

CULTURAL AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF AN HISTORICAL NEIGHBORHOOD IN EDİRNE

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ABSTRACT:

This paper investigates the family, social and economic structures and social interaction in Yıldırım District in Edirne. The district has a long history starting from the 15th century in the periphery of Edirne. It still has the mosque, poor people's kitchen and some of housing from that time. During the Ottoman period, the ethnic and religious groups were identified by their wards such as Greek ward, Gypsy ward and Islamic ward.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate social and cultural implications of the changes in these neighborhoods through time. Physical, social and demographic conditions are observed by surveying these neighborhoods. According to the results of the study, although there are people from different countries, and different regions of Turkey with different cultural background, they are very well socially integrated. Young people complain about unemployment problem and lack of social facilities. They demand upgrading of physical conditions of their neighborhood. Due to its importance in the history and for social well being of the society, it is necessary to provide required investments to improve physical conditions of the neighborhood, to restore historical buildings and to upgrade the living standards.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study is to illustrate the relationship between the social and physical structure of an historical neighborhood of Edirne.

Yıldırım is one of the three peripheral neighborhoods of Edirne (Yeniimaret, Yıldırım, Karağağaç). Yıldırım district was established by Sultan Yıldırım Beyazıt and it was developed in the surroundings area of soup kitchen of Yıldırım. Current name of this district is "Eski İmaret" and the neighborhood is "Yıldırım".

The district of Yıldırım lies to the west of the city by Tunca River and by a wide band of agriculture lands and forest areas. The district is bounded by Bahçe Avenue in the east, agricultural fields in the west, fields and Taşocağı Road in the north and the Greek Cemetery and Kızılmescit Avenue in the south.

The development of Yıldırım, Gazimihal and Yeniimaret began after the construction of the Mihal Bey Mosque, the soup kitchen (imaret), and the bath in the 15th century. A second wave of settlement occurred upon the construction of another soup kitchen in Yıldırım that was sponsored by Sahmelek Pasha and his wife Benzirci Hatun. This district no longer exists today. Today's Yıldırım district was named the "old soup kitchen" (Atalay, 1993), (Anon 1966) while the area adjacent to the Beyazıt soup kitchen was named the "new soup kitchen".

The soup kitchen in the Gazimihal Neighborhood is known locally as the "middle (orta) soup kitchen". This last soup

kitchen has entirely disappeared and nothing, not even its foundations, remain today.

By its popular name (Yıldırım İmaret) it can be understood that this soup kitchen belongs to Edirne. It was established in 1399, 37-38 years after the Ottoman conquer of the city Edirne. The first settlement in the area consisted of 28 small homes clustered around the charity complex.

During the Ottoman period the city had included a number of different ethnic populations who lived together, yet apart in different neighborhoods and wards, the wards were largely identified according to their ethnic minority, such as Greek wards, gypsy wards, Islamic / Turkish wards, etc. (Erdoğan 1994).

The history of the old district of Yıldırım is reflected in its old neighborhoods, streets and housing pattern. The entire metropolitan area of Edirne, however is in the midst of rapid population growth, with an annual growth of 5% which is above of the national average. This uncontrolled growth is destroying the ruin of the historic cultural wealth of Yıldırım.

Cultural and socio-demographic aspects of Yıldırım was studied by Erdoğan (2001) by analyzing the characteristics of 17 old homes in Yıldırım and of their proposed housing types and settlement alternatives in the area which is losing its former historical remnants due to its rapid and uncontrolled development.

This study investigated:

- New formation Yıldırım Beyazıt neighborhood social structure.
- Is housing and neighborhood pattern homogenous or heterogeneous?

3. METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted in Yıldırım Beyazıt Neighborhood of the Yıldırım district on 220 houses between March-June 2003. The Houses were selected in a random way. Interviews were done with the head of families. This data is used in the statistical analysis to determine the satisfaction of the residents (see to figures and tables).

4. CURRENT HOUSING TYPE

A) Old Housing Types

The traditional houses of Anatolia are generally of Hilani and megaron types and the same kinds of houses are seen in this district. Homes currently being built in rural neighborhoods continue to be these types.

B) Minimum Housing Types

Minimum housing types are seen in this district, as well as in other district of Edirne (Erdoğan,1994). These consist of houses with no deeds that are constructed on vacant lots and fields. These houses resemble to the basic Anatolian house as they generally consist of two rooms built around a central hall.

C) Multi -Floor Apartment Blocks

The new housing is generally developing without preserving the earlier, traditional housing textures due to rapid urban development. Thus, traditional homes are quickly disappearing and are being replaced by blocks of multi-floored apartment buildings.

5. CASE STUDY FINDINGS

5.1 Household Characteristics

60 % of the household has 4 persons which is the largest ratio among the others. 17.2 % of the mothers are 30-40 years old, 21.8 % 40-50 and 11.8 % 50-60 which are the higher ratio than the others. With respect to education of the mothers, 51.81% has primary school, 8.18 % secondary school education. 17.27 % of the mothers is illiterate. 62 % of the household have 2 children per family which is the highest ratio among the others. Education and occupancy of the 632 children is expressed as 11.86 % is primary school student, 10.6% secondary school student, 9.17% primary school graduates, 5.69 % secondary school graduates, 8.38 % high-school graduates and 37.34 % married and working. The educational level of the parents is as follows: Primary school graduates are 50.9 %, primary school drop outs are 13.63 %, illiterates are 13.18 % and the secondary school graduates are 12.72 %.

5.2 Economic Situation of The Family

355 persons of the sample population are contributing to the income of families from which 52.2 % are fathers and 38.5 % are children. Occupation types of the fathers are as follows: 20.52 % self-employed, 16.93 % farmers, 12.37 % retired 9.77 % employees and 20.52 % jobless. Occupation of mothers is as follows: 56.08 % is house wives, 12.17 % farmers and 10.86 % seasonal jobs.

5.3 Origin of Families and Duration to Stay

With respect to the origins of the families, 33.52% are natives, 32.62 % from Edirne, 7.58% from Greece and 4.37 % from Kırklareli. Duration to stay in the same house are as follows: 16.36 % is 0-5 years, 13.63 % 5-10 years, 12.77 % 20-25 years, 14.54 % 26-30 years. Location of parents changes as follows: 28.3 % is in other neighborhoods of Edirne, 28.71 % in the same neighborhood and 16.5 % in Greece. Reasons to chose their neighborhood are as follows: 14.05 % job opportunities, 14.05 % being natives, 12.04 % house ownership and 12.04 % marriage.

5.4 Social Characteristics of the Families and Social Interaction

55 % of families are extended families. Family members are as follows: 18.1 % are brides, 15.7 % fathers, 9.4 % brother or sister, 12.7 % married children. 68.1 % of the families have their relatives in their neighborhoods. With respect to best friend location, 32.75 % is next door neighbor, 12.06 % in the same building, 19.36 % in front of the door, 5.17 % on a different street, 4.13 % relatives. The ratio of families who met their friends in their neighborhoods is 86.8 %. Frequency of social interactions with their neighbors are as follows: 30.48 % with the neighbor in the next door, 17.07 % with the neighbor in the front, 10.67 % with relatives, 29.98 % with the neighbors around and 12.8 % with the neighbors in the same building. Frequency of social interactions with neighbors is as follows: 33.63 % once a day, 19.09 % more than once a day, 17.27 % more than once a week, 11.36 % whenever they have an occasion, 10.45 % once a week, 4.54 % other neighborhood. The ratio of the families who have contacts with the friend and relatives in other neighborhoods of Edirne is 75.9 %. The reasons of social interactions are 26.8 % visits to relatives, 15.9 % special visits such wedding, 11.8 % job visits and others. Frequency of visits are 28.14 % once a week, 20.95 % more than once a week, 12.57 % once a month, 9.58 % more than once a month, 10.17 % seldom, 8.38 % everyday and 7.18 % often. 76.1 % of the families do not dispute with their neighbors. The families who admit that they dispute with their neighbors explain the frequency as follows: 42 % seldom, 31 % once a week, 17 % a couple of times in a year, 10% every day. The ratio of friends from the same origin is 43.2 %. The distribution of their origin county is as follows: 19.2 % from Bulgaria, 16.8 % from Greece and 10.4 from Istanbul. The ratio of families who have close contact with their neighbors is 68.1 %.

5.5 Social Support

65 % of the families received help from their neighbors or relatives when they moved to this neighborhood. The ratio of the families who are aware of new comers is 38.6 %, 45.9 % who are unaware, 15.4 % do not have any idea. 27.05% of the new comers to this neighborhood come from Edirne's other neighborhoods. 82.3 % of new comers are from the different origin of the natives of the neighborhood which 44.9 % of people admit that they support each other, 32.2 % do not have the same option, 23.6 % some times. They help each other. 68.8 % of people admit that they help new comers.

5.6 Residential Characteristics

The distribution of the number of room is as follows: 15.9 % of the houses have 2 rooms, 41.8 % have 3 rooms, and 33.1 % have 4 rooms. The satisfaction from the neighborhood is 69.5 %. Their desired changes in their homes and their neighborhoods are as follows: 22.91 % of people want larger homes and addition of a kitchen and balcony, 17.33 % want

parks/recreation area/sport area in their neighborhood, 16.4 % want painting and renovation, 10.83 % want new furniture, 10.83 % do not want to change anything, 6.81 % primary school building/equipment for the school, 6.5 % road/infrastructure, 5.57 % shopping facilities, 5.26 % better neighbor relationships, 4.02 % social security. The ratio of people who want to move from the neighborhood is 64.2 %. The reasons of desire to quite are as follows: 23.41 % is to get more comfort, 18.35 % need to change old houses, 12.97 % job opportunities, 11.7 % to be close to relatives, 10.75 % better educational opportunities, 8.22 % is dissatisfaction with the existing neighborhood, 7.91 % is unsatisfactory transportation and 6.64 % is smallness of the neighborhood and crowding.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study investigated different characteristics of Yıldırım/Beyazıt neighborhood. With respect to socio-economic characteristic, people have low income and lower level education. Parents and children are working to make a living. The occupation of fathers are government employee, farmer and trade while that of mothers are house wife and farmer. The ratio of the people who have continuous jobs is limited. Jobless rate and the ratio of transitory jobs are high.

With respect to demographic characteristics, majority of people were born especially in Yıldırım or in Edirne's other neighborhoods. Other people were migrated from Greece, Bulgaria, Tekirdağ and Kırklareli. Majority of people lived more than 20 years in their current house.

The reasons of their preference to continue to live in this neighborhood are their jobs, being native, the house inherited and their marriage. The majority of people live with their relatives in this neighborhood and continue to live a traditional life.

They have close relationships with their close neighbors or their neighbors are their relatives. They have more frequent social contacts with their close neighbors. They visit other neighborhoods of Edirne for special reason such wedding or holiday greetings.

People who migrated to the neighborhood receive help from their relatives and their neighbors. People who migrated from other neighborhoods of Edirne are the majority in the neighborhood. The ratio of the people who admit that they are unable to help to the migrants is high. Most of the people agree that there is unity in the neighborhood.

Majority of the houses have 3-4 room and the satisfaction of people with their neighborhood is high. However, they complaint about the infrastructure, physical structure and lack of social facilities and they desire to make some adjustments of the buildings to their current needs.

Finally, this neighborhood has a homogeneous social structure which reflects in its physical pattern. It is necessary to propose upgrading projects to supply the need for social facilities, infrastructure and to improve the physical structure according to their needs. Due to its importance in the history and the social well being of the society, it is necessary to provide required investments to improve physical conditions of the neighborhood, to restore historical buildings and to upgrade the living standards.

At the same time, it is necessary to solve economic problems such high unemployment rate by stimulating new economy investments.

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APPENDIX: FIGURES AND TABLES

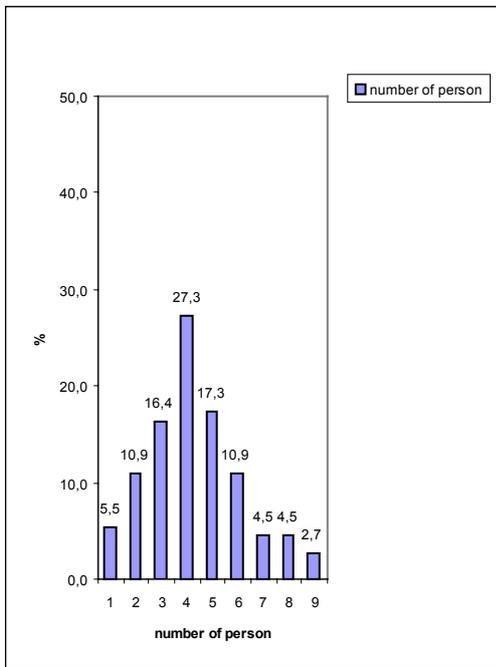


Figure 1. Number of House Inhabitants

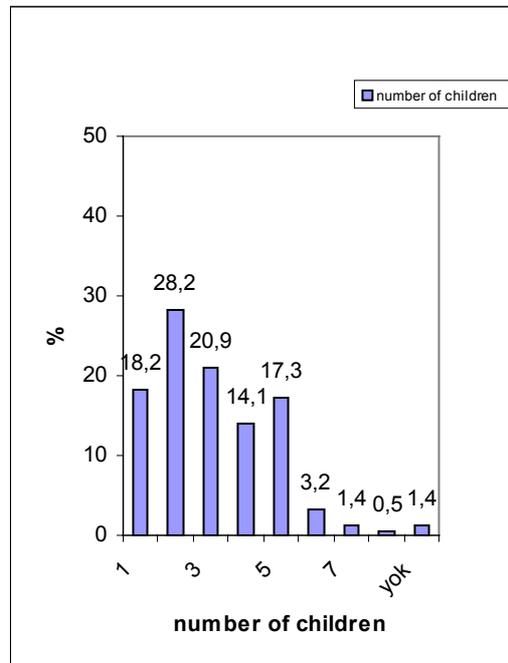


Figure 2. Number of Children In Houses

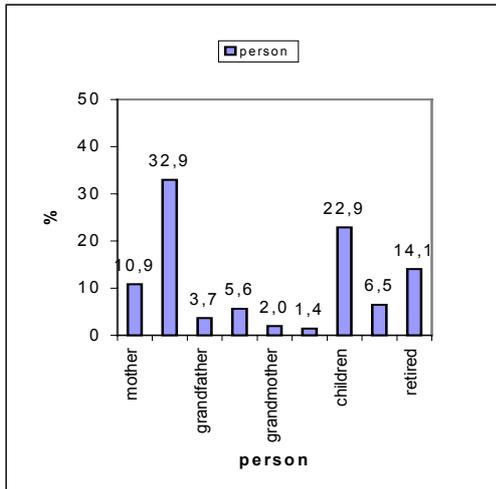


Figure 3. Contributing to the Income of Family

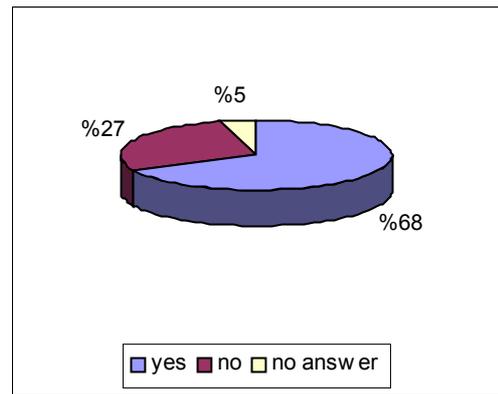


Figure 4 . Family Have Their Relatives In Their Neighborhoods

Which neighbors with frequent interaction	Number of person	%
Same building	42	12,8
Nobody	15	4,57
Relatives (no social interaction with neighbors)	35	10,67
Neighbor in front	56	17,07
Different street / neighborhood	15	4,57
Next door neighbor	100	30,48
Neighbors around	40	12,19
No answers	25	7,62

Table 1. Social Interaction With Neighbors

Frequency of interactions with neighbors	Number of person	%
Once a day	74	33,63
More than once a day	42	19,09
Whenever they have occasion	25	11,36
Usually in summer	8	3,63
Once a week	23	10,45
More than once a week	38	17,27
Once a month	10	4,54

Table 2. Frequency of Social Interaction With Neighbors

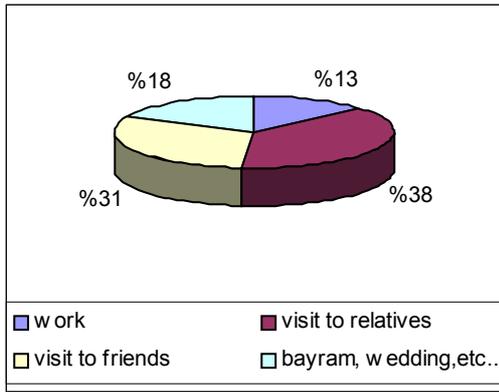


Figure 5. Reason of Social Interactions In Other Neighborhood

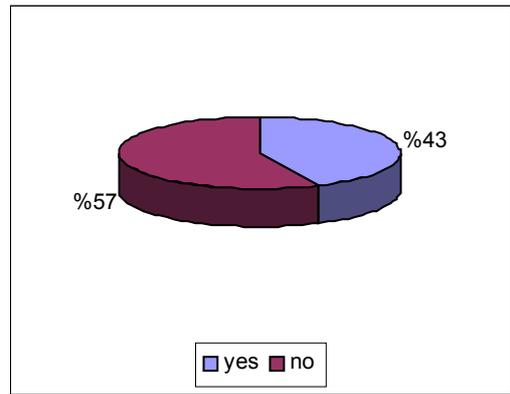


Figure 6. Social Interactions With Neighbors Which Have Same Origin

If social interaction with different neighborhood is done, frequency ratio	Number of person
Once a week	47(%28.14)
More than once a week	35 (%20.95)
Once a month	21(%12.57)
More than once a month	16 (%9.58)
Once a couple month	5(%2.99)
Everyday	14 (%8.38)
Seldom	17 (%10.17)
Often	12 (%7.18)

Table 3. Frequency of Social Interaction With Neighbors

The ratio of friends from the same origin	Number of person	%
Erzurum	8	6,4
Bulgaristan	24	19,2
Yunanistan	21	16,8
Edirne	20	16
Gümüşhane	5	4
Almanya	8	6,4
İstanbul	13	10,4
Çorlu	15	12
Niğde	6	4,8
Konya	5	4

Table 4. Ratio of Friends From The Same Origin

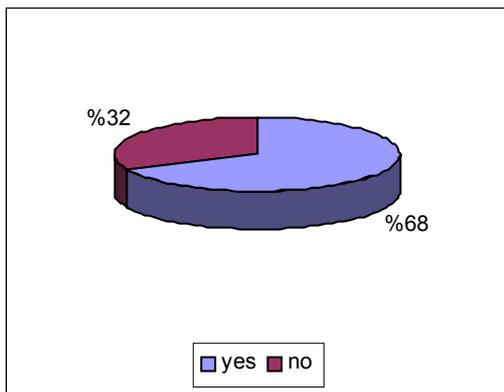


Figure 7. Frequency of Social Interaction With Neighbors

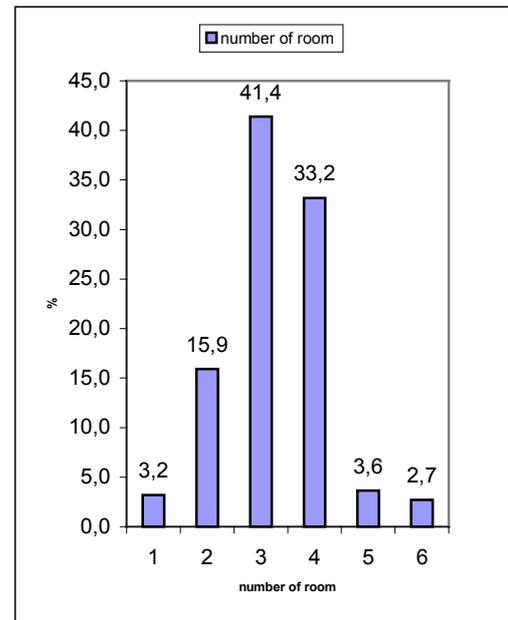


Figure 8. Distribution of Number of Rooms

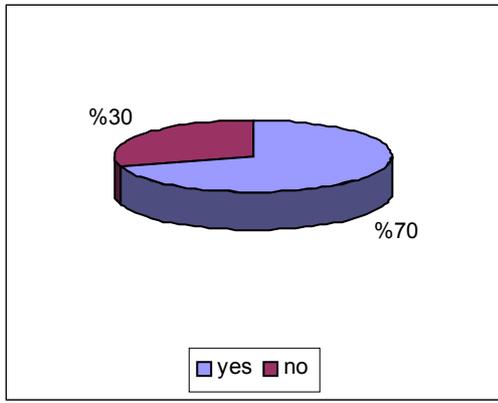


Figure 9. Satisfaction With Existing Neighborhood

The origin migration of newcomers	Number of person	%
Gümüşhane	2	2,35
Erzurum	3	3,52
Doğu	9	10,58
Karadeniz	7	8,23
Trabzon	4	4,7
Tokat	3	3,52
Rize	2	2,35
Manisa	2	2,35
Anadolu	7	8,23
Bayburt	3	3,52
İstanbul	8	9,41
Bulgaristan	12	14,11
Edirne(from the other districts)	23	27,05

Table 5. The Origin Migration of Newcomers

Desire of residents to make change in their homes and neighborhoods	Number of person	%
parks/recreation/sport area	56	17,33
Do not change anything	35	10,83
Primary school building and equipment for school	22	6,81
new furnitures for home	35	10,83
larger homes/kitchen and balcony	74	22,91
shopping facilities	18	5,57
road/infrastructure	21	6,5
painting and renovation	53	16,4
better neighbor relationship	17	5,26
social security	13	4,02

Table 6. Desire of Residents to Make Change In Their Homes and Neighborhoods

The reason to desire to move from the neighborhood	Number of person	%
Get more comfort	74	23,41
unsatisfactory transportation	25	7,91
smallnes of neighborhood and crowding	21	6,64
better educational opportunities for children	34	10,75
Need to change old houses	58	18,35
Job opportunities	41	12,97
Be close to relatives	37	11,7
Unsatisfaction with the existing neighborhood	26	8,22

Table 7. The Reason of Desire To Move From The Neighborhood