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Socioeconomic Profile of Students of Human Resources in Turkey and Their Occupational Expectations

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important results of the processes of information society is that it has radically changed the way we look at human resources. Man who produces and works with information has assumed a synergic role combining all other resources. This phenomenon has brought human resources to the foreground. Parallel to global developments, human resources management is rapidly developing in Turkey. It is becoming a part of strategic management, and HR managers are climbing to the top of organizations.

The results of a recent research conducted on students of Human Resources Program at Gebze Vocational School of Kocaeli University, which is the first undergraduate school in the field of human resources in Turkey, highlight the process of professionalization of human resources management, training and education of professionals, and the future of this profession.

INTRODUCTION

Today our world is passing through the processes of information society brought about by tremendous developments seen in information and communication technologies. Concurrent with those developments globalization, which eliminates borders in terms of free movement of goods, services and information, has taken competition from national to international dimensions.

The fact that efficient use of information and communication technologies has become the sole prerequisite for success is radically changing the way all students of human resources view education and business life. Nowadays education has gone beyond the school walls and turned into life-long training. In this sense, it is extremely important that candidates choosing human resources management as a career should gain a level of competency to assume tasks and produce works not only in national standards but also global dimensions.

Human resources management (HRM) is newly developing profession in Turkey. Though education is also provided on post graduate and doctorate levels, a great majority of executives are not professionals who have specifically taken undergraduate or graduate degrees in human resources. Since Gebze Vocational School of Kocaeli University is the first institute on undergraduate level, the content of education and how it relates to employment have been found worthwhile for review in terms of socio-economic profile of students and their vocational expectations.

This research primarily aims to determine the importance, changing dimensions and vocational education of human resources as one of the new professions in Turkey as well as to highlight the "profession of human resources and profile of HR professionals" which have rarely become the subject of scientific studies.

Secondly, it aims to determine the socio-economic profile of HR students, their perception of human resources management and their vocational expectations through conducting a comprehensive study as a questionnaire on the students of Gebze Vocational School of Kocaeli University, which provides undergraduate education for HR professionals in Turkey, interpreting its results by statistical techniques and thus presenting a projection on the future of the profession of human resources. It is expected that the results of this research will guide further analytical and theoretical field studies.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN TERMS OF ITS MEANING AND SCOPE

Definition, Importance and Changing Dimensions of Human Resources Management

Human Resources Management (HRM) is both an academic theory and a business practice. The fundamental assumption of academic theory is that man is not a machine (Online, 1). On the contrary, he is the most valuable resource. Today's organizations are well aware of the synergic dimensions of having efficient human resources. Therefore, taking man, especially trained and creative man as its objective, HRM is a very significant

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activity through which organizations gain, develop, and retain employees with high qualifications, and thus turn into high performance organizations (Brown and Williams, 2003:20). As a term, human resources include all the employees within any organization from top management to unqualified employees at the lowest level (Kaynak et al, 2000:15). According to Aldemir et al, all the managers, employees, auxiliary work force, technical work force and advisors are also included (2001:21). Therefore, all the resolutions taken for managing the people working within the organization, the principles followed, strategies applied, activities carried out and methods employed are collectively expressed as human resources management (Örücü and Köseoğlu, 2003:7).

In this context, though similar expressions have been put forward by many writers, if we are to make a comprehensive definition, HRM may be defined as all the functions and activities that will ensure efficient management of human resources in a beneficial manner to the organization, individual and environment by complying with the laws in any organizational or environmental media (Kaynak et al., 2000:16). Man is the most dynamic element of working life. And working life is the sole area that is most affected by the changes and transformations brought about by the new millennium. There is man in the focal point of working life. HRM, which is the center of applications towards man, is extremely sensitive to changes.

Survival is proportional to competitiveness for today's organizations. Therefore, management authorities claim that survivors of the third millennium shall be organizations that are faster and more efficient than competitors (Kalder, 2000:5) Drucker says, "The most significant asset of the 21st century will be information". And man, who is able to generate and use information, exists in the center of the information age we are living in (Drucker, 1994:292).

Thus, man is encouraged to be productive and creative in order to produce the goods and services that will meet customer (human) requirements and expectations through limited resources in this global atmosphere of competition because "creativity" which is bestowed upon man is the cheapest way of obtaining added value out of existing assets. (Düren, 2000:98). The fundamental objectives of human resources management are to manage employees' skills and make efficient use of their capabilities for success.

It is an established fact that development of human resources is related to organizational performance in information economy (Nafukho et al., 2004:550). Thus, the results of efforts of human resources return to organizations as increased efficiency, profitability, and competitiveness. Research shows that an average increase of % 10 in the level of education of the work force brings an average of % 8,6 in the total factor of productivity. In contrast, an increase of % 10 in the capital stock–i.e. hardware value – only enhances productivity by % 3,4.

To summarize, the marginal value of investing in human asset is three times bigger than the marginal value of investing in machinery (Steward, 1997:93). This renders HRM extremely important and meaningful for organizations aiming superiority in competitiveness.

Human Resources Manager and Its Duties

Human resources management is nowadays brought beyond the classical personnel applications. In strategic sense, it is becoming the sole address of strategic roles and responsibilities such as integration of individual and organizational objectives, sharing of authorities and responsibilities, transformation of change into success, management of skills and competencies, management of learning, and harmonization of corporate strategies and human resources strategies. Sertain adds brand making and critical role in brand management as well (2005:92). On the other hand, parallel to globalization, HRM forms a critical dimension in management strategy of corporations working on international scale (Özgen et al., 2002:381).

All developments require focusing on human resources manager as well both on national and international scale. HRM is becoming conspicuous as an important occupation, and HR managers are increasingly becoming nominated for upper management of organizations.

According to the researches made by Society for Human Resources Management and The Bureau of National Affairs, one HRM expert is employed for every one hundred employees in USA (ArthurAndersen, 2000:25). Human resources management is in deed an exciting and dynamic profession. The complexity and critical importance of this profession require a great deal from an HR manager (Palmer, 1993:7).

An HR information system is established in organizations in order to collect, arrange, analyze and report information about individuals and works (Woods, 1997:93). It is vital to establish and implement this information

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system in order to be in control of human resources. Dealing with individuals within an organization requires vast knowledge and technical skills on why and how those people are working. In this sense, technical knowledge concerning wages and payments as well as comprehensive regulations knowledge about working life are also obligatory for execution of classical personnel functions.

In addition, HR management requires analysis of human behaviors and knowledge about the motives that drive people. An HR manager must also be a good communicator, and possess behavioral sufficiency and competency. The manager must bear executive responsibility when necessary in terms of planning of human resources in particular, and of recruiting and waging, performance management, career planning, training and development, corporate communications, suggestions, incentives, and establishment and improvement of HR information systems. Besides, an HR manager must at the same time be a good negotiator and expert in collective negotiations (Woods, 1997:307). On the other hand, he must assume a strategic role at every stage from adoption of Total Quality Management (TQM) to establishment and improvement of systems.

Those competencies provide significant strategic advantages for HR managers in achieving transformation within corporations, and render HR a vital part of strategic management of corporations. This allows for human resources managers to become promoted to upper management in corporations. In addition, it leads to fulfillment of expectations from an HR manager. The culture and mentality of the team controlling or managing an organization usually prevails that organization (Kalder, 2000:59). Now that upper managers from HRM background are replacing those who used to come from production, sales or finance background in the past, it is believed that organizational transformation of information society shall be facilitated under the leadership of HR managers.

VOCATIONAL PROFILE OF HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS

Job Definition of HR Professionals

HR professionals work under the department managers of human resources, personnel, industrial relations, administrative affairs, and quality in order to fulfill tasks and responsibilities related to the functions and activities of human resources and total quality management in organizations.

Organizational Tasks of HR Professionals

HR professionals are reliable partners in solving problems related to works and organization (Cohen & Bradford, 2003:141). In line with the vision, mission and objectives of an organization, they assume active roles and responsibility in the following fields:

- Execution of HR policy,
- Recruitment processes,
- Planning of work force,
- Establishment, management and development of performance management system,
- Arrangement and follow up of employee's rights,
- Planning, organization, execution, inspection and evaluation of training and development programs,
- Implementation of total quality management, and establishment and development of related systems,
- All processes of industrial relations,
- Establishment of healthy communication and flow of information among all the units within an organization, and between domestic and international customers,
- Establishment and organization of systems concerning health, safety, moral, motivational and social activities.

Tools Used by HR Professionals

HR professionals use various tools such as:

- Miscellaneous bureau equipment,
- Telephone, fax, computer, typewriter, photocopy machine,
- Documentation such as applicable laws, regulations and bylaws,
- All kinds of training materials.

Qualifications Required by the Profession of HRM

Some competencies expected from a candidate of HR profession:

- Has improved behavioral understanding,
- Has good command of Turkish and a foreign language at a minimum,
- Is able to express himself and persuade other,
- Is quick to perceive details,
- Follows up legal procedures and changes,
- Can establish empathy,
- Observes confidentiality and keeps secrets,
- Is apt for bureau works.

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Working Atmosphere and Conditions of HR Professionals

An HR professional works in quiet, clean, well illuminated, healthy and closed atmosphere in adequate working conditions. His primary concern of work and responsibility is the entire employees within his corporation. Therefore, he is constantly in communication and interaction with the human resources of the corporation in managing all the processes related to his work. And thus, his working area is not limited to office atmosphere only.

EDUCATION OF HR PROFESSIONALS

Training of HR Professionals

In Turkey the institutional infrastructure concerning professional education and training of HR professionals is still too weak. It can not be said that there is an established curriculum for human resources programs on the international scene either (Sincoff & Owen, 2004:80).

In addition to the courses and seminars to eliminate lack of knowledge of field professionals, the annual HR congresses provide a great deal of exchange of information. Besides, it can be said that individual and corporate websites have an important role in sharing knowledge (Kohl et al, 2004:339). The organized education on this profession in Turkey is carried out through "human resources" programs of vocational higher education institutes of universities. The human resources program given at Gebze Vocational School of Kocaeli University is the first in this field. There are also certificate programs arranged for graduate students. Post graduate and PhD programs are delivered academically within universities. It is claimed that leadership is learned at work rather than at school. It is true that working life has rather positive effects on development of managers and leaders (Sharkey, 2003:67). However, we believe that starting work after certain theoretical education has innumerable benefits. HR training at whatever level is extremely useful for HR professionals starting business life. Research shows that trained individuals exhibit enhanced competency in communication, helpful nature to others, professionalism, self appreciation, and self confidence. Students of human resources, too, feel luckier than other students (Madsen, 2004:331).

Preliminary Requirements for Professional Education in Human Resources

Graduates of vocational high schools with a major in bureau services, bureau management and secretariat, legal secretariat, librarianship, management and commercial secretariat, and secretariat may apply for an under graduate HR program without an exam, and if they posses the necessary requirements they may be admitted.

On the other hand, graduates of branches other than those specified for transfer without an exam, or graduates of foreign language based high schools, graduates of Anatolian High School and classic high schools may be entitled for additional admission after transfer without an exam according to their choices and results of university entrance exam.

Duration and Content of Vocational Education of Human Resources

The duration of education is two years after high school or similar institute. Education involves topics such as:

- Business Management,
- General Economy,
- Organizational Behavior,
- Management and Organization,
- Total Quality Management,
- Basic Concepts of Law,
- Labor Economy and Industrial Relations,
- Presentation Techniques,
- Human Resources Management,
- Public Personnel Management,
- Training Management,
- Strategic Human Resources Management,
- Human Resources Planning,
- Labor and Social Security Law,
- Communication and Behavioral Competency,
- Customer Relations Management,
- Time Management,
- Statistics,
- Employee Health and Job Safety,
- Public Relations,
- Crisis and Stress Management,
- Contemporary Management Techniques,
- Brand Making and Brand Management,
- Social Responsibility,
- Turkish,
- Atatürk's Principles and History of Revolutions,
- English and Vocational English,
- Basic Computer,
- Computers in Human Resources Management (Online, 2).

Career Development of HR Professional

HRM is a very dynamic field. This dynamism can result in rapid increase of knowledge, and thus outdate the existing skills and knowledge in a very short time (Erdoğmuş, 2003:25). Outdated knowledge and skills is a tricky trap for career planning of HR professionals. One way of escaping from this trap is to benefit from external training when necessary on the corporate scale to be provided in line with the analysis of training needs (Şencan and Erdoğmuş, 2001:84-85). HR professionals can also climb the corporate stairs rapidly is they follow new developments individually after graduation and adopt constant improvement as a principle.

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HRM professionals start working life at the lowest level of departments such as HR, Personnel and Administrative Affairs, Quality Management, Training, and Industrial Relations. An HR professional may also find a job as a specialist at departments such as HR, Personnel and Administrative Affairs, Training, Waging Management, or as a Quality Manager or Quality Assurance Representative, and be promoted to management of those departments in later stages of career. They may be nominated for upper management (such as a general manager or assistant general manager) as well by completing graduate degree in business management and similar areas after succeeding in vertical transfer exam arranged by the Institute of Selection and Placement of Students in Higher Education, and then continuing with further education.

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHOD OF RESEARCH

Purpose

The "Human Resources" under graduate program delivered at Gebze Vocational School of Kocaeli University, as we have said earlier, is the first of its kind in Turkey. The HRM program has been responded with great interest since its start in 2001, and the graduates did not experience employment problems seriously. Due to increasing importance of HR it is believed that graduates will climb corporate stairs to upper management in today's world where HR professionals are nominated for a position like General Manager. Since it was the first program in Turkey, a survey was conducted to determine the socioeconomic level of students preferring this department, the type of high school they come from, and the factors affecting their preference. One other target was to find out the expectations of students from business life and human resources profession.

Scope

All the first and second year students of organized and secondary education at Gebze Vocational School of Kocaeli University were included in this research. It is believed that this first research in its field will inspire future researches in Turkey.

Method

The research was conducted by survey on 143 first and second year students admitted to organized and secondary education at Gebze Vocational School. 25 survey questions designed in line with the purpose of this research were distributed to students to be answered individually. Our primary concern in preparing the questions was to arrange them in short, lucid and understandable expressions to allow for easy and healthy answers. Thus, all the students assisted in achieving the purpose of this research by answering all the questions. We employed statistical techniques in classifying, grouping, processing and evaluating the survey. We applied scientific methods in arranging the tables. In order to see and perceive the phenomenon more clearly in the tables prepared, we referred to percentages as well as number of students according to various criteria. In general we took ratios into consideration when making comparisons based on "the principle of equality of horizontal and vertical ratios" in calculating the ratios. When interpreting the survey results according to proportional values we tried to remain impartial and realistic, sticking to the answers given. Considering that some comparisons made on the ratios did not provide sufficient information on certain subjects, we analyzed cases that are directly related to the purpose by detailed statistical tests. We employed the model of "difference test between ratios" in comparing the cases. Since the number of subjects was more than 30 ($n > 30$), we used Z test because the sampling range of $x_1/n_1 - x_2/n_2$ statistic, average $\mu = p_1 - p_2$ and standard deviation is close to the normal curve which is:

$$\sigma_{x_1/n_1 - x_2/n_2} = \sqrt{\frac{p_1(1-p_1)}{n_1} + \frac{p_2(1-p_2)}{n_2}}$$

We tested $p_1 = p_2$ in comparisons. In this respect, we acted on the assumption of H_0 hypothesis: $p_1 = p_2 = p$. That is, we started the analysis by accepting the two ratios equal. Since we will apply double tail test, we formed our H_1 hypothesis as: $p_1 \neq p_2$. Thus, our hypotheses are: $H_0 : p_1 = p_2$ and $H_1 : p_1 \neq p_2$ dir. In difference test between ratios, we used the formula:

$$Z = \frac{\frac{x_1}{n_1} + \frac{x_2}{n_2}}{\sqrt{p(1-p)\left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right)}}$$

. In the formula, it is: $p = \frac{x_1 + x_2}{n_1 + n_2}$.

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The priority level was taken as 0.05 in our tests. Thus, we determined meaningfulness of our test at a probability of % 95. At the priority level of 0.05, the Z value at each tail is between $-1,96$ and $+1,96$. So, when $Z<-1,96$ or $Z>1,96$, we refused H_0 hypothesis. When $-1,96 \leq Z \leq 1,96$ we accepted H_0 hypothesis.

Data Analysis and Findings

As stated earlier under the heading "Method", our subjects consisted of 143 first and second year students at Human Resources Program. 21 % was male, and % 79 female. 52.6 % was taking this program as a first-time higher education, and % 47.4 second-time. (Table 1)

Table 1: Level of education and distribution according to classes

Level of education / Classes	First-Time Higher Education		Second-Time Higher Education		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1st Class	52	36.4	24	16.8	76	53.2
2nd Class	23	16.2	44	30.6	67	46.8
TOTAL	75	52.6	68	47.4	143	100.0

On the other hand, % 69 of 75 students of first-time higher education was in the first class, and % 31 was in the second class. % 35.2 of the students of second-time higher education was in the first class, and % 64.8 was in the second class. Thus, % 53.2 of a total of 143 students was in the first class, and % 46.8 was in the second class. Age range of students: % 4.9 was between 17 and 18 years of age; %50.3 was between 19 and 20; % 39.9 was between 21 and 22, and % 4.9 was above 23. (Table 2)

Table 2: Distribution according to age groups

Age groups	Frequency	Percentage
17 - 18	7	4.9
19 - 20	72	50.3
21 - 22	57	39.9
23 +	7	4.9
TOTAL	143	100.0

Thus, % 90 of the subjects ranged between 19 and 22 years of age, and % 4.9 ranged between 17 and 18 and above 23. We found out that % 2.1 (3 students) came from villages, % 2.1 (3 students) came from towns, % 17.5 (25 students) came from districts, % 18.2 (26 students) came from cities, and % 60.1 (86 students) came from big cities. This shows that a great majority came from metropolitan cities. Table 3 shows the range of students according to monthly income. As is seen in the table, % 7 had monthly income less than 400 YTL while % 55.3 had monthly income between 500 – 1200 YTL. The ratio of students above 1200 YTL was % 37.7.

Table 3: Distribution according to monthly income

Income groups	Frequency	Percentage
- 400	10	7.0
400 – less than 800	40	28.0
800 - less than 1200	39	27.3
1200 – less than 1600	28	19.6
1600 – less than 2000	14	9.8
2000 +	12	8.3
TOTAL	143	100.0

These ratios also showed that almost 2/3 of the students had monthly income below 1200 YTL.

Table 4: Distribution according to monthly expenditure

Expenditure groups	Frequency	Percentage
- 50	2	1.4
50 – less than 100	22	15.4
100 – less than 200	50	35.0
200 – less than 300	40	28.0
300 – less than 400	17	11.9
400 +	12	8.3
TOTAL	143	100.0

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We saw that more than % 50 of the students had monthly expenditure less than 200 YTL and % 20 above 300 YTL (Table 4). We determined that % 52.4 (75 students) had working fathers, % 4.9 (7 students) had working mothers, and only % 15.4 (22 students) had both parents working. The number of students in whose families there were other members working was 39, which corresponded to % 27.3 of the total.

Table 5: Distribution according to supporters

Support	Frequency	Percentage
Entirely by family	80	55.9
Family + credit, scholarship, etc.	53	37.1
Employment	4	2.8
Family support + employment, etc.	3	2.1
Employment, credit, scholarship, etc.	3	2.1
TOTAL	143	100.0

Table 5 shows how students are supported. % 55.9 of the students is supported entirely by their families, and % 37.1 by their families and credit, scholarship, etc. % 7 of the students is supported by employment, family, credit, scholarship, etc.

Table 6: Distribution according high school

School	Frequency	Percentage
State High School	45	31.5
Industrial Vocational High School	1	0.7
High School of Commerce	35	24.5
High School for Islamic Clergymen	13	9.1
College – Anatolian High School	10	7.0
Foreign Language Based High School	27	18.9
Anatolian Vocational High School For Girls	12	8.3
TOTAL	143	100.0

% 31.5 of the students at human resources program is graduates of State High Schools, % 24.5 of High Schools of Commerce, % 18.9 of Foreign Language Based High Schools, % 9.1 of High Schools for Islamic Clergymen, % 8.3 of Anatolian Vocational High Schools For Girls, and % 7.0 of Colleges, Anatolian High Schools and Science Schools. There is also one graduate of Industrial Vocational High School. In summary, % 56 of the students at human resources program came from State High Schools and High Schools of Commerce while the rest came from various high schools. Table 7 shows the reasons why our students chose to study at Gebze.

Table 7: Distribution according reasons of preference

Reasons of preference	Frequency	Percentage
Desired department	83	58.0
Proximity	16	11.2
Industrial town	6	4.2
By accident	38	26.6
TOTAL	143	100.0

% 58 of our students said that they chose to study at Gebze because Gebze Vocational School had the desired department. % 11.2 said their reason of preference was proximity. % 4.2 pointed out Gebze was an important industrial town. And finally, % 26.6 chose this school by accident. What is significant is that the majority of students preferred Gebze because of the desired department.

Table 8: Distribution according type of admission

Type of admission	Frequency	Percentage
University entrance exam	72	50.3
Additional quota	50	35.0
Transfer without exam	17	11.9
Horizontal transfer	4	2.8
TOTAL	143	100.0

% 50.3 was admitted to Human Resources Program by university entrance exam, % 35.0 by additional quota, % 11.9 by transfer without exam, and %2.8 by horizontal transfer. (Table 8)

As a result of our research, we determined that % 32.2 had marked the program as the first preference, % 18.9 among the first three preferences, % 23.1 among the fourth to seventh, % 6.3 among the eighth to twelfth, and % 4.9 as the first at undergraduate level (Table 9). % 14.6 of the students had marked it as the 13th or later preference.

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Table 9: Distribution according preference

Preference	Frequency	Percentage
First preference	46	32.2
First preference at undergraduate level	7	4.9
First 3 preferences	27	18.9
4^{th} – 7th preferences	33	23.1
8^{th} – 12th preferences	9	6.3
13th and later preferences	21	14.6
TOTAL	143	100.0

According to our research, % 66,4 said they chose Human Resources Program by their own decision, % 25.2 partially by their own decision and partially for other factors; % 1.4 against their decision, and % 7.0 by accident. This shows that more than % 90 chose this program by their own decision and for other factors. (Table 10)

Table 10: Distribution according decision of preference

Decision of preference	Frequency	Percentage
By their own decision	95	66.4
Partially by their own decision and partially for other factors	36	25.2
Against their decision	2	1.4
By accident	10	7.0
TOTAL	143	100.0

We prepared a question with five options in order to find out our students' opinions on what they wished to do after graduation, and the results are indicated in Table 11.

Table 11 Opinions about post graduation

Opinions	Frequency	Percentage
Complete the graduate degree	80	55.9
Reenter university entrance exam	22	15.4
Start working	21	14.7
Attend vocational development courses	17	11.9
Education is satisfactory	3	2.1
TOTAL	143	100.0

More than half of the students (% 55.9) said they wished to complete the graduate degree. % 15.4 said they wanted to enroll another department by reentering the university entrance exam after graduation. % 14.7 wanted to engage in business life, and % 11.9 thought of attending vocational development courses. Only 3 students (% 2.1) considered the education given at this program was satisfactory.

As shown in Table 12, more than half of the students (% 54.5) want to work in private sector. % 29.4 wants to work at a job that is related to the education given, % 5.6 any job, % 5.6 public sector, % 3.5 start their own businesses in this field and % 1.4 adopt another profession or work at another type of work.

Table 12: Business sectors they wish to work in after graduation

Sectors	Frequency	Percentage
Private sector	78	54.5
Any job related to the education given	42	29.4
Public sector	8	5.6
Any job	8	5.6
Start his own business in this field	5	3.5
Adopt another profession	2	1.4
TOTAL	143	100.0

% 81.8'i (117 students) said they had made a good decision by choosing Human Resources Program, and % 14.7 (21 students) said they could have made a better preference at undergraduate level. % 35 (5 students) did not comment on choosing Human Resources Program.

Table 13: Advantages of this program in terms of getting promoted in working life

Advantages	Frequency	Percentage
Advantages in getting promoted to executive levels	80	55.9
Advantages may vary according to open positions and career planning	48	33.6
May provide no advantages	15	10.5
TOTAL	143	100.0

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As seen in Table 13, % 55.9 of the students pointed out that Human Resources Program will provide significant advantages in getting promoted to executive levels in particular. % 33.6 stressed that advantages might vary according to open positions and career planning, and % 10.5 thought this program might not provide any advantages in working life. We also aimed to find out about our 143 students' opinions on the wages they would get after graduation, and wanted them to make comparisons about individuals working especially at accounting or finance departments. The responses are indicated in Table 14. More than half of the students said that they thought they might get better wages than people working at accounting or finance departments. Almost half of the students said it would not be different from the wages of people working at other departments. 6 students said they might get lower wages than the people working at accounting or finance departments.

Table 14: Opinions on levels of income

Departments	Frequency	Percentage
Better wages than accounting or finance departments	73	51.0
No privileges over other departments	64	44.8
Lower wages than accounting or finance departments	6	4.2
TOTAL	143	100.0

% 68.5 (98 students) said they viewed Human Resources Program as the profession of the future. % 30.1 pointed out that this program's role might change in time, and it might even become more significant. 2 students emphasized that Human Resources Program would lose its significant in the future.

CONCLUSION

We can summarize the results of the research conducted on 143 students of Human Resources Program as follows:

% 55.2 of our students was between 17 and 20 years of age, and % 44.8 was 21 and above. % 32.2 of our subjects stated that Human Resources Program was their first preference. According to the statistical test we employed, younger students chose this program as the first preference, and students of 21 years of age or above generally chose as later preferences. (Z=0,97 and P>0,05). This shows that there is a significant relationship between age and preference. % 66.4 of the students preferred this program by their own decision while % 25.2 partially by their own decision and partially for other factors.

% 35.0 of the students has monthly income less than 800 YTL while % 46.9 has monthly income ranging between 800-1600 YTL. The ratio of students with monthly income that is above 1600 YTL is only % 18.1. On the other hand, % 55.9 aims to complete the graduate degree after HR Program. We statistically determined that there was a relationship between the level of income and desire to complete the graduate degree. As a result of the test we found out that students wished to engage in working life after completing the graduate degree due to their low levels of income in general. Besides, we determined a strong relationship between income up to 1200 YTL and enrollment with the desire to complete the graduate degree. (Z=1,10 and P>0,05).

% 54.4 of the students had a working father, % 4.9 had a working mother, and % 15.4 had both parents working. % 55.9 was entirely supported by their families, and % 37.1 was supported by their families, credits, scholarships, and employment.

% 54.5 of our students wished to work in private sector while only % 5.6 in public sector. % 3.5 pointed out that they wanted to start their own businesses in this field. According to the statistical test, we determined a very significant difference between the ratios of students wishing to work in private and public sectors (Z=9,1 and P<0.001). This shows that students prefer private sector more in working life. % 18.1 had monthly income above 1600 YTL and % 3.5 wanted to set up their own businesses. The statistical test indicates that students with a higher income want to start their won businesses after graduation. (Z=1,79 and P>0,05). There is a meaningful relationship between high income and desire to start own business.

In our research more than half of the students expressed that the education given would prove advantageous in getting promoted to executive levels.

Again more than half of the students claimed that they might receive more wages than individuals working at other departments. On the other hand, almost all the subjects emphasized that human resources management would be the profession of the future.

As a result, we can say that the majority of students preferred HR program consciously, however they find the under graduate program insufficient and wish to complete graduate degree before engaging in business life. They prefer working in private sector. Though there is a new trend in human resources, a small minority consider setting up their own business. The majority believe human resources will gain more importance in the future, and in this respect, we can add that their occupational expectations in terms of career planning and waging management in particular are quite high.

As a result of all the theoretical evaluations conducted, changes seen in business life, trends of the information society, results of this comprehensive research and expectations of students, we can say that aspiration of HR professionals for upper management is in line with the approach of "future management" because we hold the opinion that the best representative of corporate and management culture in 21st century will be human resources. Corporations which do not pay strategic importance to human resources management will have to bear the adverse affects of this attitude in the near

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future (Barutçugil, 2004:12). When this is considered on international scale, the importance of human resources and HRM is becoming more and more obvious. Upgrading human resources education to four years of academic study will both meet the general demand of students, and their expectations to reach upper management in a short time. We believe that vertical transfer to faculty of business management will be beneficial for human resources professionals. Thus, graduates will be fully equipped with intensive knowledge on human resources at the end of four years of education in business management, and become specialists in business management which will facilitate promotion to upper management.

Stating that human resources will be one of the most favorite professions in the future, Osman Özsoy reports that, with the spreading of Total Quality Management, human resources professionals who have good command of a foreign language and who can execute ISO 9000, 14000 applications are already much sought for (2001:143-146). This verifies the fact that HR graduates face fewer problems in finding jobs despite the bottle neck in current employment situation in Turkey. Despite all those developments signifying the importance of human resources there is a tremendous reality that must not be overlooked. Today most of the human resources managers come from financing, marketing or operational units rather than of human resources background (Enz-Fitz & Phillips, 2001:10). This situation should have remained in times when there was no specific education for human resources professionals. Fortunately, today we are educating students who are fully equipped with both theoretical and practical knowledge in human resources.

In conclusion, we wish to point out that the most important investment in a county is "investment in man". It is an established fact that trained work force has positive contribution to economy and nation as a whole. In this context, we believe that it will be highly beneficial if human resources program, which aim to supply trained, knowledgeable and experienced managers to Turkish economy, is upgraded to four years of graduate degree and students are encouraged to follow this program.

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