13 nolu Genelgesi.  
b) 09/01/2015 tarihli yazınız.

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## APPENDIX D: Status Scores Associated with Occupations in Turkey

Meslekler	Puan
1. Orta ve büyük işveren (10 kişiden fazla çalıştıran) (kendi hesabına; imalat, hizmetler, inşaat, taşımacılık vb.)	1.69
2. Kendi hesabına profesyonel (kendi hesabına çalışan doktor, avukat, mühendis, mimar, hukuk müşaviri, mali müşavir, noter, mütercim tercüman, programcı, tasarımcı vb.)	1.55
3. Memur Maaşlı – profesyonel, üst düzey yönetici, profesyonel ordu mensubu (kamu yöneticileri, kamuda profesyonel meslek sahipleri ve profesyonel ordu mensupları –astsubay ve er dahil değil.)	1.54
4. İşçi, düzenli ücretli, beyaz yakalı (yönetici/profesyonel)	1.54
5. Kendi hesabına büyük ticaret (ithalat, ihracat, toptancı, kabzımal vb.)	1.24
6. Memur, maaşlı - orta düzey memur (ara eleman, öğretmen, devlet dairelerinde kamu çalışanı memur.)	1.12
7. Küçük işveren (1-10 kişi çalıştıran)	0.81
8. İşçi, düzenli ücretli, beyaz yakalı – düşük ve orta vasıflı	0.79
9. Memur, maaşlı- yardımcı hizmetler (odacı, çaycı, arşiv görevlisi vb.)	0.65
10. Kendi hesabına küçük ticaret	0.57
11. Ücretsiz aile işçisi	0.49
12. İşçi, düzenli ücretli, mavi yakalı - orta vasıflı (ustabaşı, aşçı, şoför, şef garson vb.)	0.40
13. Farklı bir kategori olarak “şu anda çalışmayan” emekliler	0.35
14. İşçi, düzenli ücretli, mavi yakalı – vasıfsız (fabrikada imalatta kol işçisi, hizmet sektöründe komi, kebağçıda çalışan, inşaat ve tamir işleri, imalatta çırak, garson vb.)	0.24
15. Kendi hesabına marjinal işler (kendine ait işyeri olmadan kendi hesabına çalışanlar (işportacı, boya-badanacı, araba tamircisi, çevirmen vb.)	0.21

Source: Kalaycıoğlu et al, 2010.

## APPENDIX E: Detailed Chart on Research Participants' Profiles

	Age	Gender	Socio-economic Status	Born in	Size of the Household	Mother's Education	Mother's Occupation	Father's Education	Father's Occupation	Weekly Pocket Money Received	Possession of Valuable Assets in the household (dishwasher, LCD TV, internet, computer, car, cell phones)	Continuity to Secondary Education	Participation Status in the Second Stage Data Collection in 2016
SA	14	F	L	Ankara	5	Primary	Housewife	Primary	Construction Worker	20	None	Yes	Yes
DS	16	F	L	Ordu	5	Illiterate	Housewife	Primary	Works at Night Club	12,50	None	Yes	Yes
EA	14	M	L	Ankara	5	Illiterate	Housewife	Primary	Works at Grocery Shop	4	None	Yes	Yes
DA	14	F	L	Ankara	4	Illiterate	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Does not know	10	None	Dropped Out	Yes
AD	14	M	L	Ankara	7*	Lower Secondary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Auto-mechanic	15	No Internet, car and cell phone	Yes	Yes
EK	14	F	L	Ankara	4	Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Driver	10	None	Yes	Yes
MK	14	M	L	Şanlıurfa	8	Illiterate	Housewife	Primary	Street Vendor	10	No dishwasher, TV and cell phone	Dropped Out	Yes
EA	14	F	L	Ankara	4	Drop-out from Primary	Housewife	Drop-out from Lower Secondary	Teaman	12,5	No Internet and TV	Yes	Yes
EÇ	14	F	L	Ankara	7	Primary	Housewife	Primary	Barber	20	No dishwasher, Internet, computer and cell phone	Yes	cannot be reached
SBA	15	F	L	Ankara	5	Drop-out from Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Birdman	15	No Internet and car	Yes	Yes
CA	13	M	L	Ağrı	8	Illiterate	Housewife	Illiterate	Construction Worker	5	No to Internet, car, TV and computer	Yes	Yes
RÖ	14	M	L	Ankara	4	High School	Housewife	High School	Works at a supermarket	10	No car and cell phone	Yes	cannot be reached
YEF	14	M	L	Diyarbakır	8	Illiterate	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Coffeeman	35	No car, TV and cell phone	Yes	Yes
EK	14	E	L	Çorum	5	Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Porter	10	No car, TV and cell phone	Yes	Yes
İED	15	F	L	Ankara	5	Lower Secondary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Owens his business	20	No car and TV	Yes	Yes
AT	14	M	M	Ankara	4	Lower Secondary	Housewife	University	Civil Servant	10	All	Yes	refused to take part
BB	14	M	M	Ankara	5	x	Housewife	Doesn't know	Security Guard	35	All	Yes	cannot be reached
EBA	14	F	M	Ankara	5	Lower Secondary	Housewife	University	Mechanical Engineer	30	All	Yes	cannot be reached
GP	14	F	M	Ankara	4	University	Housewife	University	Electronics Engineer	70	All	Yes	Yes

	Age	Gender	Socio-economic Status	Born in	Size of the Household	Mother's Education	Mother's Occupation	Father's Education	Father's Occupation	Weekly Pocket Money Received	Possession of Valuable Assets in the household (dishwasher, LCD TV, internet, computer, car, cell phones)	Continuity to Secondary Education	Participation Status in the Second Stage Data Collection in 2016
YAM	13	M	M	Manisa	5	Primary	Housewife	University	Manager at TGNA	20	No computer	Yes	Yes
TA	14	M	M	Samsun	4	Primary	Works at a supermarket	Primary	Owens a cell phone shop	35	No Internet	Yes	cannot be reached
SI	14	F	M	Ankara	4	Primary	Cook	Graduate	Electrician Technician	20	No Internet	Yes	Yes
SSA	14	F	M	Ankara	5	High School	Housewife	High School	Marketing Manager	60	All	Yes	Yes
GDY	14	F	M	Ankara	3	High School	Housewife	High School	Mechanical Engineer	70	All	Yes	Yes
ESC	14	F	M	Ankara	6	Lower Secondary	Housewife	Primary	Chief	25	No computer and cell phone	Yes	cannot be reached
BTM	15	M	M	Ankara	6	Primary	Housewife	Lower Secondary	Worker at Municipality	30	No car	Yes	Yes
BG	14	M	M	Ankara	4	High School	Housewife	High School	Owens his business	40	No Internet	Yes	Yes
SD	14	F	M	Ankara	4	High School	Housewife	High School	Retired	90	No car	Yes	Yes
BK	14	M	H	Ankara	3	University	Teacher	University	Teacher	100	All	Yes	Yes
DC	14	F	H	Ankara	6	University	Retired Housewife	University	Agricultural Engineer	50	All	Yes	Yes
AÜ	14	F	H	Ankara	3	University	Housewife	University	Insurance Expert	30	All	Yes	Yes
SEP	14	F	H	Ankara	3	Graduate	Secretary	University	Public Relations Manager	30	All	Yes	Yes
S	14	F	H	Ankara	4	University	Teacher	University	Lieutenant	40	All	Yes	refused to take part
AA	14	F	H	Ankara	3	University	Teacher	Graduate	Senior Official at MONE	30	All	Yes	refused to take part
BNT	14	F	H	Ankara	4	High School	Works at Digital Copy Center	Open University	Owens a Digital Copy Center	50	All	Yes	Yes
DO	14	F	H	Ankara	4	University	Housewife Sociologist	University	Civil Engineer	70	All	Yes	Yes
BU	14	F	H	Ankara	4	University	Housewife	University	Owens a jeans shop	350	All	Yes	Yes
BY	14	F	H	Kayseri	5	University	Sales Manager	University	Judge	40	All	Yes	Yes
TAL	15	M	H	Rize	4	University	Civil Servant	University	Civil Servant	115	All	Yes	Yes
EY	14	M	H	Ankara	3	University	Banker	University	Owens a auto-mechanics shop	100	All	Yes	Yes

\*This number includes grandparents

## APPENDIX F: Turkish Summary/Türkçe Özet

### Giriş

Bu tezin ana amacı toplumsal hareketliliğe yönelik istekler temelinde çocukların aktörlük kapasitesinin yapı ile karşılaşmalarını inceleyerek sosyal yapı içerisindeki hareketleri anlamlandırmak ve toplumsal hareketlilik ve tabakalaşma çalışmalarına katkı sunmaktır. Bu tez sosyolojik bir bakış açısı ile çocukların geleceğe yönelik isteklerini gerçekleştirmekte kendilerine biçtikleri aktörlük kapasitesini anlamaya çalışmaktadır.

Bu çalışma, farklı cinsiyet ve sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen 14-15 yaşlarında - çocukların gelişimlerine uygun bir şekilde seçilmiş- çocuklardan veri toplayarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yani bu tez; yapı ve aktör arasındaki ikilemi özel olarak Bourdieu'nun teorisi üzerinden tartışarak geleceğe yönelik istekler üzerine olan alanyazın ile toplumsal hareketlilik üzerine olan alanyazın arasında köprü kurma girişiminde bulunmaktadır.

### Teorik Çerçeve

Teorik çerçeve pek çok sosyoloğun farklı yorumlar getirmiş ve getirmekte olduğu yapı ve aktör arasındaki ikilem üzerine kurulmuştur. Bu ikilemin yapısalcı kanadı toplum ve yapılarının bireylerin eylemlerini belirlediğini iddia ederken, bireyci yaklaşım; toplumun, kendi hareketlerinin aktörü olan bireylerin eylemlerinin bütününden oluştuğunu iddia eder (Walsh, 1998). Yapısalcılar bireylerin sosyal varlıklar olduğunu, onların ilgi, amaç ve değerlerinin sosyal dünyanın bir ürünü olduğunu kabul eder. Buna karşılık olarak, bireyciler, yapısalcı okula karşı çıkar ve yapısalcıların sosyal dünyayı insansızlaştırdığını ve toplumu ve toplumsal kurumları bireylerin hareketlerinden ayırarak şeyleştirdiğini düşünür (Wallace, 1975, s. 125). Anthony Giddens bu ikilemi yapılaşma kuramı ile kırmaya niyet etmiş ilk isimlerdendir. Giddens bu ikilemi tarihsel, süreç içerisinde ve dinamik olarak ele alır (Ritzer, 1996; Platt, 2011). Ona göre, yapı zaman ve mekan içerisinde var olmaz.



Bireylerin faaliyetleri sonucu olarak var olur. Aktörler sosyal dünyayı dönüştüremeyecek olsalardı onlara aktör denemezdi ve aktörlükleri biterdi. Bu ikilemi yıkmaya yönelik benzer bir yaklaşım Bourdieu'dan gelmiştir. Bourdieu hem aktörsüz yapıları hem de özgürce hareket eden aktörleri reddederek ikisinin sentezi üzerine kurulu bir sosyal teori geliştirmiştir (Swanson, 2011). Bunu yaparken dönüşümsel bir sosyoloji önermiştir. Yapı ve aktörün karşılaşmasını kavramsallaştırmıştır (Smith, 2001).

Bourdieu'nun dönüşümsel sosyolojisi gücün kaynaklarını ortaya çıkartmış ve sosyal asimetri ve hiyerarşilere ışık tutmuştur (Navarro, 2006). Bourdieu, kendi inşalarının farkında olmadan sadece kültürel kodları takip eden pasif aktör fikrini reddetmiştir ve *habitus* ismini verdiği kavram ile bireylerin eylem, algı ve pratiklerini şekillendirebildiklerini önermiştir. Bourdieu'ya göre *habitus* zihinsel bir süzgeçtir. Bu süzgeç; hem kendi hem de başkalarının hareketlerini değerlendirerek bir bakış açısı elde ederek kişinin eğilimlerini belirler. *Habitus* yaşadığımız çevre içerisinde her koşula tepki göstermemizi ve hayat ile başa çıkmamızı sağlar.

Bu yüzden de *habitus* bu tez için çok önemlidir. Nesnel şanslarımız ve öznel beklentilerimiz hakkında sınırlar verebilir. Bireyler buldukları sosyal konumun imkanlarına ve imkansızlıklarına bakarak eğilimlerini belirlerler. *Habitus*; bireylerin faaliyet gösterdikleri alan içerisindeki gereksinimlere bakarak duruma ayak uydurmalarını temsil eder (Callinicos, 2007, s.296). Bu konum da o alana özgü sermayelerin birikimiyle belirlenir. Yani şu formül ile:

[(*habitus*) (sermaye)] + alan = pratikler

Alanlar yarı özertir. Bireyler ve kurumlar bu alana özgü sermayeleri harekete geçirmeye çalışırlar (Appelrouth and Edles, 2008, p. 694). Bu alanlarda aktörlerin bilincinin ve isteklerinin ötesinde ilişkiler vardır ve her alanın kendine has kuralları vardır. Bourdieu bu kurallara *doxa* der. Alanın *doxasına* göre birey durumunu değerlendirerek kendine alanın yapıları tarafından kısıtlanmış bir konum alır (Ritzer, 1996). Yukarıda söylediği gibi bu konumlar sermayeler tarafından belirlenir. Bourdieu'ya göre dört çeşit sermaye bulunmaktadır. Bunlar maddi varlıkları ifade eden ekonomik sermaye, bilgi ve eğitime ilişkin ünvanları ifade eden

kültürel sermaye, bağlantıları ve ilişkileri ifade eden sosyal sermaye ve şeref ve prestiji ifade eden sembolik sermayedir. Bu tez için aile ve eğitim alanı özel anlam ifade ettiğinden, bu alanlar aşağıda detaylıca tartışılmaktadır.

#### *Bir alan olarak aile*

Aile bireylerin içine doğduğu ve gündelik pratikleri aşıl原因an bir alandır. Aile; Bourdieu için sosyal bir alandır. Burada sermayeler biriktirilir ve *habitusun* eğilimleri belirlenir. Bir ailede çeşitli sermayeler vardır, bunlar alanın yapılarını ve dolayısıyla içindeki aktörlerin eylemlerini belirler (Quarmby, 2013). Aile sadece sınırları belirlemez. Nelerin başarıl原因abileceğinin yanı sıra nelerin arzu edilebilir olduğunu da belirler. Çocuklar anlamsal karmaşıklığı, duygusal bağlanmaları ve eylem için reçeteleri burada öğrenir (Archer vd., 2012).

#### *Bir alan olarak eğitim*

Bourdieu, orjinal sınıf ve nihai sınıf arasındaki bağlantıları göstermek ve eğitim sisteminin bu sürece nasıl arabuluculuk ettiğini araştırmak için eğitim alanı üzerine çokça çalışmıştır (Sullivan, 2002). Okul, tohumlarının ailede atıldığı sınıflandırmalarla karşılaşılan ilk mekandır. Eğitim sistemi ile kısmen elde edilebilen kültürel sermaye zenginlik ve güce dönüşebilir. Ancak kültürel sermaye sosyo-ekonomik statüler arasında eşit bölüşülmemiştir ve bu da eğitimin kazanımlarını etkiler. Bourdieu'ya göre eğitim kazanımları için gerekli olan kültürel sermaye egemen sınıfın kültürüdür. Sonuç olarak da; bu kültürel sermayeye zaten sahip olan çocuklar avantajlı konumdadır çünkü egemen sınıf içerisinde sosyalleşmişlerdir. Ancak eğitim sistemi eşitlik için bir araçmış gibi gösterilir. Alt sınıftan gelen çocukların üst sınıftan gelen arkadaşları ile aynı başarıyı gösterdikleri durumlar bu fikri pekiştirir. Aslında bu sosyal eşitsizliği yeniden üretir çünkü eğitimin getirdiği sonuçlar meşrulaşmış ve meritokratik olarak temsil edilmiş olur (Sullivan, 2002).

#### *Toplumsal Tabakalaşma ve Toplumsal Hareketlilik*

Aktör ve yapı arasındaki ikilem toplumsal tabakalaşma ve hareketlilik çalışmalarıyla iç içe geçmiştir. Tabakalaşma çalışmaları yoksulun neden yoksul,

zenginin neden zengin olduğunu anlamaya çalışır. Bu açıklamayı bireyin çalışkanlık, akıllılık gibi becerilerine bağlamak ya da içine doğmuş olduğu aile, sahip olduğu bağlantılar gibi faktörlere bağlamak ve ona göre yorumlamak bu ikilemin bir yansımasıdır (Bowles ve Gintis, 2002).

Toplumsal tabakalaşma sisteminin katılığı, bireylerin buldukları konumdaki sürekliliğini ve zaman içerisinde yer değiştirebilme imkanlarını belirler. Atfedilmiş ve edinilebilir parametreler toplumdaki varlıkların ve kaynakların nasıl paylaşılacağı ve bireylerin bu paylaşımına göre toplumda edinecekleri konumları etkiler. Atfedilmiş parametreler ağır bastığında, yani toplumsal yapı daha katı olduğunda, sosyal konumlar arasında hareketlilik azdır. Kast sistemlerinde olduğu gibi doğumda elde edilen konum hayat boyunca muhafaza edilebilir (Blau, 1975). Blau and Duncan, liberal demokratik toplumlarda toplumsal hareketliliğin temelini edinilebilir parametrelerin oluşturmasının beklediğini vurgular. Atfedilmiş özellikler önceki çağın kalıntılarıdır ve olabilecek en hızlı şekilde yok edilmelidir (Blau ve Duncan, 1967, s.163). Edinilebilir özelliklere vurgu yapan bu paradigmatik değişiklik aktörün kapasitesinin altını çizerek; onun, atfedilmiş özellikleri ortadan kaldırma ya da en azından sarsma gücü olduğuna işaret eder. Yapısalcılar ve bireyciler arasında orta yolu bulmaya çalışan diğer teorisyenler gibi Blau ve Duncan da toplumsal hareketliliği bir süreç olarak ele alır ve hem içsel hem de dışsal belirleyicilere bağlayarak statü edinme teorisi adını verdikleri bir teori öne sürerler. Bu paradigmatik değişiklik toplumsal hareketlilik çalışmalarını sosyal yapı içerisindeki hareketleri atfedilmiş ve edinilebilir özellikler arasındaki dinamiğe bağlı olarak çalışmaya itmiştir. Bu da aktörün doğumda ailenin altyapısı ile gelen özellikleri değiştirmek için ne kadar kapasitesi olduğunu anlamaya yönelik bir girişimdir. Bunun sonucu olarak, geleceğe yönelik istekler gibi psiko-sosyal değişkenleri de çalışmaların içinde yer almaya başlamıştır.

#### *Çocukların aktörlük kapasitesi*

Yapı ve aktör arasındaki ikilem çocukların aktörlük kapasitesi mevzu bahis olduğunda çok daha büyük bir tartışmaya yol açmaktadır. Çünkü çocukların kapasitesi her gün gelişmektedir ve yetişkinlere bağımlıdırlar. Çocuğun tanımı ve

algısı coğrafi ve zamansal olarak değişmektedir. Sadece bu değişim değil aktör ve yapı ikilemindeki değişimler de çocukluk sosyolojisini ve dolayısıyla çocuklara atfedilen aktörlük kapasitesini değiştirmiştir.

Geleneksel yaklaşımlar çocukları pasif aktörler olarak ele alır ve toplum içerisinde sosyalleştiklerini vurgular. Bunun yanı sıra, diğerleri çocukları aktif aktörler olarak kabul eder ve çocukların toplumsal muhafazaya ve değişime katkı sunduklarını öne sürer (Corsaro, 2005). Bourdieu'nun kırmaya çalıştığı ikilem gibi, Corsaro da bu ikilemi kırarak yorumlayıcı yeniden üretim isminde bir teori geliştirmiştir. Bu teoriye göre sosyalleşme sadece ayak uydurma ve özümsemeden ibaret değildir. Bu süreç aynı zamanda kendine mal etme, yeniden icat etme ve yeniden üretme sürecidir (Corsaro, 2005, s.18).

Çocukluk, zaman ve mekanda aynı kalmadığı gibi cinsiyetler arasında da aynı kalmamaktadır. Toplumsal cinsiyetin inşası aktörlüğün inşası ile iç içedir. Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinde olduğu gibi çocuklar çocukluklarının ilk yıllarından itibaren patriarşik yapı içerisinde cinsiyetleşmiş bir aktörlük geliştirirler. Sahaları, kadın ve erkek arasındaki ilişkileri belirleyen sistemin adıdır patriarşi. Yani çocukların aktörlüğü cinsiyet açısından nötr değildir. Bu farklılıklar geleneksel normlardan, inanışlardan ve değerlerden beslenir. Kız ve oğlan olarak doğmamıza rağmen kadın ve erkek olarak büyütülürüz (Hartmann, 1979). Patriarşi psikolojik alanda da faaliyet gösterir ve nasıl erkek ve kadın olunması gerektiğini öğretir. Erkek güç ve egemenliğin peşindedir, egosentrik ve bireyseldir, pragmatik ve rekabetçidir, teknolojidir. Bunun tersine, kadın besleyicidir, artistik ve felsefidir. Estetiktir (Hartmann Firestone'dan alıntılanmış, 1979). Bu ayrım bütün hayat boyu gözlemlenebilir. 12-18 yaş arasına denk gelen ergenlik, kızların eviçi ve cinsel alandaki ezilmelerinin başladığı zamandır. Kızın güvenliği ailenin ve toplumun görevi haline gelir. Bu da kızları korumaya yönelik geliştirilen önlemlerden dolayı kızları bazı alanlardan dışlamakla sonuçlanır.

### *İstekler*

İstekler; yapılar ve aktörler arasındaki müzakerelerin bir yansımasıdır. Bu müzakere potansiyel olarak hareketliliğe sebep olur bu nedenle de aktör tarafından yapılar

arasında ilerlemek için bir strateji olarak kullanılır. Nesil içinde ya da nesiller arasında hareketliliğin nasıl gerçekleştiğini çalışmak için geleceğe yönelik istekleri anlamak önemlidir. Geleceğe yönelik istekler arasındaki eşitsizlikler toplumsal eşitsizliklerin önemli belirleyicilerindendir (Shu ve Marini, 2007). Şimdiye kadarki çalışmalar eğitime ilişkin beklentilerin eğitim kazanımlarını ve mesleki kazanımları belirlemede belirleyici olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu da neoliberal söylemin daha akışkan toplumlar elde etmek için eğitim sistemine neden bu kadar vurgu yaptığını anlamaya yardımcı olabilir (Lee vd., 2012).

Ray (2003) istek penceresi ve istek farkı arasında ayırım yapmıştır. Buna göre istek penceresi bir kişinin bilişsel dünyasını yansıtırken, istek farkı gerçek olan ile arzu edilen hayat standardı arasındaki farka işaret eder. İstek yanlılığı ise bu farka verilen tepkidir. Yapılan çalışmalar bu fark ne kadar küçük ise kişilerin bu farkı kapatmakta o kadar istekli ve motive olduğunu göstermektedir (Camfield vd., 2013). Conrady and Robeyns (2013, s.562) ve Geckova (2010) isteklerin sosyal çevre, yetiştirilme tarzı, sosyal ve kültürel bağlam ve sosyal bağlantılarımızdan etkilendiğini iddia eder. Yani gelecek ile ilgili yönelimler sadece bireysel değildir. Sosyo-ekonomik statüden, fırsatlardan, aile, okul, sosyal sınıf, kültürel yönelim gibi pek çok faktörden etkilenir. Bu faktörlerle ilgili pek çok çalışma bulunmaktadır. Bourdieu'ya göre aktörler yaşadıkları konumun nesnel şanslarına göre isteklerini uyarlarlar. Swidler and Appadurai istek kapasitesi adını verdikleri bir kavram geliştirmişlerdir. Bu kavram istekler konusunda aktörlerin kapasitesini vurgulamakla birlikte bu kapasitenin yapısal faktörler tarafından şekillendiğine de işaret eder. Bourdieu'nun *habitus* kavramından hareketle, istek kapasitesi bireylerin buldukları konuma göre değişir. Yani bir kişinin ekonomik fırsatları ne kadar kısıtlı ise onun istek yelpazesi o kadar sınırlı olacaktır. İstek kapasitesi hareket kapasitesi sağlayacaktır. Öncelikli insanlar hareket etmek için daha zengin bir haritaya sahiptir ve bu harita sayesinde istekleri de daha zengin olacaktır.

### **Sosyo-politik ve Ekonomik Bağlam**

Neo-liberalizm 1980'lerin başından beri Türkiye'deki siyasi ekonomiyi etkin bir şekilde yönetmektedir. Önceki başbakan ve cumhurbaşkanı Turgut Özal tarafından

tanıtılan bu ideoloji halen geçerliliğini korumaktadır. Yeldan'a göre (2013) neoliberal proje Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi tarafından, 2002 yılında iktidara geldiklerinden beri, devlet aygıtını dönüştürmek için islami değerler tarafından yönlendirilmiş, sivil toplum örgütlerine dayalı olarak kamu sektörünün yerelleşmesi ve demokratikleşmesi vasıtasıyla çözülmesi ve sağlık ve eğitim gibi sektörlerin ticarileşmesi şeklinde gerçekleşmiştir. Bu ideoloji odağı sosyal koşullardan bireysel koşullara yönelmiş ve bu koşulların sorumluluk ve hesapverebilirliğini devletten alıp bireye vermiştir. Bu ideolojiye göre, bir bireyin sosyal düzlemdeki yeri, sınıfı, cinsiyeti, yaşı, becerileri, ırkı ya da altyapısından dolayı farklı olabilir. Bunlar eğitim ihtimalini, mesleki yönelimi, kaynaklara erişimi, siyasi gücü, prestiji ve nihai olarak da toplumsal hareketliliğe yönelik ihtimalleri belirleyebilir. Ancak bunlar bireysel tercihlerin bir sonucu olarak da açıklanabilir (Armstrong, 2006). Rekabet eşit sonuçlarla bitmeyebilir. Siyasi iktidar fırsatların eşit olmasından sorumludur. Fırsatlar eşit olduğu müddetçe eşit olmayan sonuçlar doğaldır ve işlevseldir. Azimli ve çalışkan insanlar bu fırsatlardan daha fazla yararlanabilir. Bu durum da sosyal gerginliği azaltır. Çünkü insanların sosyal konumu devletin kontrolünde değildir. Bireyler tarafından şekillenir.

Fırsat eşitliği herkes için farklı bir anlama gelebilir. Fırsat eşitliği sosyal düzlemi bireyler arasında eşit bölüştürmek yerine bireylere tercihlerine göre seçenekler arasından seçme imkanı tanır. Bireyleri sorumlu aktörler olarak kabul eder ve bireyler tercihlerinden ve yaptıklarından hesap verebilir durumda olmalıdır. Bu söylem Türkiye'deki önemli strateji dökümanlarının da ana eksenini olmuştur. Kalkınma planları, gençlik ve milli eğitim strateji dökümanlarında fırsat eşitliğinin sağlanmasına ilişkin önemli hedefler bulunmaktadır. Bu da tepeden aşağı ergenlerin normlarını, yaklaşımlarını ve bakış açılarını etkilemektedir.

### *Sosyo-Ekonomik Göstergeler*

Ekim 2016'da yapılan Dünya Bankası analizine göre Türkiye Cumhuriyeti 2000'lerin başından beri ekonomik olarak iyi bir performans göstermektedir. Bu durum Türkiye'yi dünyanın en büyük 17. ekonomisi yapmış, istihdamı artırmış ve yoksulluğu azaltmıştır. Ancak bu kazanımlar 2012 yılından itibaren yavaşlamış bir

büyüme hızı ve artan işsizlik ile sarsıntıya uğramıştır. Genç işsizliği OECD ve G20 üye ülkelerine kıyasla oldukça yüksektir. Bu da genç nüfusu kırılgan bir grup haline getirmektedir. Ne istihdamda, ne eğitimde, ne de mesleki eğitimde olan (NEET) gençler genç nüfusun %30'unu oluşturmaktadır. Bu rakam OECD ortalamasında %15'tir. Aynı zamanda Türkiye İnsani Gelişmişlik endeksine göre 71. sırada yer almaktadır. Bu endeksin değeri ülkedeki eşitsizlikler gözönünde bulundurulduğunda %15.8 kayba uğramaktadır (OECD, 2016).

### *Türkiye'de Eğitim Sistemi*

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti anayasasının 42. Maddesi eğitimin cinsiyet ayırt etmeksizin tüm vatandaşların hakkı olduğunu ve devlet okullarında tüm çocuklar için ücretsiz olduğunu altını çizer. Eğitim sistemi Türkiye Büyük Millet meclisi tarafından 1961'de kabul edilmiş 222 sayılı Temel Eğitim Kanunu ve 1973 yılında kabul edilmiş 1739 sayılı Milli Eğitimin İlkelerine Dair Kanun başta olmak üzere pek çok kanun doğrultusunda örgütlenir.

Eğitim sistemi örgün ve yaygın eğitimden oluşur. Örgün eğitim belirli bir müfredat ışığında aynı eğitim seviyesine sahip belirli yaş gruplarındaki çocuklara okul ortamlarında eğitim sağlar. Bu okul öncesi, ilköğretim, lise ve yüksek öğrenimi kapsamaktadır. Yukarıda bahsi geçen 222 sayılı kanun 2012 yılında önemli bir reformdan geçmiş ve bugünkü adıyla 4+4+4 olarak bilinen sistemi getirmiştir. Bu yeni düzenlemelere göre 12 yıllık zorunlu eğitim gelmiştir. İkinci dördülden üçüncü dördüğe geçiş Temel Eğitimden Orta Öğretime Geçiş Sınavı adı verilen bir sınav ile gerçekleştirilmektedir.

### *Türkiye'de Ergen Profili*

Ergenlik özerklik ve ilintililik arasındaki dinamiklerin şekillendiği bir dönemdir. Türkiye'deki ergen profiline dair yapılmış en güncel çalışmalardan biri Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı tarafından yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmaya göre ergenlerin %80'i kendilerini mutlu hissetmektedir ve Rosenberg ölçeğine göre normal bir özgüvene sahiplerdir (ASPB, 2013). Hayata dair genel anlamda olumlu bir

yaklaşımları bulunurken, hayat beklentilerini öncelikli olarak mesleki beklentiler oluşturur. Mesleki beklentileri ailevi beklentiler takip etmektedir (ASPB, 2013).

### **Araştırma Yöntemi**

Bu araştırmanın ana sorusu yapı ve aktörün toplumsal hareketliliğe yönelik istekler bağlamında nasıl karşılaştığıdır. Başka bir deyişle, geleceğe yönelik istekleri gerçekleştirme bağlamında yapı ve aktör arasında ergenlerin bakış açısıyla nasıl bir dinamik vardır? Bunun cevabına ulaşmak için de aşağıdaki alt sorular sorulmaktadır:

- Farklı sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen ergenler gelecekte ne istemektedirler?
- Farklı sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen ergenler bu isteklerin gerçekleşmesinde yapı ve aktörün rolü hakkında ne düşünmektedir?
- Yapısal bir engel ile karşılaşıldığında istekler ve isteklerin gerçekleşmesine yönelik aktöre biçilen rol nasıl değişmektedir?

Bu tez niteliksel ve uzun erimli bir yöntem kullanmıştır. Araştırmanın katılımcılarını daha önce farklı sosyo-ekonomik grupları temsil eden mahallelerdeki devlet okuluna giden 40 kız ve erkek çocuğu oluşturmuştur. Bu ergenler bir sene boyunca iki kere araştırmaya katılmışlardır. Birinci adım TEOG sınavından önce, ikinci adım ise TEOG sınavından sonra gerçekleşmiştir. İlk adımda veriler, hikaye yazımı ve derinlemesine mülakatlar yoluyla, ikinci adımda ise yüz yüze ve telefonda görüşme ve odak grup çalışmaları kombinasyonu ile toplanmıştır.

Ergenler 8. sınıf öğrencileri arasından seçilmiştir. Bunun sebeplerinden birincisi; ergenlerin mevzu bahis olduğu bir konuda kendi bakış açılarını yansıtmaktır. İkincisi; çocuklardan toplanan verilerin güvenilir olması için bu yaş gelişimsel psikoloji açısından onların yeterli kapasitede olduğu bir yaştır. Son sebep ise; araştırma katılımcılarının yapısal bir engel ile karşılaşmalarına mücadele ederek bir sene içerisindeki değişimi görmektir. Buna uygun bir şekilde tasarlanan araştırmaya Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'ndan, ebeveynlerden ve çocuklardan alınan izinlerle



gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu izinler eklerde sunulmuştur. Araştırma boyunca Çocukları İçeren Etik Araştırma Rehberi'nden faydalanılmıştır.

### *Bulgular*

Araştırmanın birinci safhasının bulguları çocukların günlük yaşam pratiklerinin sosyo-ekonomik statü tarafından belirlendiğini ortaya koymuştur. TEOG'a hazırlıklar, yani gelecek kaygıları, tüm altyapılardan gelen çocukların günlük yaşam pratiklerinin önemli bir kısmını oluştururken, çocukların gününü nasıl geçirdiği, nerde ve ne yediği, katıldıkları okuldışı faaliyetler ve katılma biçimleri onların sosyo-ekonomik statü ve cinsiyetlerine göre şekillenmektedir. Çocukların sosyal yapılara ilişkin algı ve bilgileri ve bu bilgiyi nereden edindikleri de sosyo-ekonomik statü ve cinsiyet tarafından etkilenmektedir. Üst ve alt sosyo-ekonomik gruplarda toplumsal yapıya ilişkin bilgi oldukça spesifik bir hal alırken, bu bilginin kapsamlılığı sosyo-ekonomik statü düzeyi düştükçe düşmektedir.

İstek kapasitesi mevcuttaki yapabilirlikler, sosyal bağlantılar, ekonomik sermaye, kaynaklara erişim ve kaynakların kontrolü gibi *habitusu* da etkileyen pek çok faktörden etkilenmektedir. Bu da sonuç olarak isteklerin niteliğini etkilemektedir. Bulgular toplumsal yapıdaki konumlarına göre farklı sosyo-ekonomik statü ve cinsiyetlerden olan çocukların farklı şeyler istediklerini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu istekler sosyal eğilimleri belirleyen *habitus* tarafından şekillenmektedir. Alt sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen ergenler onlara bahşedilen hayat çizgisini dönüştürmeyi, kendilerini ve ailelerini kurtarmayı istemektedir. Bunun yanı sıra orta sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen ergenler mevcut durumlarını koruyup mutlu bir aile hayatı kurmayı arzulamaktadır. En son olarak da üst sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen ergenler gelecek yaşantılarında sahip oldukları lüks hayatı daha da genişletmenin yollarını aramaktadırlar. Hiç şaşırtıcı değildir ki, kız ve erkek çocukların mesleki istekleri aynı değildir ve toplumsal cinsiyet normlarına uygun mesleki istekleri bulunmaktadır. Ailevi sorumluluklara gelince durum değişmektedir. Kızların çekirdek ve geniş aileleri ile daha güçlü ilişkiler içerisinde olmayı arzu ederken, erkeklerin odaklarını kariyerlerinde tuttukları gözlemlenmiştir.

Sosyo-ekonomik statüleri her ne olursa olsun, tüm ergenlerin neo-liberal fırsat eşitliği söylemini içselleştirmiş ve aktörlük kapasitelerini bunun üzerine kurgulamış olmaları ufuk açıcı bir bulgudur. Aktör ve yapı ikilemi açısından, ergenler fırsat eşitliği söyleminin etkisiyle isteklerini gerçekleştirmenin arkasındaki ana faktörün kendilerinin aktörlüğü olduğunu düşünmektedirler. Aktörlük kapasitesinin kültürel sermayenin birikimi ile birlikte güçlendirilmesi gerektiği fikri de isteklerini gerçekleştirmek için stratejik olarak eğitimlerine yatırım yapmaları gerekliliğinin altını çizmektedir. Fırsat eşitliği cazibesi o kadar *doxik* hale gelmiştir ki varlığı ergenler tarafından sorgulanmamaktadır.

Bu durum ergenlerin hayatında aslında çok önemli roller oynayan nesnel yapıların ihmal edilmesi ile sonuçlanmaktadır. Ergenlerin toplumsal yapıdaki farklı konumları farklı ihmal yöntemleri benimsemelerine yol açmaktadır. Üst sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen çocuklar şu ana kadar aslında onlara buldukları konuma gelmelerine yardımcı olan nesnel yapıları kanıksamışlardır. Bu yapılar tanınmamakta ve buldukları yere katkıları yok sayılmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, orta sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen çocuklar nesnel yapılarla bir arada var olmayı tercih etmektedirler. Nesnel yapıların varlığı diğer gruplardan gelen çocuklara daha önemsizdir. Alt sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen çocuklar ise yapılara itaatsizlik ederek yapının onlara bahsettiği çizginin dışına çıkma yoluna gitmektedirler. En son olarak da, şaşırtıcı olarak, orta ve üst sosyo-ekonomik statü grubundan gelen çocuklarda, hem kızlar ve hem de erkekler arasında fırsat eşitliği eşit derecede kabul edilmiştir. Ancak bu alanda alt sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen kızlarda soru işaretleri belirlemektedir. Hayatlarını şekillendirme konusunda odağı kendi aktörlüklerinde tutmalarına rağmen fırsat eşitliğinin kız ve erkekler arasında eşit fayda sağlamadığının farkındadırlar.

Araştırmanın TEOG sonrasına denk gelen ikinci safhasının bulguları çocuklar büyüdükçe günlük yaşam pratiklerinin sosyo-ekonomik statüden daha derinden etkilendiğini göstermektedir. Günlük yaşam pratiklerinde en büyük değişim alt sosyo-ekonomik statüdeki çocukların içinde okulu terk eden çocuklar arasında gözlemlenmektedir. Üst sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen çocukların yaşam pratikleri

hayat kaygıları ile şekillenmeye devam etmektedir. TEOG'un yerini üniversite sınavı almıştır. Orta sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen çocuklar ise TEOG sonrası daha rahat bir ergenlik geçirmektedir.

İsteklerdeki değişim TEOG ile yaşanan deneyime göre değişmektedir. Alt sosyo-ekonomik statüye mensup ergenler arasında okulu terk edenlerde hayatlarının geri kalanına ilişkin istekler fazlasıyla değişmiştir. Yeni istekler okulu terk etmekten dolayı kültürel sermayeden yoksun olacak olmanın çevresinde çizilmektedir. Diğer gruplardaki okullarına devam eden çocukların eğitim ya da mesleki kazanımlarına ilişkin istekleri aşağı yukarı aynı kalmıştır. TEOG ile olumsuz bir deneyim yaşamış olanlar -yani istedikleri liseye girememiş olanlar- için uzun erimli isteklerin de gerçekleşmesinde soru işaretleri oluşmuştur. Daha önce yaşanmış olan olumsuz deneyim gelecekte de benzeri bir şey olabileceği ihtimalini göstermiştir. Yani uzun erimli istekler değişmemekle beraber bu isteklerin olma ihtimali belirsizliğe düşmüştür.

Bireysellikte odaklanan egemen söylem, bunun sebeplerini ergenlerde tutmaktadır. İsteddiği liseye girmeyi başarmış sınırlı sayıda birkaç öğrenci oldukça gururludur çünkü bu sonuç onların çok çalışmasının ve kişisel becerilerinin eseridir. Öte yandan istedikleri liseye girmeyi başaramamış büyük çoğunluk da gerekli olan kişisel özelliklere sahip olamamaktan ötürü kendilerini suçlamaktadırlar. Yani sonuç olarak tüm bu değişimlere rağmen, okulu bırakanlar arasında dahi fırsat eşitliği söyleminin içselleştirilmesi durumu devam etmektedir. Bu söylemle birlikte toplumsal yapıda buldukları konuma göre yapı ile mücadele etmek için stratejiler geliştirmektedirler.

Alt sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen ergenler *karşı koyan* bir aktörlük stratejisi benimsemektedir. Yani sosyal yapıya karşı aktörlük kapasitesine olan inanç devam etmektedir ve bu kapasite şimdi olmasa bile daha sonra devreye girerek istekleri gerçekleştirmeye vesile olacaktır. Diğer yanda, orta sosyo-ekonomik sınıftan gelen çocuklar *uyumlu* aktörlük geliştirmektedirler. *Habitus*ları sürekli değişim halindedir ve çevrede değişen parametrelere ayak uydurmaktadır. Son olarak da üst sosyo-ekonomik statüden gelen çocuklar *alternatif* aktörlüğe bel bağlamaktadır. Farklı bir

sosyal çevrede devreye girecek alternatif bir aktörden bahsetmektedirler. Bu mücadele stratejileri kız ve erkekler arasında farklılık göstermektedir. Birinci safhadaki bulgularla uyumlu olarak, en net fark alt sınıftan gelen kız çocuklarında görülmektedir. Patriarşik normlar kısa vadedeki isteklerine müdahale edince patriarşik engeller çok daha görünür hale gelmiştir. Alt sınıftan gelen kızlar patriarşi ile bir anlaşmaya varmışlardır. Cinsiyet farklılıkları, *doxik* olarak, yani doğal bir olgu olarak kabul edilmektedir, bu sorgulanmamalıdır. Benzer olarak alt sınıftan gelen erkek çocukları da bir erkek çocuğu, ailenin ekmek getiricisi olarak, aileyi kurtamaya yönelik kolektif bir sorumluluk hissederek aktörlük kapasitelerini sosyal yapıya karşı güçlü bir araç olarak muhafaza etmektedir.

### **Sonuç**

Bu sonuçlara göre ergenlerin isteklerine dayanarak daha adil bir toplumsal tabakalaşma ve daha eşit bir toplum beklemek işten değildir. Bourdieu'nun anlattığı gibi yapı ve aktör arasındaki dönüşümsel dinamik eşitsizlik döngüsüne sebep olmaktadır. Bourdieu'nun teorisi düşünüldüğünde bu tezin üç temel sonucu vardır. *Habitus* farklı sosyo-ekonomik ve cinsiyetlerden gelen ergenler için ortam sağlamaktadır. *Habitus* dürbün gibi bir işlev görmektedir. Dürbünden ne gördüğümüz hem durduğumuz yere hem de dürbünün teknik özelliklerine bağlıdır. Buna bağlı olarak buldukları yere ve dürbünlerinin özelliklerine göre -yani barındırdıkları sermaye- ergenler farklı şeyler görüp farklı şeyler istemektedir. *Habitus* zihinsel bir filtre olarak hareket eder ve istekleri daha baştan farklılaştırır. Yani tüm ergenlerden aynı şeyleri istemelerini beklemek haksızlıktır.

Farklı isteklere sahip olmak bu istekleri gerçekleştirmek için farklı planlara sahip olmaya sebep olmaktadır. Bu da bizi ikinci sonucumuza getirir. *Habitus* kolaylaştırıcı olmaktadır. *Habitus* sayesinde bir dışallık olan fırsat eşitliği söylemi içselleştirilir. Neoliberal söylemin altını çizdiği fırsat eşitliği olgusu ergenler arasında *doxik* olmuştur. Bu sayede ergenler dış etkenlerin eşitlendiğini düşünmektedir. Bu durum acı bir iyimserlik yaratmaktadır (Zipin et al Berlant'tan alıntılanmış, 2015, s. 241). Ergenler toplumsal yapı tarafından önlerine konabilme ihtimali olan engelleri görmezden gelerek isteklerini gerçekleştirmeyi tamamen

kendi beceri ve donanımlarına bağlamaktadırlar. *Habitusun* yaptığı bu kolaylaştırıcılık odağı bireyde tutmaktadır. Bu da sosyal yapı içerisindeki en önemli aracı birey yapmaktadır. Yani neoliberal özne başarılı bir şekilde inşa edilmiştir. Buna göre de tek sınır bireysel güçsüzlüklerdir. Bu da sosyal yapının ihmal edilmesine ya da karşılaşıldığında onunla mücadele stratejisi geliştirilmesiyle sonuçlanmaktadır. Sosyal yapılar ihmal edilirken patriarşi, özellikle alt sosyo-ekonomik statüden ergenler arasında, tanınan tek sosyal yapı olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Kızlar patriarşik normların sınırları içerisinde hareket etmeye karar vermiş olsalar dahi patriarşi ile müzakereler ufak ufak başlamış, toplumsal cinsiyet ideolojisi deşifre olmaya başlamıştır.

İstekleri gerçekleştirmedeki ana stratejinin kültürel sermaye biriktirmek olduğunu söylemiştik. Ancak kültürel sermayeyi getirecek olan eğitim sisteminin toplumsal olarak örgütlendiğini ve çocukların becerilerinden çok ebeveynlerin zenginliği ve arzuları ile şekillendiğini unutmamak gerekir (DeWiele ve Edgerton, 2016). Bu da meritokrasi yerine parentokrasinin önemine işaret etmektedir.

Bu durumda, *habitusun* hem ortam yaratması hem de kolaylaştırıcı rolü oynaması yapı ve aktör arasındaki gerginliği azaltmaktadır. Ergenlerin gördüğü sosyal düzen aynı düzen değildir yani bu düzene karşı çıkmaya kalksalar dahi mücadele edecekleri düzen aynı değildir. Zaten de odağın bireyde tutulması bu düzenin bireyin de katkısıyla oluştuğu algısını yaratmaktadır. Yani düzen aktörün de katkı verdiği bir sürecin ürünüdür.

## APPENDIX G: Curriculum Vitae

### IRAZ ÖYKÜ SOYALP

727. Sokak 28/9 Oltan Apartmanı Yıldızevler Çankaya ANKARA • E-mail:  
irazoyku@yahoo.com

### EDUCATION

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#### <09/2010 – 02/2018> Middle East Technical University, Turkey

Ph.D. on Sociology

Dissertation - Encounters Between Children's Agency And The Structures Of Social Mobility: A Case Study Of Adolescents' Aspirations in Ankara, Turkey  
CGPA:3.88

#### <08/2007 – 12/2008> University of Ottawa, Canada

M.A. International Development and Globalization

Major Research Paper - Paths to Liberal Democracy: The Role of International Actors  
CGPA: 8/10

#### <09/2002 – 06/2007> Middle East Technical University, Turkey

B.S. Political Science and Public Administration (Honors)

CGPA: 3.09/4

#### <10/2005 – 03/2006> Johannes-Gutenberg University, Germany

Exchange student in the Department of Political Science

#### <03/2005 – 02/2007> Middle East Technical University, Turkey

Minor in German Language

CGPA: 3.25

### WORK EXPERIENCE

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#### United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Turkey

<02/2012 – ongoing>

#### Chief of Social Policy Section

*(Social Policy Officer from 02/2013 to 12/2016, Social Policy Assistant from 02/2012 to 01/2013)*

-Developing, planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting of programmes on child labour and social protection for children

-Engaging in policy dialogue with government counterparts, NGOs and universities to develop child-sensitive and inclusive social policies and programmes both for Turkish and Syrian children

-Providing technical assistance to government partners for policy formulation and implementation

- Advocating for the rights of children living under poverty and engaged in child labour in several platforms
- Developing partnerships and collaborating with government authorities both at centralized and decentralized levels, private sector and NGOs to strengthen programme implementation and to build capacities of partners
- Monitoring and analyzing the socio-economic developments with regards to their influence on children
- Drafting reports, briefing notes and sections for global reports

**International Labour Organization (ILO), Turkey**

**<02/2009 – 01/2012>**

**Programme Assistant**

- Organizing workshops/conferences both at high and technical level
- Coordinating a research project on the children working in cultural and artistic activities and their working conditions in preparation of a by-law on the subject
- Conducting research and analyzing recent developments with regards to their influence on labour standards
- Supporting the preparation of Turkey’s Development Cooperation Strategy Paper together with other UN agencies and government counterparts
- Providing technical support to UN agencies and other relevant stakeholders to mainstream decent work in development strategy papers both in Turkey and in Europe/CIS
- Preparing reports and press articles in the area of child labour and labour standards
- Preparing and giving presentations, participating in panels, workshops, roundtables in the area of child labour

**University of Ottawa, Canada**

**<01/2008 – 01/2009>**

**Assistant in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology**

Teaching assistantship for the classes: “Women, Men and Society”, “Sociology and Anthropology of the Family”, “Marx and Marxist Analysis” and “World, Technology and Societies”.

**LANGUAGES**

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- Turkish (native), English (fluent), German (advanced), French (basic)

## APPENDIX H: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

### YAZARIN

Soyadı : SOYALP GÜLCÜGİL

Adı : IRAZ ÖYKÜ

Bölümü : SOSYOLOJİ

**TEZİN ADI:** ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN CHILDREN'S AGENCY AND THE STRUCTURES OF SOCIAL MOBILITY: A CASE STUDY OF ADOLESCENTS' ASPIRATIONS IN ANKARA, TURKEY

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans  Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınmaz.

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**