



# The Labor Motivation of Rural Women in Newly Developed Urban Satellites: The Case of Izmir, Turkey

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[Received: 8 May 2018; accepted in final version: 18 October 2018]

**Abstract.** *While urban developers plan to mobilize residents by reinforcing middle-class values, including settling them into urban satellites and offering career development courses, residents feel pleased with the housing opportunities but do not express interest in career advancement courses. From fieldwork observations and in-depth interviews with 35 female residents in a low-income urban satellite neighborhood (Zubeyde Hanım) in Izmir, Turkey, and by focusing on residents' reactions to career development courses, in this study the residents' experiences, connections, and desires in the urban renewal process were interpreted. It is argued that the aims of the urban renewal projects were not aligned with the residents' needs. It was found that urban relocation is a communal process. If the official communication between authorities and the resettled population are designed in such a way that the daily life struggles and needs of the targeted population are taken into account, then the urban renewal programs can be designed and implemented more effectively.*

**Keywords.** *urban renewal, public housing, women and social mobility, Turkey.*

[Diterima: 8 Mei 2018; disetujui dalam bentuk akhir: 18 Oktober 2018]

**Abstrak.** *Sementara pengembang perkotaan berencana untuk memobilisasi penduduk dengan memperkuat nilai-nilai kelas menengah termasuk memukimkan mereka di kota-kota satelit dan menawarkan kursus pengembangan karir Warga merasa senang dengan peluang perumahan tersebut, tetapi tidak mengekspresikan minat dalam program pengembangan karir. Dari pengamatan lapangan dan wawancara mendalam dengan 35 penduduk perempuan di lingkungan kota satelit berpenghasilan rendah (Zubeyde Hanım) di Izmir, Turki, dan dengan berfokus pada reaksi penduduk terhadap kursus pengembangan karir, dilakukan penafsiran pengalaman, koneksi, dan keinginan dalam proses pembaruan perkotaan. Ditemukan tujuan proyek pembaruan perkotaan tidak selaras dengan kebutuhan warga. Relokasi kota adalah proses komunal. Namun, jika komunikasi resmi antara pihak berwenang dan penduduk yang dimukimkan ulang dirancang sedemikian rupa sehingga perjuangan kehidupan sehari-hari dan kebutuhan populasi yang ditargetkan diperhitungkan maka program pembaruan perkotaan dapat dirancang dan dilaksanakan dengan lebih efektif.*

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**Kata Kunci.** *pembaruan perkotaan, perumahan umum, wanita dan mobilitas sosial, Turki.*

## **Introduction**

Urban renewal is a social, political and historical process that involves urban developers, local and national government agencies, and, most importantly, residents. On the one hand, urban renewal can be seen as a beneficial process that generates new economic activities, such as small and medium enterprises, and can reduce unemployment, bring vitality to the region, and contribute to the improvement of the local economy (Rahmawati, 2015; Yan and Chen, 2018). On the other hand, developers, private investors, and local and national government agencies have more power in the urban renewal process, leaving residents with little control, despite the fact that the process directly affects them. As a result, residents are more likely to be passive participants who undergo the renewal process than active participants who initiate and guide it. Often, the process of urban renewal does not align with the interests of residents and can produce negative emotions, since they can no longer live in a familiar environment. In fact, urban developers and community leaders view these communities as growth machines that exchange value for profit, while urban entrepreneurs market to these communities to increase that profit (Logan and Molotch, 1987). Viewing these communities as growth machines may generate revenue for urban developers but does not increase the economic opportunities of the urban poor.

Since the 1950s, informal settlements have emerged in developing countries and around the world due to increases in migration and urban growth. Beginning in the 1980s, neoliberal urban policies, shifts toward less state control, and a capitalist market have caused enormous changes in cities (Keyder, 2005). Neoliberal policies led to massive urban transformation projects headed by large development firms, the construction of high-rise buildings in place of squatter settlements, and the development of social and public housing for the urban poor. Like other developing nations, Turkey has also introduced such major urban transformation projects (Karaman, 2013; Kuyucu, 2014). There has been massive internal migration to Turkey's western cities due to increased terrorism attacks in the rural eastern zones of the country. As a result, demographic, social, economic, and political structures have changed. For decades, most migrants lived in informal, makeshift dwellings in less developed spaces in the older city centers (Karpat, 1976; Keyder, 2005; Sonmez, 2007; Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010). However, since 2000, municipal governments started sponsoring major urban redevelopment projects in the city centers and have relocated thousands of rural migrants to massive public housing developments in suburban 'satellite cities'.

Academic research thus far has focused on the political and economic aspects of the development of large-scale urban transformation projects and on the policies and processes of migrant relocation (Keyder, 2005; Islam and Karaman, 2012; Saracoglu and Demirtas-Milz, 2014). Historically, urban developers have viewed resettlement as a solution for mobilizing the urban poor, reducing poverty in the urban poor population, adapting them to urban middle-class values. However, the reactions of the residents to the urban social mobilization programs are as significant as the political and economic aspects of the programs.

This study took a different angle by analyzing the residents' reactions to urban social mobilization programs and aimed to identify how low-income residents react to the process of urban renewal. Through in-depth interviews with 35 residents of Zubeyde Hanim in Izmir Turkey, including residents who predominantly moved from squatter developments with diverse

housing tenures as well as from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, I find that the physical life standards of the residents improved but their aspirations for education and employment mobility remained the same. While urban developers and adult educators predict that residents will mobilize by taking advantage of adult education programs, such as literacy or professional development courses, the residents have not shown sufficient interest in the professional development courses. In other words, the aims of the urban renewal projects for social mobility were not in line with the needs of the residents. Therefore, this study aimed to extend our knowledge by highlighting the value of understanding relocation as a communal process and how more inclusive forms of official communication between authorities and the resettled population are needed to ensure that the daily life struggles of the people concerned have been taken into account when urban renewal programs are designed and implemented.

### **From Gecekondu into Urban Satellites**

As in other developed nations, the urban transformation in Turkey is caused by the rapid urbanization and the influx of migrants. The goals of urban transformation include responding to urban needs, achieving economic success and prosperity, improving quality of life, and avoiding urban sprawl (Litchfield, 1984). The urban literature underlines that 1950-1980 was a period of economic growth in Turkey, 1980-2000 was a period of liberalization and globalization, and 2000 was a period of revitalization of its public institutions (Keyder, 2005; Bayraktar, 2006.) Given these reasons, most scholars underscore the factors—such as privatization of the public sector, an increase in the size of municipalities, and liberalization and globalization—that have strengthened Turkey’s urban transformation projects.

The urban transformation process is quite different in Turkey than in the United States. While there has been a shift from public housing to housing mobility programs in the United States, Turkey is experiencing a shift from informal settlements, called *gecekondu*, toward urban satellites. In Turkey, the term *gecekondu* refers to a slum area. When rural immigrants arrive in urban areas, they need a place to stay, and since they cannot afford to buy or rent a property, they participate in the illegal construction of living spaces for their households, which causes the development of illegal slum dwellings (Karpat, 1976; Dünder, 2011). While informal slum dwellings are not the ultimate solution for low-income rural immigrants, they are the only possible solution that provides rural immigrants with housing and offers them the opportunity to build a social support system enabling them to access employment opportunities (Mahmud and Duyar-Kienast, 2001). Most urban scholars stress that *gecekondu*s are social institutions for the urban poor and that individuals share a common history and values, such as respect and recognition, with their neighbors.

Scholars focus on how significant factors, such as social capital, social ties, and collective efficiency, differ after residents’ relocation (Sampson, 1999; Goetz, 2010; Oakley et al., 2013). Studies on the development of *gecekondu*s emphasize that these kinds of informal relations provide support for the residents. Erman (1997) finds that the decision to move to an urban satellite is a major one for the residents to make. Urban satellites are less heterogeneous than *gecekondu*s. Erman’s study demonstrated that the residents tend to bring their norms and behaviors with them into the *gecekondu*s. For example, women tend to sit with their neighbors in front of their houses and men play backgammon with other men. In other words, these residents socialize with these close relations from their original villages and bring these with them into the *gecekondu*s. For some of the residents, moving into social housing may be risky because of fear of losing this social capital, collective efficacy, or each other’s trust in solidarity.

Most scholars focus on whether social housing provides better opportunities for residents. A recent study compared living standards in *gecekondu*s with those in social housing (Sonmez, 2007). Among the major findings was that there are differences in the size of the households, the number of children living in them, and the occupational distribution of working family members. While residents in *gecekondu*s have larger families, those in social housing have fewer children. However, certain indicators, such as unemployment, income, and car and home ownership, are similar for residents in *gecekondu*s and those in social housing (Cubukcu, 2011). In other words, moving to urban satellites may reduce family size, but the literature does not support the position that moving to social housing is the solution to reducing poverty.

### **Housing Mobilization Studies**

Most scholars agree that place matters for residents (Popkin et al., 2010). The place where residents grow up and live has a significant impact on their education, employment, resources, and other opportunities for success (Clampet-Lundquist, 2004). Besides economic mobility factors, such as employment and education, place also matters in how and where residents experience social and collective neighborhood activities; these are daily informal and casual conversations with neighbors, home gatherings and other informal forms of socialization, meetings in public spaces, and life events, such as weddings, celebrations, graduations, funerals, and cremations. These are informal activities in which residents engage. Neighborhoods and communities matter for economic opportunities and how individuals are involved in social and collective activities depends on neighborhood and communities as well (Popkin and Burt, 2005).

Social networks are significant for residents who settle in housing projects as they adapt and transform their new lives to their new situation. While residents have social connections in their prior neighborhoods, it is a challenge for them to build new connections in the new housing developments in which they are placed. Therefore, the major question is how the residents from informal settlements who settle in urban satellites organize social and collective neighborhood activities (Keene and Ruel, 2013).

To understand and analyze this question most scholars focus on social ties, which include critical resources, psychological, and material bonds. Social ties mean how many people the residents know and with whom they connect and bond (Clampet-Lundquist, 2004; Popkin et al., 2010). If the residents have stronger social ties, they can get social and emotional support from one another. Studies support the notion that social ties and the length of residency increase the amount of social and collective activities. In other words, the more people residents know, the more frequent their participation in social and collective neighborhood activities.

Studies analyzing the transformation from public housing to HOPE IV housing projects have found that relocation does not enhance social capital for relocated residents (Chaskin and Joseph, 2011). Social capital and social ties are important for such residents (Keene and Ruel, 2013). Although relocated residents also experienced structural problems in their original neighborhoods, such as unemployment, poverty, and lack of resources, somehow they manage to build relationships with one another. For instance, they know whom they should ask to watch their children when they are at work and from whom they should borrow money (Popkin and Burt, 2005). They need to build these relationships to have stronger bonds and connect as a neighborhood.

In addition to the challenges of building social ties, some relocated residents complain that residents view them differently because they came from public housing projects. Some experience others looking down on them. These negative daily interactions also prevent residents from building a good social network.

It is critical for residents to feel cohesive and interconnected in the new neighborhoods in which they are placed so they do not feel socially isolated and alienated. The structure of the neighborhood may shape the level of residents' social isolation. For instance, those in a homogenous neighborhood may share similarities that may connect them with one another, while those in a heterogeneous neighborhood may have difficulties connecting with one another.

Between 1950 and 1970, there was massive displacement from poor inner city neighborhoods into state-led public housing in North America (Gans, 1962; Teaford, 2000). However, public housing did not solve the poverty or unemployment problem. The younger population grew up in poverty and the middle-aged and older populations experienced unemployment, social isolation, segregation and alienation. These results demonstrate that public housing does not solve economical structural problems and residents experienced similar social problems as they had in poor inner-city neighborhoods.

Following the state-led public housing projects, the recent development of HOPE VI aimed to demolish public housing and move residents to mixed income developments. In this way, the urban poor might interact with middle-class residents and view the middle class as role models, which may benefit the urban poor. Although the goal of HOPE VI is to increase the social mobility of the urban poor by interaction with middle-class residents, HOPE VI has had mixed results. The lack of social ties is a significant problem for residents. For instance, female residents need help from neighbors for childcare while they are at work. Some residents do not feel they belong to the neighborhood; some feel that they already have a large family and many friends and do not feel obliged to talk with other residents. Other residents have very limited conversations with the middle-class residents, such as 'hi' and 'bye', and some residents build obligatory relationships, such as 'you can take my parking spot' (Chaskin and Joseph, 2011; Keene and Ruel, 2013). In other words, it is not easy to form collective neighborhood activities since there are class and prestige factors. Even for residents who manage to build social relationships, their interactions are obligatory or formal.

Studies investigating how residents build social connections after they are placed into housing developments have shown that there may be vulnerability in some populations, such as the elderly, large families, and families with a member with a disability. Even if these families relocate, they can experience social isolation and lose their sense of community. A recent study found that the elderly members of communities feel they are the mothers, fathers, grandmothers, or grandfathers of the communities (Keene and Ruel, 2013). After they move to different environments, these elderly members miss their former neighborhood attachments and prefer to build the same family type of environments in their new urban satellites.

Studies on social capital and isolation of the urban poor in mixed-income neighborhoods or urban satellites have been conducted by academics. The empirical data show that social ties and social capital help residents to socialize with one another. While heterogeneous neighborhoods increase class, race, regional, religious and political diversity, residents are the ones who must feel that they belong to the community, can build relationships with each other, and can participate in neighborhood activities (Clampet-Lundquist, 2004).

Social capital provides social resources, support and attachment, and offers ways to mobilize residents. The major reason for the state to move the urban poor to mixed-income neighborhoods is to help the urban poor to benefit from the resources of the middle-class residents and achieve economic mobility. However, relocated residents and middle-class populations cannot build social ties right away. Although the quality of the neighborhoods is good, most studies support the finding that relocated residents experience social isolation in the new urban satellites (Popkin and Burt, 2005; Chaskin and Joseph, 2011; Keene and Ruel, 2013). As the urban literature investigates the social interactions between the middle class and urban poor in mixed-income developments and the impact of the social contacts in employment and education markets (Granovetter, 1983), it is critical to understand the needs and desires of the urban poor before urban development projects are implemented.

## **Methodology**

The Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood has a heterogenous structure that includes low-income residents relocated from low-income squatter developments as well as residents who moved voluntarily. Therefore, the neighborhood has a natural mixed-income structure that describes the ways in which the habitants narrate the middle-class lifestyle that the urban developers reinforce.

The residents of Zubeyde Hanim initially lived in the Yali neighborhood, which is located between two middle-class neighborhoods. The mayor of Karsiyaka (which is one of the major districts in Izmir) decided to move the residents of Yali into public housing. The major reason for this is that the residents of Yali lived in poor conditions. Most are low-income Romani who have lived in Yali for years. In 2004, after mayor Cevat Durak came into power, the first project he initiated was the Yali urban transformation project. Currently, the residents live in the Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood in public housing settlements. The ethnic demographics of the Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood are very diverse. Some are rural migrants from the middle and eastern regions of Turkey and there are some Kurdish residents. Ethnic and cultural diversity is also visible in religious practices in the neighborhood with a Sunni mosque and Alevi Cultural Center built in close proximity. While the Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood is ethnically diverse, there are also status-related differences. Some of the residents moved into the neighborhood under the Yali housing transformation project, but others moved independent of the housing project. The residents who are unrelated to the urban transformation project believe that their background differs from that of the ones who came under the public housing project.

I used a qualitative approach to conduct this research, which included field interviews and participant observations. My aim was to investigate how the everyday lives of female residents changed after they moved into the Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood. I identified the opportunities that were available to women living in these satellite communities by examining their experiences, stories and personal interpretations.

I had specific interest in the Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood because of the high segregation and poverty rates and their mix of Kurdish migrants and those from other rural regions. What do the female members of Zubeyde Hanim, who have been historically marginalized, think of the employment opportunities in the newly developed satellites? How have women responded to the opportunities in these new communities? I operationalized how urban transformation has changed women's lives by gathering data on education, employment experiences, job search motivations, future career plans, professional aspirations, personal development, literacy rates, adult education and family lives.

Data collection in May 2014 and continued until October 2014. The data-collection period included two phases: (a) field interviews and observations; (b) interviews with residents and key informants, such as high school principals, the Director of Education, the director of the cultural center, and the administrators in charge of the housing projects.

It was challenging to earn the trust of the members of these communities and recruit them for participation in the study. Snowball and purposive sampling techniques were applied. In the Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood, 30 female residents were interviewed who ranged in age from 18 to 35, five female residents who were older than 48, a high school principal, the head of the adult education program, and the local government chair.

This paper extends the understanding of the process of relocation on a larger scale from the perspectives of residents who have experienced it. The state, urban developers and urban planners state that the purpose of resettling individuals from squatter developments into urban satellites is to mobilize the urban poor. In reality, the urban bureaucrats are pushing the relocated residents to adopt a middle-class lifestyle and visions. Therefore, the aim of this study was to understand the importance of connection between the lives of the residents and the content of the housing programs designed to reform their lives. In other words, it is significant to understand the residents' daily lives and past and present struggles to make plans for improving the lives of the urban poor. This paper focuses on the daily lives of Zubeyde Hanim residents and analyzes how their daily struggles shape their education and employment opportunities.

### **The Arrangement of Career Development Courses**

The Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood has an education and cultural center called the Ismail Cem Culture and Education Center (ICCEC). While school-age residents attend the primary school or the vocational high school, the ICCEC is a suitable place for adults or former students who dropped out of school. The Center offers a variety of classes for the personal and career development of the residents. Despite the diversity of these classes and certificate programs, the main problem for residents is inconsistency in their participation, attendance, and motivation to complete the programs. Typically, parental and household duties are a large barrier to participation in these courses.

The ICCEC was established around the same time as residents moved to Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood. It offers a program free of charge that includes a variety of courses, including literacy, family economics, English, French, computing, secretary and administration training, sewing, embroidery, elder care, yoga, and Pilates. The selection of courses depends on the season and demands of the residents. In addition to these courses, the center also offers free childcare services for children older than three years old as well as children's art courses. The ICCEC offers kindergarten services for children older than four and after-school and summer programs for children in primary school. There is a morning, evening, and weekend schedule.

The ICCEC is run by women, including female personnel in charge of the security of the center and asking for visitors' identification. The center has four teachers, including two kindergarten teachers. All staff, including the director and teachers, are women. The Center has three stories. The first floor of the center has two classrooms for children, and the second floor holds the offices of the director and the teachers. The classes for children take place downstairs and the names of the two classrooms are written with decorations of sea stars and small dolphins. There are Winnie the Pooh-printed curtains in both classrooms, cartoon stickers on the walls and small

red and blue chairs for the children. There is a dining room between the classrooms with small red and blue chairs as well. There are two closets at the entrance of the classrooms with children's books and arts and crafts materials, such as crayons, paper and scissors. There is dark grey carpet on the floor in the classrooms, however, the municipality has requested the carpet's removal due to allergies.

Currently, the center also provides classes in computer administration, computing and accounting, elder care, sick and home care, childcare, and sign language as well as manicure and pedicure services. Besides these occupation-related courses, there are also courses for hobbies, including sewing, Pilates and aerobics, interior design, family education and economics, English/German/French/Russian language courses, *baglama* (a stringed musical instrument), literacy, photography, wood painting and decoration, paper sculpture, *ebru* (paper marbling), and Turkish folk dance.

As can be observed from the setting, childcare facilities are significant for the Zubeyde Hanim neighborhood. When I interviewed the teachers and the director of the education and cultural center, the director showed me a bookmark made by students in art class and mentioned that she has another student's oil painting at her house. During the interview, the director demonstrated different pieces of art, poems and even photos of the students. Almost every closet in the director's office has such pieces from students in her classes. The director and the teachers take their jobs seriously and value the efforts of the students.

The teachers and administration in the education center try to create many opportunities from the few resources they receive from the municipality. For example, Melek is a kindergarten teacher who has worked in Zubeyde Hanim since 2012. Currently, Melek is assigned to the morning sections. According to Melek, one of the major struggles is that they have very limited storybooks and coloring books. Melek usually asks for coloring books from volunteers and makes copies for the children, as she believes that even very little things can make children happy.

Melek is 28 years old and was born and raised in Izmir in Karsiyaka, which is 15 minutes from Zubeyde Hanim by car. Before working at Ismail Cem Culture and Education Center, Melek worked at a kindergarten mostly comprised of middle-class children. Melek believes that not all the parents in Zubeyde Hanim value kindergarten education or the labor of the teachers:

"There are some parents who view the children's care center as a place to drop off their kids. Families stop by almost every day in summer school break and ask me when the childcare service will begin. At the beginning, I thought they were asking because they wanted to work. Then, I realized that they only wanted some away-time from their children."

Zeynep is another teacher at Ismail Cem Culture and Education Center. She is 26 years old and began teaching in Zubeyde Hanim in 2014. According to Zeynep, the population in Zubeyde Hanim is different from her previous experiences at the middle-class kindergarten centers. Zeynep does not experience major challenges with the students but feels that the parents view her and the other kindergarten teachers as babysitters to watch their children:

"I don't think the families here obey the rules, and they do not really care if their children learn anything or not. Just yesterday someone stopped by and asked me if it would be



okay if we could watch her daughter for a few hours. I don't understand. We are kindergarten teachers, and we are here to teach children, not to babysit them."

The teachers shared certain complaints about the attitudes of the parents, such as major miscommunications. The teachers in the education center are very excited and enthusiastic about practicing their skills, but they also feel that the families do not respect them and may even devalue their occupation. This communication problem influences both the teachers' performance and the parents' utilization of the adult education center.

On the other hand, parents are often desperate to find someone to watch their children. Some families need to drop off their children to attend work or for family, health, or emergency reasons—or even to take a break from their children. However, when families do not obey the rules, or request to drop off their children at any given time, the teachers and the director feel as though the families do not care about the education programs or think that their facility serves as a way for parents to take a break from their children.

In particular, the teachers who have previously worked in formal education with primary school age (ages 7-14) middle-class children feel that these parents do not have any interest in their children's school performance. For instance, the parents do not ask what their children are learning in the education programs. The teachers indicated that the families in the institutions where they have worked previously used to regularly question their teaching plans and demanded children learn new skills and build knowledge. Based on the experiences of the teachers, the class and status of parents appear to shape the relationship between teachers and parents as well as teachers' attitudes and motivation for advancing the development of the children they teach.

### **Residents' Involvement in Career Development Courses**

The Ismail Cem Culture and Education Center also has adult education and personal development classes for adult residents. The major problem for adults is to manage their time to attend the classes and attendance is even harder for adults with children. This is because the Center only accepts children who are older than four; parents with younger children cannot participate in classes regularly. The lack of childcare for children under four is a significant problem for the residents. Although residents may feel excitement about the classes, they cannot promise consistent attendance and participation.

In one example, a female resident who moved to Zubeyde Hanim in 2010 and lived with her daughter, husband, and in-laws asked if her three-and-a-half-year-old daughter could register for daycare. The director of the kindergarten answered that her daughter needs to be at least four years old. Later, the director tried to convince the mother to take classes from the adult education center, asking, "How about you? Are you interested in taking any classes?" After this question, there were a few seconds of silence. The woman was with her mother-in-law, and they looked at one another. Then, the director broke the silence. "Do you know how to read and write?" The mother said, "Yes, I learned in primary school", but the mother-in-law answered, "I do not know how to read and write." The director said, "We could teach you how to read and write. You really need to know how to read and write. Without literacy, you are like a half person; you cannot know what is going on in the world and you cannot go anywhere."

Later, the director asked: "So do you work?" The mother laughed and said, "Do you mean at home or working for money?" The director said, "Of course for money." She explained that

there is a course for elder care. She said, “The other day someone from the nursing home called me and asked me if I could refer someone. Maybe you should come to this course.” The two women looked at each other again. “That would be great, but who will take care of the children?”

The director proposed a solution that the mother-in-law could attend the literacy course in the morning, and the daughter-in-law could attend the other course at night. In this case, one could watch the children while the other was at the education center. After another look, the two women agreed to join the courses. The director then informed the women about the necessary documentation and identification required for enrollment.

The major problem for the residents is that they do not know what courses are available, are unfamiliar with the registration methods, or do not know how taking these courses will benefit them. In particular, the low literacy rate is a significant issue for residents. When residents are illiterate, they cannot read the flyers or follow the schedules for the courses.

While the residents often feel excitement and are willing to take the courses, the administrators and teachers nevertheless feel as though the residents do not have any intrinsic motivation to attend these courses. In fact, there is often a need for educators to explain a course, its purpose, and how the residents could potentially use it. The problem is not that the residents do not want to participate in these courses; rather, the residents do not know how the courses will benefit them or who will take care of their children.

There are also misunderstandings between the residents and the educators. Although the Ismail Cem Culture and Education Center offers a variety of courses, the residents do not know how to utilize these opportunities because the educators do not approach them. The director and teachers consider the demands and needs of the residents of Zubeyde Hanim and organize and schedule courses accordingly, yet the residents’ participation and involvement are often lower than what the center had expected and planned. The main problem is that the residents of Zubeyde Hanim do not know how to communicate with the administration, and the administrators and teachers do not know how to approach the community.

The misunderstandings and communication differences between the residents and the educators impact the educators’ productivity and the residents’ involvement with the education programs. Although the teachers at the ICCEC are fully committed to their roles and truly care about education and improving the community, the educators are not completely aware of the needs and desires of the community, and the educators may unwittingly be trying to impose middle-class values on the residents. For instance, the educators believe that the residents should take literacy courses, or an elder care certification, so that they can work. However, the educators are not familiar with the family dynamics of the residents, their relationships with their partners (husbands) and their kids, their life circumstances and daily struggles, or prior employment experiences.

From the perspective of the residents, they are aware that the educators are generously offering the courses for them and that the educators are sincerely concerned about their well-being. For instance, the residents acknowledge that they should take literacy courses so that they can be aware of the news or can take care of their errands easily. However, when the educators impose middle class values—the ideas and perceptions that the residents should take literacy courses so they can get ahead—these values and ideas push the residents away from being involved in the education center.

### **How do Residents React to the Career Development Courses?**

Satu, a resident of Zubeyde Hanim, told me that she is interested in taking courses at the Ismail Cem Culture and Education Center but would prefer to learn how to drive: “I would love to learn to drive. I already know the basics. I have also talked with my husband; once my daughter starts school, I am going to learn how to drive.” Petra, another Zubeyde Hanim resident, agreed with Satu and shared her desires to drive, as did Zeliha, who laughed and joined the conversation: “I tried yoga, Pilates, but stopped going later, but I would love to learn to drive... My husband gets scared every time I get into the driver’s seat. I really want to be able to drive and enjoy the freedom.”

As Satu presents, the residents of Zubeyde Hanim share their desires and goals to learn to drive. For instance, Satu is literate, has some years of primary schooling, and has opportunities of taking different occupation and career advancement courses at the community education center. Like Satu, many residents prefer to take driving courses rather than taking career advancement courses at the community education center. For these women, driving symbolizes freedom and flexibility. Although the young woman residents are aware of the structural and logistical barriers of driving, including the lack of driving skills and the gasoline and vehicle expenses, the residents still have high aspirations for driving.

Like Satu, Zeliha and Petra were married in their late teens and became mothers in their 20s. Satu, Zeliha, and Petra share similar patterns in that they are literate, have some primary education and labor experiences in the textile sector. Early marriages and having children at younger ages have limited their freedom and flexibility. For these women, driving means freedom, self-determination and serenity as well as a getaway from their neighborhood and household. Although Satu, Zeliha, and Petra appreciate the variety of courses at the Ismail Cem Culture and Education Center, they shared their desire and primary life achievement goal as learning how to drive.

While driving symbolizes freedom, it is a valuable social skill for the female residents because their urban satellite is located off the city center and the bus schedule to the city center is not very frequent. While the men in the families leave the neighborhood to work or run errands, the female residents feel as though they do not have enough flexibility and freedom in their neighborhood. Like Satu, some young women started married life in the same household with their in-laws. The household labor and childcare make them feel as if they are locked in their neighborhood. Given these life circumstances, even the ability to take driving classes gives them some flexibility, freedom and social status, despite the cost of the classes and the financial burden of buying a car.

While it can be seen that unemployed women have high hopes of driving, women who are in distance education or in the labor market tend to have more structured plans for driving. For instance, Gamze is 22 years old and has been a resident of Zubeyde Hanim since 2011, when she moved in with her parents and her 26-year-old brother. Gamze has some primary education, and currently she is in a distance education program to complete her primary schooling and earn a high school degree. Gamze works in a textile factory, but she does not enjoy her occupation. She dreams of working as a security guard at a shopping center. The textile job is a temporary plan for Gamze, but besides her future career goals, driving is one of her personal development goals:

“I was not able to earn my primary school degree. I am in the distant education program. I will continue and get a high school diploma via the distant education program... I have actually registered to get my driving license.”

Gamze desires to complete her primary education degree and finish high school, but driving symbolizes an upward social mobility marker of her personal development. Similarly, Naciye is also in the distance education program. Naciye is a mother of two daughters, aged six and two. Currently, Naciye takes distance education courses to complete her primary education while her younger girl naps. Naciye is also planning to take driving courses:

“Ismail Cem [Culture and Education Center] has been good for us and also offers courses to get jobs. This center gives us a lot. I try to use the benefits of the center. My oldest daughter will start the first grade; I still have a two-year-old. Once the younger one turns four, I take the courses. I have already participated in some. While my younger daughter takes a nap, I take my distant education courses. But my primary goal is to take driving courses this September...”

Gamze and Naciye are taking distant education classes to complete their education and move ahead in life. Driving is an important skill that Gamze and Naciye want to learn to improve their personal development in the future. When the residents lived in their previous neighborhoods, learning to drive was not on their personal agenda. After the residents settled in Zubeyde Hanim, however, driving became one of the major skills that they wished to learn. Despite their housing debts and family expenses, these women have strong aspirations to learn to drive.

### **Feelings of Social Isolation**

Although driving symbolizes freedom and self-determination for many residents, feeling socially isolated is a motivating factor for residents to develop aspirations for driving. The residents feel as though they live in a remote location with limited accessibility to the city center. When the residents lived in their prior neighborhoods, they were closer to the inner city and had frequent accessibility to public transportation. After the residents moved to Zubeyde Hanim, however, they found themselves far from the city and felt that public transportation is less frequent. The motivation to learn to drive is more important for women who stay home, as they experience social isolation in their neighborhood.

The social activities in the neighborhood are limited, particularly for female residents, as most women leave the neighborhood only on rare occasions, such as for a doctor's appointment, or a family event and these afternoon gatherings become a break from household duties. For instance, Gulsen, who is a resident of Zubeyde Hanim (26 years old), moved with her husband, six-month-old son and two-year-old daughter from Diyarbakir. Gulsen's husband works long hours as a construction worker and Gulsen takes care of their children during the day and socializes with other neighbors who also take care of their children. When I asked Gulsen about her daily routine in Zubeyde Hanim, she responded:

“We watch our children during the day... In the afternoons, we take our children outside... We mostly sit down outside our building or surroundings and then we take our children to the park. We sometimes take a walk around the buildings. But we almost never go out [of the neighborhood]... I would want to have a car and go somewhere once in a while...”

As Gulsen states, the married and unmarried residents share similar patterns in that the male members of the family are at work or running errands outside the neighborhood. Meanwhile, the female residents feel obligated to take care of the household chores and entertain the children in the families. Given these social and cultural conditions, the feeling of social isolation makes women motivated to drive.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The residents of Zubeyde Hanim express a desire to drive, but they feel that, from their experiences, the urban developers' plans do not match their desires. The process of relocation is an abstract case with varying consequences. It is important to hear and value the voices of the relocated population to understand the relocation process.

Most scholars have focused on how racial, ethnic, religion, regional and socio-economic class differences cause individuals to experience the relocation process differently. These are valuable factors when analyzing the neighborhood structure. To understand the relocation process, it is worthwhile to understand the relocated communities and their prior and present life struggles. As relocation is a communal process, understanding and communication of the relocated communities will benefit urban developers to structure urban renewal projects based on the needs of the communities.

Based on the perceptions of the residents of Zubeyde Hanim, it is significant to understand the population experiencing the process of urban relocation to implement and manage urban renewal projects. Urban bureaucrats have a tendency to apply middle-class values and lifestyles to the residents of Zubeyde Hanim, but these values and lifestyles are not what the residents desire (Logan and Molotch, 1987.) For instance, the urban educators plan yoga classes for the residents but not all residents are interested in taking them. To mobilize the low-income residents' current living standards, it is essential understanding the population, as well as the needs and desires of the population for urban renewal processes to become efficient.

This paper also extends our understanding on a larger political and economic scale. The female residents of Zubeyde Hanim whom I interviewed experienced similar life course patterns in that they were born in *gecekondu* slums in poverty, had no access to the primary education, dropped out of school early, obtained a job in the textile industry in their early teens, worked over 45 hours per week under stress and pressure at low wages without overtime pay and without benefits, gave their whole paycheck to their parents, and their only way to escape from the early work life full of burden and exploitation and no rewards was through getting married at an early age. The middle-aged women of Zubeyde Hanim share similar life course patterns with the younger women of Zubeyde Hanim in that they were born in the Central, East, and Southeast regions of Turkey in small rural villages, they had no primary education, they all got married in their early teenage years, and most did not work outside the home since they were illiterate and could not use public transportation, as commuting in the big city is very difficult for a person who cannot read.

The problems of accessing education opportunities and the labor market are connected. There has not been a significant improvement from one generation to the next in terms of gender equality and career development. For example, a significant segment of the young female residents are interested in taking the Public Service Personnel Selection Examination, which is scheduled once a year. If the residents do not pass the exam, working in the textile industry is one of the few options of employment for them. The residents have already experienced

problems, including not getting paid on time, working without any insurance, occupational health- and safety-related accidents, in addition to past experiences with work-related stress as well as second shifts at home with no partner support, handing over hard-earned money to their husband's control in patriarchal family norms as well as cultural norms of continuous demands of obedient service to elderly in-laws in the household, leaving no rewards from working life for women, which pushes the residents away from the labor market. Given these conditions, the young female residents prefer to build dreams of driving because of the chronic and social problems that they tend to deal with. Driving for young woman residents in Zubeyde Hanim will be a new skill that their mothers did not have—driving is the imagery of being in control of the direction in a patriarchal culture. To increase residents' opportunities, especially in terms of education attainment and participation in employment markets, it is worth recognizing the available education opportunities and labor market conditions for the residents. In this case, the projects that are implemented can match the needs of the population and increase the opportunities of the residents.

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