Research into socioeconomic characteristics of the population in squatter areas on the slopes of Mt. Uludag (Bursa-Turkey)

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Abstract

Particularly since the 1950s, Bursa underwent rapid urbanization due to immigration from the Balkans and various settlements in Turkey attracted by intensive industrial activities in the city. This resulted in the growth of squatter areas in some parts of the city. The belt of squatter housing addressed in this study surrounds the city along the slopes of Mount Uludag in the south and is located within and/or around the borders of approximately 10 neighborhoods. The area concerned lies on a line approximately 20 kilometers long from west to east. The neighborhoods in this area constitute the population of the research. By selected sampling, it was aimed to determine the qualities and socioeconomic characteristics of the population living in various squatter areas to the east and west of the city. Furthermore, the rural and urban origins of the population, and the population’s relationship with the country and the city, were evaluated on a neighborhood scale. In addition, the study determined factors that hindered the integration of the population in the sample area with the city and prevented the population concerned from adapting to the processes of urbanity. The data obtained from the sample neighborhoods indicated that there were significant socioeconomic differences on a neighborhood scale. The findings and obtained results constitute an important source for institutions which aim at the adaptation of a squatting population to processes of urbanity. The spatial relationships of the socioeconomic profile in the study area indicate that it is necessary for planners to consider spatial differences when drawing up social development projects.

Keywords: squatter housing, socioeconomic characteristics, migration, urban integration, Bursa.

1. Introduction

Particularly experienced in cities with rapid population growth and in developing countries, the phenomenon of squatting causes various spatial and social problems. The fact that squatting is a complex process embracing urban and socioeconomic problems has been investigated in various studies worldwide evaluating the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the squatter population as well as spatial relationships and the process of becoming urbanized. Studies cover issues such as the profile of the population living in squatter areas (Pamuk and Cavallieri, 1998), housing characteristics with respect to comfort and use (Ha, 2004), physical and social problems experienced in squatter areas (O’Hare and Abbott, 1998; Ha, 2001; Mofiat and Finnis 2005; Akbar et al., 2007), and evacuation of the population living in squatter areas and rehabilitation of these areas (Ha, 2001; Everett, 2001, Kigochie, 2001; Turnbull, 2008).

Since the 1950s, numerous studies in different disciplines have been carried out in Turkey concerning squatter houses and the quality of the population living in squatter areas. Studies by Yörükcan (1968), Alpar and Yener (1991) and Kocaman (2000) are notable for investigating the qualities of immigrant populations living in squatter areas in Turkey. Other studies note the negative impacts of the process of migration from rural areas to urban
areas on urban culture and various problems experienced in the process of urbanization among the squatter population (Kray, 1972; Erder, 1997, 1998; Erman, 1997, 1998; Güçlü, 2002; Kurt, 2003). In Turkey, issues of settlement and city have also been comprehensively addressed by geographers (Tanoğlu, 1969; Tümertekin, 1973; Göney, 1984; Doğanay, 1994). Furthermore, there are studies in which geographers have addressed various aspects of the phenomenon of squatting. For instance, Karaboran dealt with the problem of squatter housing worldwide and in Turkey (Karaboran, 1981), whereas Sevgi studied the process of urbanization and squatting in İzmir (Sevgi, 1989). In addition, Karadağ addressed the factors which had an impact on the process of the squatter population becoming urbanized (Karadağ, 1999). However, despite various studies on squatting and the phenomenon of migration in Turkey, studies on the quality of the population migrating to Bursa, and of the population living in squatter areas in Bursa, are limited in number (Aslanoğlu, 1998; Aytaç, 2004).

The industrialization process accelerated in cities in Turkey particularly since the 1950s and has significantly affected the socioeconomic characteristics of society and the rural and urban structures of the population, thereby accelerating migration movements. The arrival of a large number of people in cities within a short period of time, but the failure to construct a sufficient number of houses to accommodate them, led to the emergence of the problem of squatter housing in the cities of Turkey, similar to other countries that experienced rapid urbanization [1]. In the following years, squatter houses became widespread both in areas that were close to the city center and in locations which were geographically unsuitable such as steep hillsides or stream beds [2].

The “squatter house”, created by labor migrating from rural areas to urban areas to satisfy their housing need and constructed in such a way as to be flexible enough to develop as the family grew, used to be regarded as a marginal and temporary problem of accommodation in a city. Over time, these squatter areas and buildings acquired a permanent character, often consisting of two- or more-storey houses, and were considered as illegal neighborhoods [3]. As a result of inconsistent government approaches (such as occasional amnesties giving the houses legal status) towards squatting, combined with an increasing tide of migration to cities, the squatter areas were transformed into belts of squatter houses that surrounded cities.

Squatting in Bursa intensified and gained attention following an increase in the rate of urbanization in the 1960s. The most effective factors in this process were the great wave of migration from the Balkans in the 1950s and the channeling of investment in the automotive and other industries towards Bursa in the 1970s. Failure to plan land and housing requirements in this process led to the emergence of the phenomenon of squatter houses in the city. The squatter areas expanding on the slopes of Mount Uludag and soon became a belt that completely surrounded the city.

The objective of this research was to investigate the basic qualities and socioeconomic characteristics of the population living in squatter areas on the slopes of Mount Uludag. The role of migration on significant variations in the socioeconomic characteristics of the sample neighborhoods was evaluated. The research findings and the obtained results will hopefully contribute to the efforts of appropriate authorities aiming at integration of the population living in squatter areas in Bursa with the city and their harmonization with the processes of becoming urbanized.

Material and Methods

Some sections of the neighborhoods selected as samples were squatter areas. Thus, the survey performed within the scope of the study was applied to houses located in those sections of sample neighborhoods that were excluded from development plans. The neighborhoods selected for the research were Demirkapı, Alacahürka, Pınarbaşı and İvazpaşa affiliated to Osmangazi district, as well as Akçağlayan and Fidyekizik affiliated to Yıldırım district. The survey was applied to a total of 300 houses in 6 selected sample neighborhoods.

The survey was carried out with face-to-face interviews in houses that had been selected by random sampling. These houses constitute the statistical units of the research. The surveys were applied to the head of each household or to those who could answer questions on behalf of the household head.

The total population of the 6 neighborhoods constituting the study area was 31,544 [4]. It was envisaged applying the survey to 50 houses in each neighborhood and in this way, a total of 300 houses in 6 sample neighborhoods were surveyed. The survey was performed in August 2007. The data obtained through the surveys were analyzed using SPSS 15.0 statistical analysis program and Excel to formulate the distribution of frequencies and cross tabulation. These results were then evaluated.

2. Location of Study Area

The study area is located in the districts of Osmangazi and Yıldırım. When Bursa acquired Metropolitan status in 1987, the districts of Osmangazi, Nilüfer and Yıldırım became the central districts of Bursa. The belt of squatter houses in the study area surrounds the city from the south around the slopes of Mount Uludag and is located within and/or around the borders of approximately 10 neighborhoods, namely, from west to east: Demirkapı, Alacahürka, Pınarbaşı and İvazpaşa in Osmangazi District; and Möllaarap, Teferrüç, Akçağlayan and Fidyekizik in Yıldırım District. The sample neighborhoods selected for the research were Demirkapı, Alacahürka, Pınarbaşı, İvazpaşa, Akçağlayan and Fidyekizik (Figure 1). Hence, it was aimed to investigate variations in the
squatter areas at different locations on the belt of squatter housing to the east and west of the city.

Fig. 1. Location of study area and sample neighborhoods.

### 3. Evaluation of Survey Results

#### 3.1. Population Structure and Basic Characteristics of Study Area

According to the results of the survey, 133 of the interviewees migrated from outside the province of Bursa, while 91 migrated from the province of Bursa excluding the central districts (Osmanlı, Nilüfer and Yıldırım). It is therefore understood that 224 families migrated from provinces other than Bursa or from districts outside the central districts of Bursa and settled in the sample neighborhoods. On the other hand, some 74 householders interviewed were born in the Central Districts of Bursa.

In the study area, the total number of surveyed houses was 300 and the number of valid surveys was 298. The total number of residents in the houses constituting the survey was 1,203. The mean household size found in the study was 4.03 people (Table 1). Squatter society features a unique family structure. The basic feature of a family in a squatter house is that it is in the transitional stage between a village family and an urban family [5]. The mean household values are an indication of this. The greater the share of population of rural origin in the squatter population, the greater the size of the mean family. It is a known that the family structure in Turkey has undergone a transformation in recent years and shrunk in size. This applies to Bursa as well. The mean household size of three neighborhoods (Alacahırcık, İvazpaşa, Fidyeközk) among the sample neighborhoods is above the mean metropolitan value of Bursa; while the household average of three neighborhoods (Akçağlayan, Demirkapı and Pınarbaşı) is lower than the average for the center of Bursa. The mean household size is highest (5.18 persons) in Fidyeközk and least (3.28 persons) in Demirkapı.

Today it is observed that the “nuclear family” is gradually becoming more widespread in squatter areas due to the obstructive impact of economic conditions on the living of “extended” families. The family structure in rural areas is the “extended family” in which more than one married family may co-exist and which generally includes grandparents too. However, a “nuclear family”, composed of a mother, father, and unmarried children, is regarded as typical of the urban family. The household size of new families settling in squatter houses has been observed to shrink in accordance with the urban family type, and families are evolving into “nuclear families” [6]. Of the surveyed housing units, only six are composed of one person. 257 families have children, and 33 families have no children. Of 296 houses, 208 (70.3%) represent a nuclear family consisting of parents and children. The number of extended families including close relatives is 49 (16.6%).
In the study area, the number of families consisting of a single person is 2\% while a family consisting of ten people is 1\%. In the distribution of family sizes, families consisting of 4 members rank first (29\%). Families with members are followed by families of three people (22\%) and five people (19\%), respectively. The family structure consisting of a mother, father and child(ren) largely prevails over the sample area. In all neighborhoods, families with 2 to 3 children (56.5\%) are the most numerous. The total number of families with six or more children is two (0.8\%) and these families reside in Fidyekzkizk. The average number of children per family is 2.28. Accordingly, it is observed that the families are primarily close to the nuclear family profile. Fidyekzkizk is distinguished from other neighborhoods by its quality of population that is unique to rural areas.

When the age of the heads of household and of their spouses is considered, the squatter population is observed to have the quality of a middle-aged structure. All married individuals are aged over 21. Of the male population with status of head of the household, 67.4\% are aged over 40. 106 persons in total, who are aged 51 and over (38.4\%), occupy the greatest share within the age groups under consideration. When the age characteristics of the female population are evaluated, consisting of the wives of the male population who are heads of the household, the rate of women aged over 40 is observed to be slightly below that of the male population (62\%). Furthermore, the female population in the age group 21-30 is higher than the male population in the same age group. Accordingly, it is understood that the female population possesses the characteristic of a younger population.

Those who were born in Bursa rank first in the population of the study area (55.3\%). However, there are significant differences between the neighborhoods. In the sample neighborhoods, this rate ranges from 18\% to 86\%, and falls to 18\% in Akçaqlayan and to 2\% in Fidyekzkizk. Nevertheless, the rate of those who were born in Bursa is quite high in the sample neighborhoods located in the west of the city (76\%-86\%).

Bursa draws immigration from considerably varying parts of Turkey, besides the immigration it receives from abroad. It was found that survey respondents were from 40 different provinces of Turkey. After those who were born in Bursa, those born in Tunceli (6\%) ranked second and Erzurum (4\%) ranked third, while those who were born abroad and in Sivas (3.7\%) ranked fourth. They were followed by migrants from Diyarbakir and Van, respectively. Those who arrived from provinces in the Eastern Anatolian and Black Sea regions mostly preferred Akçaqlayan and Fidyekzkizk neighborhoods.

Of the population in the study area, 60.4\% are of rural origin, whereas 39.6\% are of urban origin. The population of rural origin is mostly located in Fidyekzkizk, Demirkapı and Akçaqlayan. Those who migrated from the rural areas of Bursa province have mostly settled in neighborhoods located in the west, while those who migrated from rural areas of other provinces preferred Fidyekzkizk and Akçaqlayan neighborhoods.

When duration of residence in Bursa is examined, it is observed that the west of the study area generally has an older squatter house formation. On the other hand, Fidyekzkizk continues to receive migration as a new squatter area. Since squatting started in the 1990s in Fidyekzkizk, there has been some intensification in the group stating that they had resided there for 16 to 25 years. 63\% of household heads in the study area have been residing in Bursa for 25 years or longer. The rate for the squatter population residing in Bursa for shorter than 10 years is 5\%.

3.2. Educational Status of Population

The rate of those who were illiterate in the sample neighborhoods was found to be quite high. The highest rate was found in Fidyekzkizk (Table 2). The rate of the illiterate female population is striking as it is higher than that of the male population in each neighborhood (18.4\%). In addition, the rate of those who were illiterate in the female population of Fidyekzkizk was found to be considerably higher than the mean values for Turkey and Bursa (48\%). This suggests that there is a requirement to open or repeat literacy courses in the study area.

When the educational status of the household heads and their spouses in the study area is considered, the educational level of men is observed to be higher than that of women. In general, three-fourths of women and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Number of valid surveys</th>
<th>Total population of surveyed houses</th>
<th>Household size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akçaqlayan</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alacakirka</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demirkapi</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>3.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivaşapa</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidyekzkizk</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pınarbaşı</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>1,203</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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men are primary school graduates (elementary school and/or secondary school). The densest group in terms of educational level consists of primary school graduates. The sole exception is Fidyekızık, where the number of those who are illiterate in the female population is higher than the number of primary school graduates. The rate of university graduates in the study area is only 3.5%. Of these, 40% are residents of Akçağlayan Neighborhood and whose occupation is an official or who are self-employed.

Furthermore, when the relationship between the educational status of the population and migration is evaluated, the illiterate population is mostly found among those who have migrated to Bursa from other provinces. No illiteracy is present among the male population that arrived in the sample neighborhoods from various areas of Bursa province. The inclusion of the majority of university graduates in the population group that migrated to Bursa from other provinces is most probably due to officials who have arrived via being appointed to Bursa (Officials are appointed to various provinces in Turkey throughout their career as their employing institution specifies. Circulation of officials around the country is quite normal).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Illiterate</th>
<th>Primary School</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akçağlayan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alacahurta</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demirkapı</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İvaşapa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidyekızık</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punarbaş</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total/Rate</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(18.4%)</td>
<td>(73.5%)</td>
<td>(6.4%)</td>
<td>(1.7%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3. Economic Characteristics of Population

The high rate of unemployment in the female population is striking. When the rate of the unemployed female population is calculated excluding the retired population not included in the workforce, the result is 87.6%. The rate of unemployed women in the female population of İvaşapa and Fidyekızık reaches around 90%. The rate of the unemployed male population in the sample area is 12.9%. This figure was calculated by excluding the retired population not included in the workforce. The rate of unemployment varies by neighborhood. The rate of unemployment among the male population of Fidyekızık (22.7%) is rather higher than other neighborhoods.

When we evaluated the income status of families based on the date of their migration to Bursa, it was found that of those who arrived in Bursa before 1950, approximately 75% had a total monthly income of less than 500 Turkish Lira (TL). However, only 21.7% of immigrants to the sample neighborhoods between 1991 and 2007 had a mean total monthly income of less than 500 TL. It was observed that the few families in the upper-income group have recently arrived in Bursa. In this case, it does not seem correct to assume that those who arrived in the city in earlier periods might have better economic conditions. It might even be considered that there are more educated and qualified employees among the families that have recently migrated to metropolitan areas compared with the past, and that, to some extent, families have started arriving to set up a business with their accumulated savings.

The number of those who are affiliated to any Social Security Authority is 255 (86.7%), whereas the number of those who are not affiliated to any Social Security Authority is 39 (13.3%). With 19 people, Fidyekızık is the neighborhood with the highest number who are not affiliated to any Social Security Authority (38.7%). The total number of those who had a green card (issued to persons from the very lowest income group) in the study area is 9 (3%). 55% of the population with a green card (5 people) are from Fidyekızık. Based on information obtained from interviews with officials administering the sample districts, it is understood that the population with a green card in the study area is more than 100 persons in each neighborhood excluding İvaşapa.

The total number of families who stated they received assistance from any social aid organization in the sample neighborhoods is 13 (4.3%). However, we do not consider this rate reflects reality and it might be thought that survey respondents avoided giving correct answers to this question. Interviews with neighborhood administrators demonstrate that even the rate of those who receive assistance only from aid organizations is higher. For instance, the number of households that receive aid in İvaşapa, with a population of 3,182, is 150. It is therefore understood that 18.8% of households in this neighborhood receive aid from social aid organizations.

### 3.4. Relationships with Hometown and City

While the earlier contrast between city and rural areas is gradually playing a less important role, new contrasts are arising from the heart of the process of urbanism. Rural problems at local level are being brought to the city. It can be accepted that the urbanization of the rural section brings about the ruralization of the city as a side effect.
The preservation of rural values and habits in the squatter family has, for a long time, made this family a continuation of the village family in the city. The continuation of the relationship of immigrants to the city with the rural section has had a negative impact on the harmonization of the immigrant population with the process of urbanization. The squatter population tries to maintain its traditional life as long as it maintains its relationship with the village and therefore, the squatter population is late in acquiring attitudes, behaviors and habits which are new to it. Adaptation to urban life increases in proportion to the rate at which relationships with the village weaken [8]. While the economic and social structures unique to rural areas are being excluded slowly in the process of becoming urbanized, the lifestyle and way of life as well as social behaviors that are unique to the city begin to be adopted. In the following stages of the process, however, the city is regarded as a permanent settlement, and the investments which used to be made in the rural area are channeled towards the city to be utilized in urban life. Since this change is experienced in the social as much as the economic sphere, the lifestyle that is unique to city-dwellers and urban culture begins to settle [9]. Furthermore, sustainment of the connection with the rural area, in some ways, also leads to new migrations. The opportunities obtained by those who have migrated to the cities, and the changes reflected on their daily life, make the successful steps taken towards becoming urbanized attractive for those who have remained in the rural area. Migration to cities, and especially to big cities, has become a strong trend in rural areas.

Although migrants to cities generally do not want to return to the village, they still do not want to sell their land, however small, in the village. This land is the last resource they can refer to if things go wrong in the city and it is one of the mechanisms that provide security [10]. A connection with the rural area is insurance for existence in the city. The findings of the present research in the sample area show that today the connections of migrants to the city with their hometown are significantly maintained. Nevertheless, it would be true to consider that the frequency and quality of this relationship have abated in comparison with the past. Of the survey respondents in the sample area, 58% of the population of village origin stated that they visited their hometown from time to time, whereas this rate fell to 35% in the population of urban origin.

Of 116 people who stated that they visited their hometown, 105 (89.7%) said that they went regularly every year. The number of those visiting irregularly (once in several years) was 11 (10.3%). Going at least once a year was encountered frequently. The rate of those going to their hometown once annually is the highest in terms of frequency of visit (55.2%). The number going to their hometown ten times or more annually is 8 (5.3%). The hometowns of all those who visit 10 times annually are within the provincial borders of Bursa. The qualities of “holiday” and “family visit” feature strongly in the relationship with the hometown. Generally, the summer months are preferred.

Variation by place of birth is observed among the families which regularly travel to their hometown every year. For instance, out of a total of 91 people who migrated from districts other than the central districts of Bursa, 48 (53%) visit their hometown every year. Doubtlessly, this outcome is influenced by the fact that the distance is not far, for the hometowns of migrants from districts (county towns) of Bursa are within provincial borders. However, contact with the hometown has weakened in the Fidyeközk and Akçağılayan neighborhoods in the eastern part of the city. This is influenced by the fact that the majority of the population residing in those two neighborhoods migrated from eastern provinces that are very distant from Bursa.

Newcomers to the city first make contact and begin their integration into city life at coffee houses, where persons from their own hometown or area are present, and “solidarity associations” set up by groups of people originally from the same geographical area. Instead of breaking traditional ties, the metropolitan structure recreates them in an urban medium [9]. The bigger the city, the stronger the accumulation of representatives of the traditional fabric. In the context of the urbanization process, especially the poor widely use their solidarity relationships based on origin, such as family, kinship and hometown, in order to solve their problems of settlement and finding a job as well as daily problems both during and after migration. So far, these relationships have played an important role in both solving the problems of immigrants and in alleviating the burden on the state [11]. Furthermore, beyond facilitating harmonization of new immigrants with urban life, hometown associations in particular constitute examples of closed social groupings aiming to sustain solidarity and similar traditions within themselves. It might be said that these groupings have a retardant effect on the process of becoming urbanized. Even though the associations concerned provide support for immigrants to the city, they remain insufficient for the process of harmonization of their members with urban life and fail to fulfill their functions in terms of becoming urbanized [9]. In the survey, six factors (obtaining inexpensive land, finding inexpensive housing, low rent, closeness to place of work, closeness to relatives, proximity to persons from same hometown-area) that were influential on the selection of neighborhoods were listed. The respondents were asked to state the factors which were the most influential. The number of those who marked the factors of “relatives” and “proximity to persons from same hometown-area” within the top three was 182. Moreover, it is understood that “relatives” was a more influential factor than “persons from the same hometown-area” (Table 3).

It is seen that associations of solidarity and culture, which are widespread in Bursa, have had a negative impact on the process of the immigrants becoming urbanized. Through social events such as evening dinners, weddings,
trips and picnics organized by the associations, it is aimed to bring together populations originally from the same area and also create a powerful force that might exert influence on the city administration in the long term.

Table 3. Number of persons selecting “presence of relatives” and “proximity to persons from same hometown” among top three factors regarding choice of current neighborhood for settlement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Presence of Relatives</th>
<th>Proximity to Persons from Same Hometown</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akçağlayan</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alacahtubra</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demirkapı</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İzmirpaşa</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidyekızak</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pınarbaşı</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The geographical areas which are the greatest source of migrations received by Bursa are fairly clear. In consideration of sociocultural characteristics, there is a need to create institutions that contribute to the process of becoming urbanized in Bursa. Interviews with neighborhood administrators indicate that a return to rural areas is not common among those who arrive in the city through migration. It is important to commence studies on this issue as soon as possible. It might be beneficial to develop social development projects which will contribute to the process of integration with the city and the process of becoming urbanized by means of the solidarity and culture associations that are commonly-found in Bursa. “The adaptation of newcomers from rural areas to urban life and changes in their life and behavior will depend on their acceptance of urban order as their future life. Then, these masses will differentiate in accordance with the urban social order; social change will take place; and there will be a transition from rural life to urban life” [12].

4. Discussion

A study in 1991 found that the household size in squatter populations was 4.92 for Istanbul, 4.54 for Izmir and 5.19 for Ankara [6]. It is observed that the average for the present study area (4.03) is generally lower than the household size found among squatter populations in other large metropolitan areas in previous years.

According to the results of the 2000 Census, the average household size was 3.9 persons in Bursa province and 3.3 in the metropolitan area. The average in the sample area is higher than that in the province of Bursa and the Bursa metropolitan area. The family structure is characterized as being between that of the metropolitan and rural areas. The household size of families that settled in squatter houses has been observed shrink over time in accordance with the urban family unit because economic conditions are unsuited for an extended family to make a living. This characteristic was also detected in the sample area.

Alpar and Yener determined that of the families living in squatter houses in 1991, 80.7% in Istanbul, 78.3% in Ankara and 84.9% in Izmir were nuclear families. Recent data about the household structure in Turkey show that the number of families consisting of one person was found to be 6%, the number of families with a nuclear family structure was 80.7%, the number of extended families 13.0%, and the percentage of houses consisting of students or laborers was 0.3% [13]. It was found that the nuclear family structure also prevailed over the study area. However, when compared with the results of previous studies in squatter areas, the rate of nuclear families in the study area (70.3%) is low. In addition to this, the rate for extended families in the study area (16.6%) was found to be higher than the average for Turkey (13.0%).

According to data from 2007, the rate of illiteracy in Turkey in general is 9.8%. 4% of the male population and 15.4% of the female population are illiterate. The rate of illiteracy in the population of the study area is above the average of Turkey (11.7%). Nevertheless, the rate we found is lower than that in unplanned housing areas in Istanbul in 2002 (18%) [14], but is considerably higher than the rate of illiteracy in the metropolitan area of Bursa (3%) [15].

A study in Bursa in 2006 found that in the metropolitan area, the percentage of those who completed primary school was 42.4%, for high school it was 26.4%, and university graduates was 8.8%. In the study area, the rate of primary school leavers is far above the metropolitan average, and the average of high school and university graduates is considerably lower than the metropolitan average [15].

The rate of unemployment in Turkey was declared to be 9.9% in 2007 when the current study was performed. In 2000, however, unemployment rates were 9.3% for Bursa province and 14.3% in Metropolitan Bursa. When these data are taken into consideration, it is observed that the rate of the unemployed male population in the sample area (12.9%) is above the averages of Turkey and Bursa province but below the average of Metropolitan Bursa.

86.7% of the population employed in the sample area is registered with various Social Security Authorities.
This rate is above the average values of Turkey (69.8%) and the Marmara Region (73.8%).

Of all households in Turkey, 13.65% receive aid from various aid organizations while 86.35% do not receive any assistance [16]. This rate was found to be quite low in the study area (4.3%).

The number of those who were born in Bursa is higher in the sample neighborhoods in the west of the city than neighborhoods in the east of the city. The study area receives migrations from the provinces of considerably different regions of Turkey. The highest migration is received from provinces in the Eastern Anatolian Region and the Black Sea Region. In addition, immigrants from metropolitan cities such as Istanbul and Ankara and from neighboring provinces such as Balıkesir and Bilecik take a large share. In the sample neighborhoods, the number of those who were born in Bursa is followed by people born abroad, and then in the provinces of Tunceli, Erzurum, Sivas, Muş, Diyarbakir and Van, respectively. For reasons of safety and security, the city has also received migrations from some provinces in the Eastern Anatolian Region.

The results of a study in squatter areas in 1991 found that the number of household heads who never visited their hometown was 28% in Ankara, 41.5% in Istanbul, and 38% in Izmir [6]. When compared with this study, the rate of those who do not visit their hometown is quite high in the sample area (43%).

5. Conclusion

In the sample area, 15% of the households had a monthly income of less than 500 TL. It is clear that some families have difficulty in meeting their basic needs. 98.9% of the families residing in the sample neighborhoods live below the poverty threshold, therefore, the housing problem of families with an income below the poverty threshold has been solved through squatter houses. The housing problem is the reflection of an unequal distribution of income.

Unemployment and poverty are serious obstacles facing the integration of residents of squatter areas with the city and urban society. Economic weakness is important among the elements that make it difficult for migrants to cities to become socially urbanized. The findings of this research also indicate that there are economic obstacles preventing the participation of the population residing in the sample area from involvement in the processes of becoming urbanized. Opportunities to secure a regular job and income are of critical importance for integration of the squatter population with the city. Therefore, also considering the low occupational qualities of this population, there is a need for vocational courses in this environment. Likewise, the very high rate of illiterate adults in the study area suggests that it is necessary to open or repeat literacy courses.

The residents of the sample neighborhoods generally have a rather weak relationship with the city in terms of activities that involve travelling around and learning about the city. Likewise, social and cultural services and buildings are not generally included among the wishes of the squatter population regarding their neighborhood. It might also be stated that they make no demands concerning this aspect. As a typical consequence observed in squatter areas, demands are mostly related to infrastructural problems. Thus, a means of attracting the population to spaces with a cultural content that will contribute to the sociocultural structure of the city should be investigated, and encouraging measures should be taken.

Some of the migrants that have arrived in the city sustain their relationship with their hometown, and relationships of kinship and affinity to their hometown appear to occupy an important place. The findings in the sample area show that 57% of the immigrants maintain a connection with their hometown. Nevertheless, the frequency and quality of this relationship have abated in comparison with the past. However, great emphasis is placed on activities that link those from the same hometown or area. Associations of Culture and Assistance in Bursa give an idea from where Bursa mostly receives migration. When we look at the geographical distribution of the provinces represented by the associations, it is understood that the greatest number are established by migrants from the Erzurum-Kars and Eastern Black Sea regions. It might be beneficial to start social development projects which contribute to the process of urban integration and urbanization by means of these associations of solidarity and culture. Considering the sociocultural characteristics of those areas that most send migrants to the city, there is a need to create new institutions that contribute to the processes of becoming urbanized in Bursa.

Acknowledgement

This study was supported by the Scientific Research Commission at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey (project No. 2009/16), to whom we would like to extend our gratitude.

We would like to individually thank our undergraduate students Arda Bay, Ferit Arslan, Ahmet Üçkardaş, Hakan Efe, Yusuf Rodoplu and Gülfem Saka at the Department of Geography, who voluntarily worked to carry out the survey application.

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