

WHO ARE THE FUTURE POLICE ELITES? SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE STUDENTS AT THE POLICE ACADEMY IN TURKEY

YUSUF ZIYA OZCAN* ALI CAGLAR**¹

*Middle East Technical University, Department of Sociology, 06531 Ankara, Turkey**

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The purpose of this paper is to investigate the socio-economic background of the students at the police academy which trains middle and higher level police officers for the needs of the national security organization.

The questionnaire which was used in the research was administered to all the students, therefore no sample was selected. This study can be defined as 'quantitative descriptive'. It was considered essential that the study should use both quantitative and qualitative methods. The strategy advocated was to combine questionnaire, open-ended interview and secondary data techniques in the same study.

The paper concludes that economic factors have an important bearing on choosing the police profession as a career. The future police elites in Turkey come mostly from middle and lower class families. There is an occupational socialization in the families of students. An important proportion of students are not happy with their soon to be future profession. This creates a very crucial situation for the policing policies in Turkey.

KEY WORDS: Socio-economic background, police academy, police elites, police, police organization, Turkey.

WHO ARE THE FUTURE POLICE ELITES? SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE STUDENTS AT THE POLICE ACADEMY IN TURKEY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the socio-economic background of the students at the Police Academy which trains middle and higher level police officers for the needs of the security organization. It provides a college level education and training for the police officers. The importance of the school stems from the fact that police elites are trained there. It will be useful to give some information about the establishment of this institution before taking up the issues to be entertained in this article. The Police Academy was established in 1937 by a statute of the article 18 outlined in the "Codex of Security Organization", as (Code number 3201) :

Address for correspondence: Ali Caglar, University of Surrey, Department of Sociology, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 5XH, U.K.**

"The aim of the Institute is to train and educate middle and higher level officers and security administrators in order to provide service for the Security Organization. Moreover this Institute shall provide the necessary professional skills for the personnel and train them in their professional attitude as officers committed to the Law and principles of Ataturk." (Turk Polisi, p.143)

When it was first established this institution was intended to fulfil a double function; on the one hand it was to function as an educational centre for the police vocational schools. These were organized to educate and train recruits for the police profession as ordinary (general) police officers. On the other hand it was to provide the highest level of specialization for police officers. That is, to apply a specialized training program to police officers to become experts in certain occupational areas such as narcotics, judicial, murder, fiscal, traffic, ethical values, etc., and to educate and train middle and higher level police officers such as police station administrators and town directors of security. However, through social changes in Turkish Society, the institution was segregated from the main body of vocational schools. It was then established as an independent institution for higher education. In the 1960-61 academic year it thus acquired the identity of an institution for higher education and in 1962 the curriculum was extended to three years. Later still, in 1980, a decision was taken to extend it to four years. Presently it provides education at four-year college level. In 1982, when a new university law was passed, the name of the school, which had been the Police Institute, was changed to the Police Academy, in accordance with article 132 of the Turkish Constitution and article 2 of the Organization for Higher Education (Y.O.K.). (Turk Polisi, p. 143).

It is the responsibility of the Police Academy to educate and train middle and higher level of officers and security administrators to provide a service for the Security Organization in Turkey. It is located in Ankara, the capital of the country. The Academy is a boarding school and is totally financed and controlled by the General Directorate of Security. The students of the Police Academy mostly come from police high schools (around 75 %), from general high schools and equivalent schools, from police organization, among the police officers who are in service, and from other universities. Students who graduated from other universities and wish to pursue a career in the Security Organization are accepted after taking examinations and are subjected to a special training and education for one academic year (special class). Then those who are successful after this training and education obtain the same status as the Academy graduates.

All students have to take a physical fitness examination first, then those who are successful have to take a written examination. After this stage, the students who are successful take an oral examination in front of an examination committee. The General Directorate of Security select the police senior bureaucrats (examination committee) who give their last verdict about the students who are given the registration right to the Police Academy. In order to apply to the Academy for entrance exam, it is enough to be a Turkish citizen, i.e. all Turkish citizens who have the conditions of examination for police profession are given an equal chance. There is no discrimination in terms of religion or ethnic background. This is at least theoretically in operation in Turkey. However the exam committee which is selected by the General Directorate of Security has authority to give the last verdict on the recruitment (selection) of students.

Students wear a special uniform. Graduates are charged with compulsory service in the Organization, and they start with the rank of vice commissar² which is mostly the post of leader of a small working team or group in a police station.

The education and training programme as well as of other police educational institutions are determined by the General Directorate of Security. This is in line with wider plans

for educating and training students in virtually all areas of policing. Therefore the contents of courses vary from sociology to Law, from human rights to forensic sciences. The examination system in the Academy is the same as the system in other state universities. An applied occupational training programme is also taken by students in the summer vacation every year.

After this brief information about the Police Academy, we would like to outline the objectives of our study under two general principles:

- 1) The Police Organization in Turkey has not previously been studied from the sociological perspective. With respect to historical studies, the literature review has revealed that there are very few studies carried out on the history of the Police Organization (Alyot, 1947). There are short articles about the Turkish Police printed in the Police Journal. The literature review has also indicated that there are two doctoral dissertations about the Police Organization (Kaygisiz, 1982 Genc, 1979). Moreover, there are about 15 Master's theses done which some of them are cited in the bibliography at the TODAIE (Turkish Institution for Middle East Public Administration), Public Administration Departments of Gazi and Istanbul Universities. In other words, the police are one of the least studied subjects in the Turkish social science literature. A review of the literature indicates that there has been almost no sociological research on either a theoretical or empirical level conducted in this area. The police are most probably seen as a taboo institution that should not be touched. The limited literature on the police gives the Police Organization a character that is closed within itself, like the Military. However, at least, from a journalist's view Birand's book (1986) has changed the "closed box" image of the Military and proved the point that even the military can be studied. Therefore, one of our purposes is to show both social scientists and everyone in the Police Force that the Police Organization is not taboo, and it can and must be studied from the sociological perspective. This kind of study should demonstrate many unknown aspects of the police and contribute to Turkish social studies as well. The present study, although limited, should go some way to fulfil the need in this regard, and hopefully pave the way for future studies.
- 2) Our second objective is more sociological in that we shall attempt to get acquainted with the students of the Police Academy from a sociological point of view. In other words, an investigation of the socio-economic background of the students at the Police Academy which trains middle and higher level police administrators for the needs of Turkish Police Organization is pursued in this study. This is important because the graduates of this Academy assume critical duties and crucial administrative tasks in the Police Organization in Turkey. In other words, they will be the ones who put the policing policies of the country into practice as police administrators on the administrative level. They will be effective and influential on the nature of police management, relations with the community, other professionals, public services, and higher and lower ranks in the Police Organization. In this context, therefore, the following questions significantly stand out: Who are the future police administrators? What is their socio-economic background? From which parts of the country do they originate? From what kind of families, in terms of education, occupation and income levels, do they originate? Do they willingly choose their careers? or Do they still hope to find other jobs? Under what influences did they make their decisions about their career? In what type of residential unit (village, town, city) did they spend their childhood? etc. The research shall try to answer these questions regarding the socio-economic background of the students at the

Academy. When we consider the crucial and sensitive duty of the police organization, the significance of this kind of study becomes more obvious; namely we need to be acquainted, at least in the present context, with Turkey's future police leaders. This is a necessary step on the way towards a full analysis of police elites on the lines of Reiner's recent (1991) study of British chief constables.

DATA

The questionnaire which was used in this research was administered to the students of the Police Academy in the 1988-89 Academic year. The questionnaire has two main sections. The questions addressed in the first section³ aim at inquiring into the socio-economic background of the students. In this particular academic year there were 1041 students. Since it was not difficult to administer the questionnaire to all students, we did not select a sample to administer the questionnaire. All the students filled the questionnaire out. The number of the first year students was 293, and the second year students 262, third year students 269, and the fourth year students 182. There were also 35 students in the special class.⁴ Besides this, in order to support and strengthen the data which were obtained by means of questionnaires some interviews were also conducted with some senior bureaucrats, senior students and people.

ANALYSIS

The analysis will be based on descriptive statistics. Therefore, we shall only interpret the frequency distribution of the variables. This will nevertheless enable us to make significant remarks concerning the socio-economic background of the students.

1) Educational Background of the Parents

The table below illustrates the educational backgrounds of the parents of Police Academy students and their frequency distributions.

Among the parents, primary school graduates make up the majority (45.5 % of fathers and 48 % of mothers). These percentages are 55.1 for male, 57.9 for female for population, 6 years old and over, in Turkey according to data gathered from 1985 general census (SIS, 1992:62-63). If the age group of parents, at least 35 and over, and three years old data are considered, their educational attainment can be accepted as lower in comparison with the whole population, especially the educational attainment of the mothers (See for more information SIS, 1992:62-63). In other words, most of the students come from families with a relatively lower educational background, i.e. most of the parents of the students either had primary school education or no education at all.

Although 'literate' can be seen as an unusual additional category in educational attainment, there are few opportunities to become literate without formal schooling in Turkey. For example, when an illiterate man joins the army for his compulsory military service, he is taught to write and read during his training. Another way of being literate for both men and women is to be taught by their children. Besides that some public institutions, such as Public Training Centre and summer school courses of the State, teach reading and writing to illiterate people. Unfortunately, they can not have a formal school diploma.

Table 1 Educational Distribution of the Parents of the Students at the Police Academy.

<i>Level of Education</i>	<i>Father</i>		<i>Mother</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Illiterate*	26	2.5	198	19.0
Literate	83	8.0	220	21.1
Primary school graduate	474	45.5	499	47.9
Junior high(secondary) school grad.	171	16.4	60	5.8
High school (Lycee) or equivalent	177	17.0	44	4.2
University graduate	94	9.0	12	1.2
Masters or Ph.D. degrees	7	0.7	1	0.1
No answer	9	0.9	7	0.7
Total	1041	100.0	1041	100.0

* Illiteracy rate in Turkey was 20.5% in 1988. Source: State Institute of Statistics (DIE).

Therefore 'literate' was used as a separate category in the above table. The result of the table shows that 21.1 percent of women and 8 percent of men are literate, i.e. they can read and write even though they have no formal school certificate.

When we look at the distribution of father's education, which is the more important determinant of the son's educational status in Turkey (Ozcan, 1983a), it is obvious that fathers have much less education than their sons. In other words, the education level of all sons will be higher than that of their fathers. However, the educational level of mothers is even lower. Although 90 percent of the fathers have at most obtained a middle level of education, this percentage is 98 percent for the mothers.

Most of the academy students are children of parents who have on average primary school education. This raises a crucial question: Why do the parents who have on average primary school education send their children to the Police Academy? or Why do the children of the parents who have a relatively lower educational attainment choose to go to the Police Academy?

It is a fact that presently in Turkey the students who graduate from universities can not easily find jobs.⁵ But those students who graduate from schools such as Military Academies and Police Academy acquire a special status and therefore do not face the same problem as the students who graduate from other universities. Students who graduate from the Police Academy are immediately appointed to special duties. More importantly these students have financial support from the government while still attending their schools. Therefore since parents are anxious about the future of their sons they naturally prefer to send them to an educational institution which will support their education and guarantee their jobs.

Low educational achievement appears to be the natural consequence of the economic status of the parents. This fact will also be seen in the distribution of parents' occupation.

2) Occupations of the Parents

In Table 2, the distribution of occupations among the parents as reported by the students can be seen. We face a problem here. The questions concerning the professions of the

parents included a detailed explanation but unfortunately the answers are given in a general manner such as government job or teacher. This led to difficulties in coding of occupations. We have used here the coding by The State Institute of Statistics (DIE) which is outlined in the brochure entitled "Classification of Professional and Economical Activities (1980)". This is the translation of internationally known occupational classification called ISCO (International Standard Classification of Occupations), and its terms are used in classification of parents' occupations. Having the occupations classified this way it will be easier to compare and contrast the results of this research with other similar research done elsewhere in the world (Treiman, 1977).

When we look at father's occupation in Table 2, keeping in view the minor mistakes arising from the classification of jobs, we see, that 18 percent of the fathers are employed in the service sector that make up the largest group. Those who work at higher level administrative jobs, directorates or who are entrepreneurs make up the smallest group (3.2 %). The occupational distribution of the fathers is in conformity with their educational background. Most of them work in low prestige jobs such as driving, small private businesses, service jobs, petty government and agricultural jobs which require no education or require only junior high or high school (Lycee) education. Therefore, it is natural for these parents to encourage their children to pursue a more desirable job than they have, such as police duty.

Table 2 Occupational Distribution of the Parents of the Students at the Police Academy.

<i>Professions</i>	<i>Father</i>		<i>Mother</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
1. Academicians, technical vocations, private business owners.	122	11.7	23	2.2
2. Higher level administrators, entrepreneurs, directors.	33	3.2	0	0.0
3. Administrative and other similar professions.	129	12.4	9	0.8
4. Business workers or sales personnel.	95	9.1	2	0.2
5. Service personnel.	186	18.0	3	0.3
6. Farmer, forest worker, fisherman and hunter.	113	10.9	2	0.2
7. Miners, metal workers, textile, food services, cleaning and tannery workers.	43	4.1	3	0.3
8. Carpenters, handcraft workers, electric and electronic workers.	39	3.7	0	0.0
9. Plastic, paper, construction workers and transportation workers.	107	10.3	3	0.3
10. Housewives, retirees, those who can not work or cannot be classified.	173	16.6	988	95.7
Total	1040	100.0	1033	100.0

The majority of the mothers are housewives (95.7%) and are not working outside. If we remember that 88 percent of the mothers are primary school graduates or are illiterate (see Table 1), it is not surprising that the majority of them are housewives.

3) Income of the Fathers

Since recent research done in social stratification has shown that there is not a strong correlation between educational, occupational and income status (see for U.S.A. Jenks and others, 1972; for Turkey Kasnakoglu, 1975- Ozcan, 1983b), distribution of income stands out as a problem to be evaluated independently. Table 3 below shows the distribution of answers given to the income question.

Table 3 The Monthly Income of Fathers*

<i>Income(TL)</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
1 - 100.000	147	17.2
101.000 - 200.000	424	49.7
201.000 - 300.000	188	22.0
301.000 - 400.000	52	6.1
401.000 - 500.000	29	3.4
501.000 - +	14	1.6
Total	854	100.0

Median = 200.182

* Since there are extremes in the amount of incomes we prefer to take the median value into consideration rather than the average amount of incomes. \$1 was equal to TL 1,498.92; £1 was equal to TL 2,549.07 in (August)1988. National minimum wage was TL 126.000 in industry, was TL 117.000 in agriculture sector.

854 students answered this question and almost half of them (49.7%) stated their father's income is between TL 100.000 – 200.000. The second largest group, which comprises 22 percent of the fathers, had incomes between TL 200.000- 300.000. Those fathers whose income is more than TL 300.000 is only 11 percent. However, when we evaluate the income of the fathers in general we see that 89 percent of them have an income below TL 300.000. The median value of the distribution is 200.182. This shows that the students at the Police Academy belong to families with an average monthly income of TL 200.000 which was equal to £78.50 in August 1988.

At first sight these incomes may seem high for 1988 but it should not be forgotten that these are the incomes of fathers who have children between the ages 18-22. It is even possible to consider these families below average, because a father with children in the 18-22 age groups must have worked in his job for at least 15 years. When we consider all possibilities, their income⁶ can be classified as low. Under these circumstances we may conclude that most students at the Police Academy belong to families with low or middle income.

4) The Family Size and Place of Family Residences

At the beginning of this study, we presumed that most students of the Academy come from villages and from extended families. Tables 4 and 5 give us the percentages to evaluate the truth of this presupposition.

Table 4 The Place of Family Residence of Police Academy Students

<i>The Place of Residence</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Villages	87	8.4
Towns	171	16.5
Cities	773	74.6
Abroad	5	0.5
Total	1036	100.0

Table 4 shows that 74.6 percent of the students families live in cities. Only a minority of the families live in the countryside (8.4%) while a considerable number of them live in towns or smaller cities (16.5%). This shows that our presupposition about the families of students concerning type of residence are wrong because most of them live in cities. When we consider the fact that approximately 60 percent (Gokce, 1976) of the population in Turkey today live in cities, the result indicates urban bias among the recruits with respect to place of residence.

Table 5 The Family Size of the Students at the Police Academy

<i>Number of Siblings</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
0	5	0.5
1	152	14.8
2	324	31.5
3	230	22.5
4	124	12.1
5 and more	194	18.6
Total	1029	100.0

The number of children, Table 5, is taken as the basis for determining the size of families. Those families with only 1 or 2 children comprise 46.3 percent of students' families. If we consider a family with three children a small size family in Turkey,⁷ this percentage becomes 68.8 percent. So we can say that most of the students come from small size families. On the other hand, 30.7 percent of the students belong to larger families, namely with four and more children. It is consequently possible to say that Police Academy students do not come from the countryside and extended families. On the contrary, they mostly come from cities and they belong to small families.

5) Type of Place of Birth

Table 6, below, summarizes the birth places of students and the locations where they lived until the age 12. On the same table we also see the location where students had junior high and high school education.

Table 6 The Birth Places of Students and the Locations Where They Lived Until the Age 12, the Graduation of Junior High and High School (Lycee).

<i>Place of Birth</i>	<i>Place They Lived</i>							
	<i>Place of Birth</i>		<i>Until 12</i>		<i>Junior H. Sch.</i>		<i>High School</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Villages	187	18.5	122	11.8	51	4.9	16	1.6
Towns	227	22.4	194	18.7	192	18.5	63	6.1
Cities	594	58.7	718	69.3	793	76.4	949	92.3
Abroad	4	0.4	2	0.2	2	0.2	0	0.0
Total	1012	100.0	1036	100.0	1038	100.0	1028	100.0

This table shows that when the level of education increases, the tendency to live (settle) in larger cities also proportionally increases. Only 1.6 percent of those students who were born in the countryside (18.5 %) lived there until they finished high school.

In the same way those students who were born in small towns (22.4 %) and lived in the same locality constitute 6.1 percent of the total number of students of the Academy. It seems that there is more emigration to larger cities during the education of students. 58.7 percent of the students were born in cities and continued their lives in cities as they progressed in their educational status. The table also shows that most of the students (92.3 %) come to live in cities upon graduating from the high school. They live in the atmosphere of a city culture. It is known that urban settlements are characterized by size, density and heterogeneity, which in combination provide the basis for a complex division of labour and fundamental changes in the nature of social relationships which had rendered ties of kinship less important and replaced them with relationships of an instrumental, transitory and superficial character (Jary and Jary, 1991:681). We may assume from this that most students have the norms and values of a city culture in their lives. However it should not be forgotten that these norms and values should be thought of in the Turkish culture context.

6) Distribution According to Provinces and Regions

We think it is also important to know in which province and region students were born. This may help in determining the policy of the Academy, if any, in choosing the students in accordance to their provincial and regional backgrounds. When we consider the same problem with regard to the Military Academy, the following remark is made by Birand:

"The military is sensitive to choose students from every province and region. Although it is hard to maintain this policy yet it is true that there is at least one student from each province of Turkey, but majority of the students in the Academy come from the 17-20 provinces and towns or villages belonging to these provinces" (1986:32).

Our interview with the officials at the Academy has revealed that they do not maintain such a policy. However, this research shows that there are students from every province with the exception of one (Giresun). Table 7 provides the list of those provinces which have 15 or more students in the Academy with the corresponding percentages which will help to show the trends in the distribution of students by provinces.

Table 7 Distribution of the Students According to Their Place of Birth by Provinces*

<i>Provinces</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Adana	25	2.4
Afyon	18	1.7
Ankara	201	19.5
Balikesir	25	2.4
Bursa	16	1.5
Cankiri	18	1.7
Denizli	16	1.5
Eskisehir	26	2.5
Gaziantep	17	1.6
Isparta	15	1.4
Istanbul	67	6.4
Izmir	53	5.1
Kayseri	16	1.5
Konya	38	3.7
Manisa	20	1.9
Samsun	15	1.4
Sivas	21	2.0
Yozgat	20	1.9
Other Cities	327	31.5
Abroad	2	0.2
No Answer	85	8.2
Total	1041	100.0

* The table classifies individually these provinces which have 15 and more students at the Police Academy. The number of all provinces in Turkey was 67 at the time of data collection.

Table 7, above, shows that there is not a clear-cut accumulation of students from particular provinces. There are, however, more students from some of the provinces when compared with others. For example, 19.5 percent of the students are from Ankara; the second largest group (6.4 %) is from Istanbul. Besides these Izmir, Konya, Eskisehir, Adana, Balikesir, Sivas, Manisa and Yozgat have comparatively higher number of students of the Police Academy. However, when we consider the places of birth of the students it is hard to find a discernible pattern of distribution among provinces.

As for regions, Turkey is classically divided into five regions: Mediterranean, Black Sea, Eagean-Marmara, Central Anatolia, East and Southeast Anatolia. On the basis of this regional classification, Table 8, below, shows the distribution of the students among the regions.

Table 8 Distribution of Students According to Their Place of Birth by Regions.

<i>Regions</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Mediterranean	121	11.6
Black Sea	89	8.5
Eagean-Marmara	258	24.8
Central Anatolia	409	39.3
East and Southeast	77	7.4
Abroad and No Answer	87	8.4
Total	1041	100.0

Table 8 shows that 39.3 percent of the students come from the Central Anatolia region. The second largest group (24.8%) comes from the Eagean-Marmara Region. In this case Mediterranean, Black Sea, East and Southeast Anatolia Regions are represented with less number of students. Considering the fact that the Academy is located in Ankara which is the capital of Turkey, and is in Central Anatolia Region, it is reasonable for this region to be overrepresented. Therefore, more people from the same region have direct access to information about the Academy and thus it is easier for the people of this region to send their children to the Academy.

7) Admission to the Academy

Since application for admission to the Academy involves a career choice, it is important to find out why the students actually apply to the Academy. It is also important here to consider the result of some research done on this issue before interpreting our data. In 1971, a study which is unique in this issue carried out with 1 percent of population of the shanty towns (Gecekondu) in Ankara showed that 3.1 percent of the youth preferred a career in the police (Gokce, 1976:139). Some 24.9 percent of the sample preferred to become a teacher, 21.2 percent a medical doctor or pharmacist, 14 percent an engineer or architect, 7.5 percent a military officer, 4.7 percent an officer in government and 3.6 percent a judge or lawyer. Preference of other occupations was less than 2 percent. The data of another study carried out nationwide in 1984 showed that 9.4 percent of high school students, 0.6 percent of private high school students, 11.9 percent of vocational high school students and 3.7 percent of Imam Hatip School (religious high school) students prefer a police job as a career. The percentage of those who prefer this career in total population is 9.2 percent (Gokce, 1984:91). The same study also investigated the parents' career choice for their children and indicated that 3.7 percent of the mothers and 4.6 percent of the fathers wished for their children to select a police job as their occupation (Gokce, 1984:136). Gokce also indicates that both the students and the parents mutually agreed on this preference of the

career. It seems that the socio-economic situation of the families plays a major role in career choice (Gokce, 1984:86). Having salary both during police high school and Police Academy education, and the job guarantee after graduation make the police career very attractive for both students and parents.

We, however, must also point out in this context another crucial attitude towards the police profession. Since the police occupation, like the military, politics and religion, is sensitive to value judgements concerning the legitimacy of the economic and political system, its prestige is low in general (Gokce, 1984:90; see also Aral, 1977; Cingi-Kasnakoglu, 1980). This mostly come from the police public relationships. As Reiner (1992) states for Britain, there has never been a 'Golden Age' of police-society relationships in Turkey either. Although there is almost no reliable, scientific data on public-police relationships and public perception of the police, the interviews conducted with senior students, police officers and some people have shown that the police are more likely to be unpopular than any other governmental officers or civil servants.

In order to describe the students in the Academy better one has to look at the process they go through in their career selection. In the questionnaire, a question is directed to the students: "Did you become a police officer by your own choice?" 85 percent of the students replied positively implying that they have chosen their career willingly. On the other hand, 15 percent of the students gave a negative answer to the question. However there was another question directed to the ones who gave a negative answer: "Who played the most important role in your decision?". Some 78.3 percent of these students replied that a member of their family such as parents, brothers and sisters played the most important role. The rest of these students have similarly mentioned persons such as friends and relatives as the main influencers on their preference of this career. In order to check the existence of any occupational socialization they are asked if they have any police relatives. It is important to note here that 41.8 percent of the students have a police relative either in the family or among the relatives. Therefore it is possible to say that there is an occupational socialisation inside the family. Although the influence may be negative, positive, or simply 'realism-enhancing', as Fielding stated (1988:28), contact with police before joining as family member or kin has an important potential to influence the student's image of the occupation. The recruit contact with police is also high in U.K.(1988:28) and in U.S.A. (Van Maanen, 1974:88). It may be accepted as an international characteristic of police recruits.

Some 77 percent of the students of the Police Academy come from police high school; 16.9 percent from high school or from an equivalent school; 2.8 percent from the Police Organization and 3.3 percent of them are university graduates. This study shows that the majority of the students (77%) decided to become police officer after their junior high school education, aged 14-15. Their preference does not seem to be made with a conscious effort because of their earlier stages of age. It should not be forgotten that the students coming from police high school are obligated either to work as police officer or to enter the Police Academy. Since these students are paid for boarding and tuition if they do not choose the police profession then they are legally obligated to pay back all their expenses. On the other hand, if they choose to enter the Academy, boarding is provided and most of their expenses are paid. This is probably why the percentage in this regard is high. Selection of the occupation at earlier stages might bring problems in their future career, because when they become more involved they might realize that this was not actually the profession they hoped for. Indeed 44 percent of students answered 'yes' when we directed the question: 'Would you prefer to be in a different educational institution instead

of the Academy?.' Responses showed that only around half of the students found what they expected in this profession. We have interviewed some of the students and they indicated that they did not make their choice consciously and furthermore they prefer the Academy for financial reasons. Some of the senior students indicated in the interviews conducted with them that their profession is not a respectable one. They believe this because of some experiences on the street or in daily life that provide data on this issue. A student, even, made a statement as follows:

When I have an off day from the Academy, I definitely want to wear my civilian clothes instead of my uniform. Otherwise, I mostly feel uncomfortable in social circumstances, because everybody keeps a distance from us. They do not want to talk and communicate with us as they do with others, and everybody looks at us strangely. I do not understand why they behave like this. We are also Turks and their citizens, and are educated to preserve them. This is not only my judgement. You can talk with other students as well. I am sure that you will have the similar answers and feelings on this issue...(M).

Moreover, they think that the working conditions of police profession are heavy and dangerous in comparison of the other governmental jobs, and they could have done better in another profession. In other words, career choice which is made under the influence of family and attractive financial support even during education is reevaluated by the students when the city life and culture exhibits other alternatives to them.

Among the 454 students who prefer to be in another university, 41.2 percent of them preferred to be a student in Ankara University, specifically at Faculty of Law; 12.1 percent preferred Middle East Technical University; 6.6 percent preferred Istanbul University; 6.4 percent Bosphorus University and 4 percent of them Hacettepe University. The rest of the students indicated that they preferred various universities in the country. This finding leaves us with a problem which seems to be a crucial issue to be studied in more detail and needs to be further investigated; what are the factors causing the students dislike of their profession, even though they will have the opportunity to reach the highest status in this occupation?

CONCLUSION

The Police Academy is the only academic institution which trains middle and higher level police officers for the needs of the General Directorate of Security in Turkey. The graduates of the Academy assume critical duties and crucial administrative tasks in the Security Organization. Therefore studying them is very important for the understanding of some parts of policing in Turkey.

In order to reveal the socio-economic background of the students a questionnaire was constructed and administered to all students. The findings demonstrate clearly that economic factors have an important bearing on choosing the police profession as a career. The future police elites in Turkey come mostly from middle and lower class families, although this requires further research and analysis. The high rate of unemployment and guarantee of a job in the police force leads students to choose this profession. This also explains the occupational socialisation in the family, i.e. contact with police as a family member or kin has important potential in influencing the student's image of the occupation. Besides this, although a high proportion of students choose to become police elites at the beginning, when they become more involved they realize this was not actually the profession they hoped for because, firstly, police occupation is not a respectable one and,

secondly, it has heavy and dangerous working conditions. They think they would have been better off in another profession. This means that an important proportion of the future police elites do not like their soon to be future occupation. They will work in this occupation because of a lack of other work opportunities, although there is no further sociological studies which provide data on this issue. This situation gives rise to a very important problem for the future of policing and police occupation in Turkey. In other words, how can a person become successful when he does a job that he does not like to deal with? This reality directs us to think about the recruitment process (Are the right persons being selected?), occupational education and policing policies in Turkey. More detailed studies should be conducted in these areas, and related policies should be reevaluated. Unfortunately, this requires a separate study.

Notes

- 1 *Assoc. Prof., Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University (M.E.T.U.), Ankara, Turkey; ** Ph.D. student, Department of Sociology, University of Surrey (U.K.). This research is supported by AFP 89-01-02-01 grant of M.E.T.U. The authors would like to thank Reccp Gultekin, vice president of Police Academy for his help in data collection and General Directorate of Police for the permission to conduct the research in the Academy, and also to thank Dr. Nigel Fielding for his valuable comments.
- 2 The composition of the ranks in the Organization can be given from the top as follows: General Director, Assistant General Director, Chairman of Department, Security Director (city, Emniyet Muduru), Security Director (town, Emniyet Amiri), Head Commissar (mostly chief of a police station), Commissar (mostly leader of a working shift in a police station), vice commissar (mostly leader of a small team or working group), ordinary police officer.
- 3 The second section of the questionnaire was about the "Perceptions and Expectations of Police Academy Students About the Instruction in Police Academy".
- 4 Special class consists of students who graduated from other Universities and wish to pursue a career in this security organization. These students are accepted after taking an examination and are subjected to a special training for one academic year. Then those who are successful after this training obtain the same status as the Academy graduates.
- 5 Unemployment rate in Turkey was 9.8% in 1988 (Source: SIS -State Institute of Statistics (DIE).
- 6 Non-monetary incomes and the incomes of other members in the family are not included here.
- 7 The increasing rate of population is 2.2 percent per annum (Brown, 1992:1). The average number of children is four. The consumer indexes are calculated by the State Institute of Statistics according to a family with four children. Therefore a family with three children was accepted as a small size family.

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