HUMAN RIGHTS REFLECTIONS OF ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION STUDENTS:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN PERCEPTION AFTER GEZİ PROTESTS

Ersin TURAN

Abstract

The central theme of this study is the level of knowledge and understanding of Human Rights concepts held by students in the Istanbul University Faculty of Communication. In keeping with the students' education on media and communication subjects, a sample survey was conducted in order to determine the extent to which the students have acquired a command of Human Rights discourses and, as communicator candidates, what kind of perceptions they hold regarding the scope of this subject within Turkey and in the world. Further, in order to deepen the research the results were compared to those of a similar study conducted 7 years earlier. The Human rights discourse is developing in the Political Science, Law and Women's Studies fields and it seems to be extending to nearly all the social science disciplines. However, in the eyes of the youth the image of Human Rights in Turkey appears not to have developed in a positive direction. This article therefore can and should be assessed as a comparison of Human Rights perceptions of the generation before Gezi and the university youth after Gezi. However, the study universe observes, within the frame of Human Rights concepts, the possible cultural and social changes that can occur among Turkish university students studying in the same university and having relatively the same education. Additionally, the young people in this study universe have their own observations about the Gezi protests, in part because of the close distance between the Faculty of Communication and Taksim.

Keywords: *Human Rights in Turkey, Academic Studies in Human Rights, Gezi Protests*

İSTANBUL ÜNİVERSİTESİ İLETİŞİM FAKÜLTESİ ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN YANSITTIKLARI İNSAN HAKLARI KAVRAMLARI: GEZİ PROTESTOLARI ÖNCESİ VE SONRASI DEĞİŞEN BAKIŞIN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ANALİZİ

Öz

İnsan Hakları kavramlarının neler olduğu ve bu kavramlar ışığında; İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi öğrencilerinden oluşan bir örneklemde, bu kavramları ne düzeyde anladıkları çalışmanın konusunun ana temasını oluşturmaktadır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin okudukları İletişim Fakültesi eğitimine uygun olarak medya ve iletişim alanındaki İnsan Hakları söylemlerine ne düzeyde hâkim oldukları, bu söylemleri ne düzeyde takip ettikleri ve iletişimci adayları olarak Türkiye'de ve dünyada bu konu kapsamında nasıl bir algıları olduğunu belirlenmeye çalışıldı. Bu aşamada, 7 yıl öncesinde yapılmış olan çalışmayla kıyaslanmasıyla; araştırmaya derinlik kazandırmak ve bilimselliğin tekrarlanabilirliğini göstermek amaçlanmıştır. Siyaset, Hukuk ve Kadına yönelik alanlarda gelişen İnsan Hakları söylemleri toplumsal olan her alanda konuşulmaya başlamış gözükmektedir. Elbette bu gelişmeler ışığında bile Türkiye'de İnsan Hakları hakkında bir ilerleme imajı gençlik nezrinde pozitif bir gelişime uğramamıştır. Makale, bu nedenlerle de Gezi öncesi kuşak ile Gezi sonrası üniversite gençliğinin İnsan Hakları algı karşılaştırması da olarak değerlendirilebilir ki değerlendirilmesi de gerekir. Ancak çalışma evreni aynı okulda okuyan ve aynı eğitime sahip, Türk üniversite gençleri arasında meydana gelebilecek kültürel ve sosyal değişimlerin neler olduğunu İnsan Hakları kavramı çerçevesinde karşılaştırmaya tutarak gözlemlemektedir. Ayrıca bu çalışma evrenimizin gençleri, İletişim fakültesinin Taksim'e yakın konumu nedeniyle Gezi protestolarına bağlamında şu veya bu şekilde kendi gözlemlerine sahip olmaktadırlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Türkiye'de İnsan Hakları, İnsan Hakları Konusunda Akademik Çalışmalar, Gezi Protestoları*

[*] Res. Asst. Dr., İstanbul University, Faculty of Communication, Department of Journalism, eturan@istanbul.edu.tr

GİRİŞ

The Gezi Park protests in our country, one among a series of social movements in the world that begin with Egypt and one that was to claim its place in history, caused debates among all relevant and irrelevant social environments. Human Rights concepts constituted the basis of these debates. During this process it was observed that, while each of the parties considered that they were in the right, contradictions arose when they criticized parties in other countries that were in the same position as themselves. The primary purpose of this study is not to explain the Gezi Protests. It was planned as a survey-based study in which the results would be compared with a similar study published in 2006, "Human Rights in the Agenda of the University Youth". However, in view of the fact that the student profile is expected to change over a period of seven years, it was decided to wait before undertaking the new study in order to prevent repetition of student participants in the survey and carry out a study with a new university generation. At the time that we decided to again test the approach of the youth on Human Rights Concepts, the Gezi Protests had taken its place as a social movement that had increased interest in Human Rights and left its distinct mark on the period; hence it could not be excluded. In conducting the survey, in order not to distract attention, care was taken to avoid digressing from questions common to both studies - with the exception of one or two additional questions that mention the Gezi Protests. These have been left out of the assessment but if repeated in a future study will be comparable.

In 2013, environmentalists conducted protests and pitched their tents in Gezi Park in an attempt to demonstrate their opposition to the structural changes, stop the public works that were going on and gain time before a court decision on the dispute. Police action to hinder this passive resistance with disproportionate force in front of the media and TV cameras sparked bigger and bigger protests, which turned into mass demonstrations against stiff and uncompromising discourses of the government of then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. In the face of increasingly rough police tactics, public participation in the country grew among the larger masses. It was a period that brought about various Human Rights discussions regarding the toughness of the police intervention. The Gezi Protests became an important political breaking point. Opponents versus government supporters began to base their criticisms on Human Rights concepts. The most important effect of this period is that the people were exposed to intense information regarding Human Rights concepts by both media and social media. During this phase, public authority vanished in the touristic area between Taksim and Beşiktaş. Three groups seized the lack of authority and formed a rebel zone where provocateurs as well as marginal groups were also free to circulate. The course continued with the government's call for its own voters to go into the streets for Rabia demonstrations. The protests that started when construction vehicles entered Gezi Park for destruction on May 27th ended with a police intervention on June 15th ("Gezi Parkı Protestoları," n.d.).

This article therefore can and should be assessed as a comparison of Human Rights perceptions of the generation before Gezi and the university youth after Gezi. However,

the study universe observes, within the frame of Human Rights concepts, the possible cultural and social changes that can occur among Turkish university students studying in the same university and having relatively the same education. Additionally, the young people in this study universe have their own observations about the Gezi protests, in part because of the close distance between the Faculty of Communication and Taksim.

Human Rights Concepts/Terminology

Human Rights have undergone various differentiations in the national and international literature. The primary ones are described as follows:

Classic Human Rights, or Protective Human Rights: These are individual rights and freedoms that protect the individual from the power and authority of the state and that cannot be overturned by the state. These rights can be called 'Negative Rights'. Classic Human Rights limit the powers of rulers in favor of the individual and protect the people. The first examples in history were the declarations of rights in the Magna Carta, the 1787 Constitution of the United States and the 1791 French Constitution (Kara, 2012: 57-63).

Separation of Individual Rights and Collective Rights: This concept represents rights that take in a much larger incorporated (nation) or unincorporated (public) collective structure. The biggest criticism regarding it argues that collective rights cannot exist unless there are individual rights. However, it is possible to say that the right of self-determination (*droit à l'auto-détermination*) in this context has benefited people referred to in Articles 1/2 of the UN Charter, who are mostly the colonial peoples of Africa and Oceania. Indeed, the UN General Assembly's decision No. 1514 dated 14 December 1960 bears the title "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples". Article 6 of the Charter closes all the doors to change of the borders. According to the article, any attempt targeting the national independence and territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with UN law ("Her Türlü Irk Ayrımcılığının...," 2015).

 Separation of Human Rights and Civil Rights: This separation finds its source in the August 20, 1789 French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, according to which human rights are birthrights and citizenship or civil rights are present at a rate regulated by positive law. Today, this separation has lost its validity because human rights are secured internationally at the present time (Tezcan et al., 2004: 16-21):

> Separation of Rights of Protection, Demand and Participation: According to the classification made by German lawyer Georg Jellinek, it is triple separation as rights of protection, claim rights and right of participation:
>
> Separation of Formal Rights and Actual Rights (Freedoms): A doctrine whose source is found in Marxism, it was presented by Marx as an alternative to the rights that he described as classic human rights of liberalism, or formal rights. This concept represents such rights as the right to have a job, to have a respectable life of real liberation from social exploitation.
>
> Quinary Separation as Individual, Political, Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights

and Duties: This separation was based on the international agreement on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights among UN member states that had been introduced in the UN General Assembly decision dated December 16, 1966. This concept penned by AKAD shows the similarities found in the 1961 Constitution of Turkey and the contents of this international agreement on civil rights (Tezcan et al., 2004: 16-21).

Separation of Human Rights as First, Second, and Third Generation Rights: First Generation Human Rights are considered as the rights regulated by Articles 1-21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and rights acquired in the historical process. The main ones are: right to life, privacy of domicile, private property, freedom of conscience and religion, political rights, the right to privacy, etc.

Second Generation Rights are economic, social and cultural rights. For instance, the right to science, the right to art, the right to education, etc.

Third Generation Human Rights were first put forward by Karel Varsak after the Second World War. It covers subjects such as sharing of the revenue to be obtained from ocean bottoms, Antarctica, outer space and the moon. It takes the human values as global, i.e., the right to peace, the right to food, right to communication, the right of self-determination, the right to receive humanitarian assistance, and environmental rights.

AIM AND METHODOLOGY

Aim

As noted above, human rights and studies in this field globally generally parallel those in our country. The Gezi Park resistance and protests have now become a part of history. Considerable documents, articles and publications about human rights violations were produced during this period. It is assumed in this study that there is a perceptual change in the 'Human Rights' values of the youth in the current period. Based on this assumption, the aim was to compare the results of a Human Rights survey conducted prior to the Gezi Protests and the results of a survey carried out during and after the protests and to assess the perspective on Human Rights.

After 2006, aside from the socio-political developments in Turkey, new developments occurred that affected young people and societies across the world. The most important topic is the prominence of the social media that came to the forefront in this period. With devices in almost everyone's hands that had not only telephone but also computer capability with Internet, connection developed at lightning speed without time and place limitations. The reason why such new developments emerged in the social events of the recent period is absence of time and place limitation on the Internet and all channels of communication -even on regime-controlled TV and radio channels and newspapers-, causing such breakthroughs as protester groups' getting organized on Twitter, photo sharing over Instagram and video sharing over Youtube The world behaved like a single social group on the Internet. Of course, it can be presented either as an innovative

social development or as a way of spreading, with terrifying effect, manipulations, disinformation and especially, actions of war on societies. Twitter was launched on March 26, 2006, in the year when our reference survey was carried out. Instagram was created on October 6, 2010 and Pinterest, which lets people socialize through their interest areas, in March 2010. Humanity had thus obtained the possibility to get and spread information over a single channel and make it possible for even the smallest ideological group to have the space to be heard.

In Turkey, after a one-party government was elected in 2001, economic stabilization and a political single-voice environment were established. When working with a generation that can remember the crisis period in 2006, we can say that, the youth in the 2013 study grew up in a single party political system and whatever their political preferences are, their critical view is oriented to this one-party government. In light of these developments, it follows that there is a new generation that thinks it cannot make itself be heard and whose Human Rights perceptions have been molded through these social media tools. Based on the data obtained from in this study, we will try to identify possible future changes and developments.

Within the framework of this general aim, answers to the following questions were sought with the pre-test, post-test comparison model:

1) In your opinion, which newspapers among the Print Media publish the most on the 'Human Rights

Discourse'?

2) In your opinion, which television channels among the Broadcast Media cover the 'Human Rights

Discourse' the most?

3) Which subjects in Turkey have been submitted to the European Court of Human Rights? Would you

give examples you know?

4) Do you know the websites that report on Human Rights subjects?

5) Do you know of any non-governmental organizations active on Human Rights?

6) In your opinion, which radio channels among the Broadcast media cover 'Human Rights Discourse'

the most?

7) In your opinion, in which fields are the subject of Human Rights discussed?

8) In your opinion, what are the first three countries in which human rights were protected?

9) In your opinion, what are the top three countries in which human rights are violated?

10) What do you pay attention to when evaluating the truth in a piece of news?

Methodology

The study has been carried out among the students of Istanbul University Faculty of Communication using the survey method and two-stage modeling. The students were asked 20 open-ended questions with multiple choice and one-word answers. Not all the questions asked in the survey were used in this article. The common questions that had been evaluated in the first article published in 2006 were evaluated comparatively in this study. Other questions will be assessed for use in an additional study. In 2006, the survey was applied to 132 students of which 78 were male and 54 were female; and in 2014, the survey was made on 230 students of which 104 were male, 4 were non-specifiers and 122 were female.

In the study, very different answers occur because of the knowledge variability of the individuals. The first three pieces of data that were mentioned most in replies to certain questions were subjected to tabular and interpretive assessment, without which it would otherwise be difficult to make a judgment from the plethora of information.

FINDINGS

The findings will be given according to the research questions as below.

Which newspapers among the Print Media publish the most on the 'Human Rights Discourse'?

The students name 37 different publications. Those that were named 3 or more times are subjected to ordering and comparison. According to the agenda of the students, the *Sözcü*, *Cumhuriyet* and *Hürriyet* newspapers published the most about Human Rights. Data in Figure 1 (...) indicate that *Sözcü* received 55 votes, *Cumhuriyet* 50, *Hürriyet* 35, *Radikal* 34, *Birgün* 24, *Milliyet* 19, *Aydınlık* 18, *Sol* 16, *Evrensel* and *Karşı* 9, *Sabah*, *Taraf* and *Zaman* 6, *HaberTürk* and *Özgur Gündem* 5, *Akşam* and *Posta* 4, *Akit*, *Azadiya Welat*, *Yeni Şafak* and *Yurt* 3 votes. When we evaluated the first three newspapers in terms of gender, the women considered *Hürriyet* as more prone to writing about human rights. There are two-three person variables for *Sözcü* and *Cumhuriyet* (Figure 1: 103).

It was observed that the *Radikal* newspaper had lost its lead to *Sözcü*, falling back to 4th place (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 159). Nevertheless, this regression of *Radikal* spans the student body of the Istanbul University Faculty of Communication; whereas *Radikal* was selected the best newspaper of 2013 in the "TOP 2013 Awards" held for the eighth time in 2014 by the Galatasaray University Business Club and awarded in 31 different fields. *Radikal* author Cüneyt Özdemir received the best columnist award. *Radikal* Editorial Coordinator Muhittin Danış, who accepted the award, made a speech on Human Rights and Gezi in the name of the newspaper saying ("2013'ün en iyi...," 2014):

> Ali İsmail Korkmaz was beaten to death last year during Gezi protests in Eskise-
> hir. The Eskisehir governor said that Korkmaz was beaten by his friends. However,

Radikal was a close follower of the event and revealed the images of police beatings. This year, again, Berkin Elvan, who was shot in the head with a gas canister, lost his life. In three different applications made to the institutions of the state, it was stated that there were no images about the day of the event. However, we have reached the first images about the day of the event yesterday. We will be a close follower of this event as well. As the *Radikal* family, we are dedicating this award primarily to Ali Ismail Korkmaz and Berkin Elvan and to our 8 young people who lost their lives in the Gezi protests.

Galatasaray University had elected *Radikal* as the top newspaper in 2012 as well.

Which television channels among the Broadcast Media cover the 'Human Rights Discourse' the most?

A total of 44 television channels were named in the survey. The rankings presented in the figures include those channels that were mentioned by three or more students. According to the results, taking the first three channels as base, the entire ranking of the former study, which was *NTV*, *CNNTurk* and *Kanal D*, changed with the exception of *CNNTurk* (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 160-161).

The results of the second study, undertaken in the first months of 2014, show that *Halk-TV* took the lead, *CNNTurk* maintained its position and *Ulusal Kanal* took the third place from *Kanal D*. In the new ranking, *NTV* and *Kanal D* dropped back to 4th and 5th places, respectively. Data were based on the following tally of votes: *Halk TV* 63, *CNNTurk* 36, *Ulusal Kanal* 30, *NTV* and *Kanal D* 18, *FoxTV*, 12, *Artı Bir* 9, *Star* and *IMC TV* 8, *BBC* 7, *ATV* 6, *CNN International* 5, *Samanyolu*, *Habertürk* and *Yol* 4, *Hayat*, *Show TV*, *TRT*, *El-Cezire* and *Sokak TV* 3. Evaluating in terms of gender, we can say that *Halk TV* made it to the top thanks to the women with 35 votes, compared to the men with 28 votes (Figure 2: 103).

Which subjects in Turkey have been submitted to European Court of Human Rights? Could you give examples you know?

While the three leading ECHR agenda subjects named were 'Turban' (religious headscarf), 'Torture' and 'Leyla Zana' (parliamentarian) in the reference study (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 163), the murder of Hrant Dink, the Roboski case and, again, the headscarf issue cases remained in the knowledge store of students in the current study. The case of President of Turkey Abdullah Gül's wife Hayrünnisa Gül (wearing a headscarf), which ranked 5th, is placed in the awareness ranking. When it is evaluated within the "Turban" category, it can be said that the turban issue is known among today's youth as the first ECHR case (Figure 3: …). Leyla Zana was remembered by one person and lost recognition as an ECHR case. Data were formed according to the votes as follows: Hrant Dink 13, Robosky and Headscarf 10, Abdullah Öcalan 9, Hayrünnisa Gül 8, Torture and Ergenekon Prisoners 7, Uğur Kaymaz 6, Madımak 4, Armenian Genocide, Press Commission, Dersim and Long Detentions 3. In general, we can say that the rate of response

from 230 people is low. The headscarf is on the agenda of the women with 6 votes and Hrant Dink is another prominent subject with 8 votes of men (Figure 3: 104).

Do you know the websites actively reporting about on Human Rights?

In the study, significant changes are observed on this subject in the comparison with the recent period. It can be said that website names made progress in terms of diversity and numbers, but website recognition has not improved even though our young people spend much more time on the Internet. However, in addition to bianet.org, the twitter and change.org sites which were named for the first time in the second study have ranked among the top three. In addition, ihd.org, which had been mentioned in the former study, was not named at all. The websites by votes are as follows: Change.org 7, Twitter.com 4, Bianet 3, T24.com 2; receiving 1 vote each were ANF, Sendika.org, Facebook, İmza.la, UNICEF, Radikal, Amnesty.org, Mazlumder.org and İHH. Change.org came first with 6 votes by women. The sparse number of responses to this question from among 230 people surveyed may be interpreted as an indication that young people do not use Internet on this or similar subjects. The sparsity of answers does not allow an evaluation over gender (Figure 4: 104).

Twitter's coming to the forefront as a website active in the field of Human Rights is an important social perception. The youth have stated that Twitter, a platform of freedom of expression, is itself a website active on Human Rights. This reveals the website's position in the social perception while it was active in the period when the study was being carried out. The website was banned by TIB (the Telecommunications Ministry) according to a decision of the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, dated 20.03.2014 ("Twitter gece yarısı…," 2014). The ban was removed on April 2nd, 2014 as a result of an agreement between Twitter executives and the government. The removal of this ban was welcomed in Europe as well ("Avrupa'dan İlk Yorum…," 2014).

Do you know of any non-governmental organizations active on Human Rights?

In this study, the names of 43 non-governmental organizations were written by the students. Among these, fan groups and football teams such as Çarşı, Genç Fenerliler and Fenerbahçe were ranked apart from NGOs. The NGOs with 3 or more mentions were enumerated in the figures. While Amnesty International ranked first, the same organization is seen as third in the former study. The Human Rights Association (IHD) dropped back from first to second place (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 161). Although the number of participants was increased from 132 to 230 in the second study, the number of respondents to the question decreased and the recognition of 37 people in the first study dropped to 20 in the second study. Regarding Amnesty International, there was an increase in recognition from 2 to 21 people. We can say that women led in mentioning Amnesty. Another positive development on this question is that 43 different NGOs as compared to 4 in the first study were mentioned. The votes are as follows: Amnesty In-

ternational 21, İHD 20, UNICEF 17, Mor *Çatı* 13, MazlumDer 8, ECHR 7, IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation 6, Turkey Human Rights Foundation and LGBT Solidarity Association 5, UNESCO, UN and WHO 4 (Figure 5: 105).

In your opinion, which radio channels among the Broadcast media cover 'Human Rights Discourse' the most?

The results from this question show that *Best FM* moved to the lead from its former 6th position. It can be said that over the course of 7 years the other two radio channels in the top three, *Açık* and *Özgür*, still use the human rights discourse and did not lose the recognition of the students. 24 different radio channels were named in the study, whereas 12 were named by the students in the former study (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 161). Thus, it would not be wrong to say that the radio era is not over. The vote results were as follows: *Best FM* and *Açık Radio* 5, *Özgür* and *Yön Radio* 4, *Show Radio* 3. With the rise in mobile phones ownership, radio recognition has increased as well. Although the channel most mentioned among 230 people was not preferred by more than 5 people, this should not be interpreted as meaning the young people do not listen to radio. We asked about radio channels in terms of their human rights discourses. Therefore the only conclusion to make is that radio channels do not carry out a mission for the sake of social education or raising awareness. (Figure 6: 105).

In your opinion, in which fields are the subject of Human Rights discussed?

Human Rights discourse is used in 40 different fields according to the students, whereas in the previous study, 4 different fields were focused on, which is an interesting development in itself: the votes were as follows: Press 59, NGOs 42, Universities 23, Parliament 7. The answer parameter used in the previous study (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 166) was developed and more detailed data acquired; the top votes in the second study are as follows: Politics 43, Law 34, Women's Rights 24, Policy 20, Freedom of Expression 16, Social Life 12, Social Security and War 11, Racism, Education and Children 9, Economy and Social Media 8, Press 6, Right to Live 5, Religion and the Homeless 4, the Right to Privacy, Health and International Relations 3 (Figure 7: 106). In brief, the issue of Human Rights has gained a foothold in our lives as a discourse that is progressively more understood and used. Politics is an area that the men indicated interest in (27 votes) whereas the areas of Law (24) and Women's Rights (15) come to the forefront among the women (Figure 7: 106).

In your opinion, what are the first three countries in which Human Rights were protected?

According to the students, Turkey has dropped back to 15th place in Human Rights protections, receiving 14 votes from among 203 respondents. Turkey received only 1 vote

from among the women. This result, along with the results from the following question, points to the situation of women in the society. In the eyes of the youth, Turkey, which was 13th in the previous study, appears to have regressed in the ranking of countries in which Human Rights are protected (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 167). France has dropped back to 10th place compared to the previous study, with Sweden, Switzerland and France at top ranking. The vote results are as follows; Norway 80, Sweden 71, Switzerland 66, England 56, Holland 41, Germany 36, USA 33, Canada 25, Denmark 24, France 22, Finland 22, Japan 7, Australia 6, Belgium 5, Turkey, North Korea, New Zealand and Cuba 4, Syria, Italy and Uruguay 3 (Figure 8: 106).

In your opinion, what are the top three countries in which human rights are violated?

In the previous study Turkey and Iran were second and third on the list and maintained their places while Iraq has dropped back from first to fourth place. According to the observations of participants in the present study, Syria is the country where Human Rights violations are experienced the most. The votes are as follows: Syria 97, Turkey 86, Iran 68, Iraq 39, Palestine 26, Saudi Arabia 22, China 20, Egypt and Afghanistan 19, USA 18, Russia 17, North Korea and India 13, England and Israel 10, Somalia 8, Nigeria 5, Pakistan 4 and Ukraine 3. If we take a look at the status of Turkey from the viewpoint of the women, we see that Turkey received more votes from women than men: 48 votes by women placed Turkey among the countries where human rights are violated. In evaluating this situation, the fact that equality and human rights for women have not developed ideally should be considered and raises cause for concern, even if proportionately speaking the survey participants have the family and social opportunities for the right to education and sufficient social rights in the future (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 168) (Figure 9: 107).

What do you pay attention to when evaluating the truth in a piece of news?

In a different study, it was documented that university students have a different consciousness level in trusting as well as seeing social media as news source. The proportion of the students who stated they believe in news sources on the Internet remained at 9%. 51% of this student population stated that they follow the news through the Internet and 41% stated that they can evaluate the news (Gündüz & Pembecioğlu, 2013: 330-331). In the present study, the aim of this question is to determine how students, specifically those receiving education in communication, evaluate all types of news they encounter through the print, visual or social media. Here it can be said that the media organization and the identity of the writer are regarded as the first factors in perceiving truth in the news. As for social media, the position of the source is important for verification. The importance of the ideological environment in making evaluations can be seen from this study. The votes are as follows: The Author 113, Media Organization 150, Reflection on the Social Media 86, Compliance with My Ideology 63 (Figure 10: 107). In

addition, they were asked to write "Other" options, which can be viewed in Table 1 (108) (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 168).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, an attempt has been made to measure the importance of values that are shaping the social life of the youth. Ranking Human Rights terminologies according to known categories in the literature produces a scientific measure of the degree to which these concepts have developed and been internalized by the society. As the most important indicator in this regard, the university youth are the target of the study. The aim is to examine the extent to which the new generation has been affected by technological developments that have brought about increased access to information, social networking and cultural changes in Turkey and the world in recent years, and as a result, whether students' perceptions on Human Rights have changed. In order to determine whether or not such change has taken place, it was thus decided to use the comparison method to undertake a study similar to a previous study of a group of Istanbul University Faculty of Communication students of similar age and cultural environment. The main reason why we did not include here an evaluation of different questions asked in this study and the resulting data was to not create confusion. We also believe that further understanding can be gained when the resulting data are compared with a similar future study. By including participants who are enrolled in a specified professional education category, similar comparison studies can be more easily conducted in future. Research studies with students in different professional education groups can provide ideal comparison populations for research on consciousness regarding Human Rights. As development and education levels increase among the Turkish population over time, so, too is the concept of universal Human Rights being learned and integrated. At every educational level, measuring degrees of social education and seeing the positive reflections of its results is an observation process extending over time. The time that was required for maturation of this study is expected to pave the way for the future studies as well. Acceleration in communications and the rapid increase in technological developments and their integration into the social life are factors that trigger change but cannot go beyond that. In order to measure the change, more of these types of studies are needed.

In view of the data findings from the first study, it was concluded that the fields in which Human Rights are discussed are limited and are learned about through the press (Turan & Mavnacıoğlu, 2006: 172-173). Based on the present study results, it can be said that the students hear and learn about the concept of Human Rights mostly in Political, Law and Women-oriented applications. They evaluate these with their observations in the fields of politics, social life and freedom of expression, respectively. Although these fields are different from each other, their common characteristic is the fact that without taking an active role and making their individual observations, they could not see or hear the discourses in these fields. In sum, for the students of 7 years earlier, Human Rights was a phenomenon that they encountered in the media, civil society organizations and,

most importantly, in the university environment they were connected to; whereas today it has turned into a discourse they can hear and talk about in every area of their lives. It can be said that Human Rights are part of their lives.

As a result of the education generation difference between the two compared student groups and the important structural changes that Turkey has experienced during that period, the study brings a perspective to social change although there is no obvious approach in this direction. A careful researcher in light of different data could bring different interpretations based on the working content on social changes together with the data in this study. The 'Human Rights' concept constituting the foundation of the questions asked in the study is an unchangeable value with established laws. Although these values have transformed into a standard through international agreements, since the beginning of humanity they have existed under the concepts of Ethics and Morality and function principally as an unchangeable landmark. Inasmuch as decades ago in accordance with the regulations and legal order of the society at the time, a concept of a "wrong" within the context of Human Rights was not applicable as being wrong, it can become a subject of debate and be regarded as having been wrong in humanistic conscience. As the levels of education and social perception increase over time, so it takes time for the birth of an environment allocated by law to become mature for application. "Human Rights" can therefore be accepted as one of the most important values that can serve as a reference point when analyzing changing dynamics in a society. In this connection, it may be postulated that as future generations are educated in human rights and civil rights and absorb these principles, the people's overall education and development levels will rise. In light of the data, in order for our development level to raise it is time to recognize that the existence of advanced consciousness has started to be realized and is to be expected.

In the global world order, protection of Human Rights through laws and increased level of consciousness of this approach in the society are acknowledged as an indicator of development level. Social peace emerges within an increasingly high tolerance environment and, necessarily, with the support of just Human Rights laws that are established and take root in the society. The students' being the most important segment of the society, to know the development of their perceptions of Human Rights concepts and their structural perception also means to understand the perception level of individuals who, as future workers in the media, have the potential to direct the perceptions of the society itself.

While this study was being prepared for publication; *Radikal* which started publication in 1996 announced its decision to cease publication with its issue is dated 28 June 2014. The newspaper had been shown as one of those giving the most coverage to discourses about human rights. It took first place in the previous study that is the comparison reference of this study, but dropped back to 4th place according to the current study. Yet Radikal maintains its place as an important publication in the history of the Turkish press. As the newspaper is the first newspaper in Turkey to pass completely to digital

life, it seems logical to ask whether the reduction in recognition by the students could be evaluated as the footsteps of this transformation, although without a detailed study it is not yet a valid question.

Another observation that may emerge from our study concerns Human Rights for women, which is felt to have remained in the background. We observe that when rights are mentioned, more egalitarian countries orient more attention toward women especially women's image. For Turkey in this regard, it is essential to becoming a contemporary society that women become secure both legally and socially.

As the definitions of Human Rights as 'First Generation Rights' was given voice in the previous study, it is possible to evaluate in terms of knowledge accumulation what the participants in the second study mentioned about Second and Third Generation Rights. Briefly, continuous interaction between media, social media and social structure is taking place. This situation certainly carries both positive and negative sides, but based on the study data it can be said that people have become conscious and been affected positively concerning Human Rights. It appears that when people are evaluating the actuality of the news, they trust their personal perceptions in light of realistic data and a sense of trust rather than acting according to directions (Ideology). The feeling of confidence in the reliability of news source and the personality of the author are particularly important as demonstrated in this study in which all the participants, as future workers in the media, have adopted the reliable media-author combination as their model. Despite all the social developments and increase in welfare level, based on the fact that Turkey has a long road ahead within the scope of Human Rights, the desire to witness more positive improvements in the data in future studies is an expectation of our scientific identity.

REFERENCES

2013'ün en iyi gazetesi: Radikal. (2014, April 18). *Radikal.* Retrieved from: http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/2013un-en-iyi-gazetesi-radikal-1187270

Avrupa'dan İlk Yorum: Twitter Yasağının Kalkması İfade Özgurlüğü İçin İyi Haber. (2014, March 3). *Diken*. Retrieved from http://www.diken.com.tr/aktuel/avrupadan-ilk-yorum-twitter-yasagi-nin-kalkmasi-ifade-ozgurlugu-icin-iyi-haber/

Çöküş (film). (n.d.). Retrieved March 11, 2015 from http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Çöküş_(film)

Dündar, U. (2014, April 9). Geriye doğru ilerleyen demokrasi!.. *Sözcü*. Retrieved from http://sozcu.com.tr/2014/yazarlar/ugur-dundar/geriye-dogru-ilerleyen-demokrasi-483449/

Gezi Parkı Protestoları. (n.d.). Retrieved April 4, 2014 from http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gezi_Parkı_protestoları

Gündüz, U. & Pembecioğlu, N. (2013). Yeni Medya Üzerine. In M. Demir (Ed.), *Bilgi Kaynağı Olarak Sosyal Ağlar ve Sosyal Medya* (311-338), İstanbul: Literatürk.

Her Türlü Irk Ayrımcılığının Ortadan Kaldırılmasına İlişkin Uluslararası Sözleşmenin Onaylanmasının Uygun Bulunduğu Hakkında Kanun. (2015, November 26). TBMM. Retrieved from https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/kanunlar/k4750.html

İçduygu, A. & Payaslıoğlu, A. (2003). Türk Üniversite Öğrencileri Arasında İnsan Hakları Bilinci. *İnsan Hakları Araştırmaları*, 1, 113-131.

Kara, U. (2012). Birinci Kuşak Haklar: Kişi Özgürlükleri ve Siyasal Haklar. In T. Akkaya (Ed.) *Temel İnsan Hakları Bilgisi-I,* (50-63)*,* Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi.

Tezcan, D., Erdem, M. R., Sancaktar, O. (2004). İnsan Hakları Çeşitleri, Avrupa İnsan Hakları Sözleşmesi ve Uygulaması. Ankara, Turkey: Ankara Cezaevi T.C. Adalet Bakanlığı Eğitim Dairesi Başkanlığı

Turan, E. & Mavnacıoğlu, K. (2006). Üniversite Gençliğinin Gündemindeki İnsan Hakları. In E. Sözen, A. Ayten, M. İri (Eds.) İnsan Hakları Bir Gündelik Hayat Pratiği (153-173), İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları.

Twitter gece yarısı kapatıldı. (2014, March 20). Retrieved from http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/52673/Twitter_gece_yarisi_kapatildi.html

Youtube yasağını dünya böyle gördü. (2014, March 28). *Hürriyet.* Retrieved from http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/26100168.asp

TABLES AND FIGURES

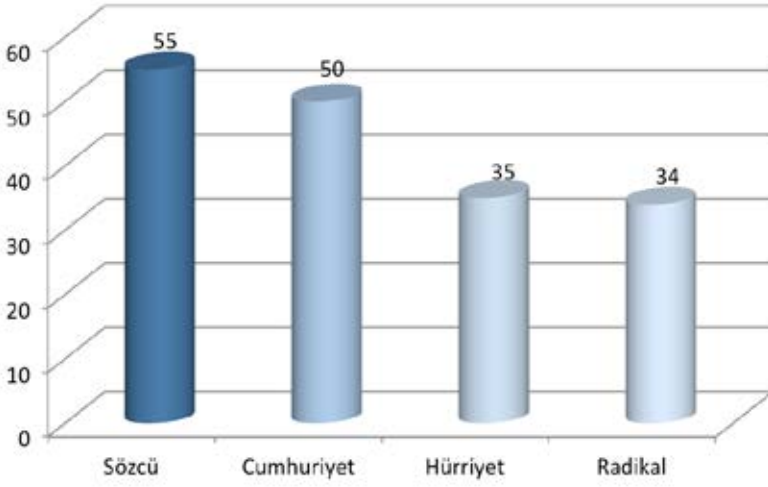**Figure 1: Human Rights Discourse in Print Media**
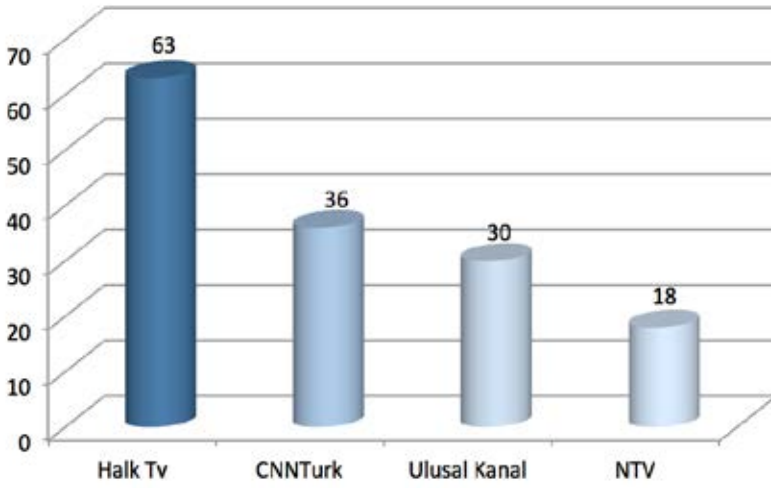

Figure2: Human Rights Discourse in TV

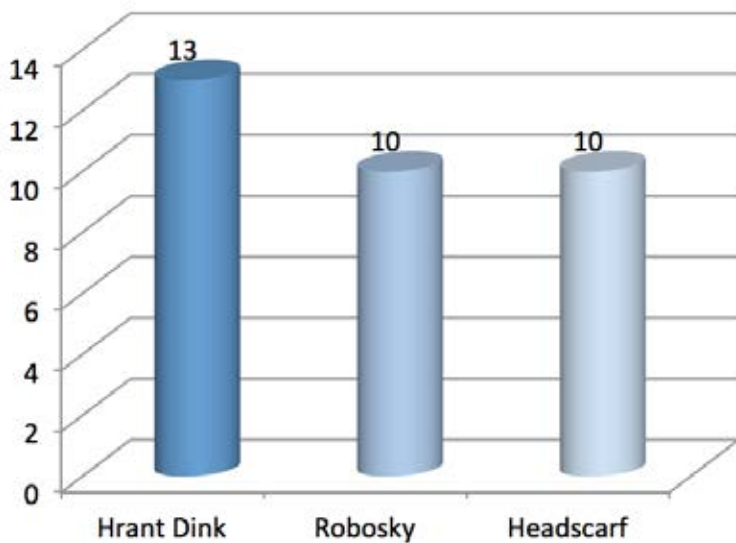**Figure 3: Subjects in European Court of Human Rights**

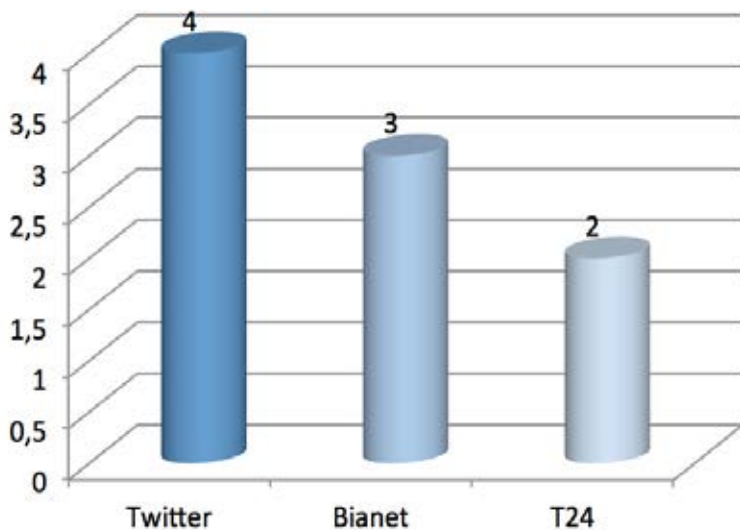**Figure 4: Human Rights Discourse in Websites**

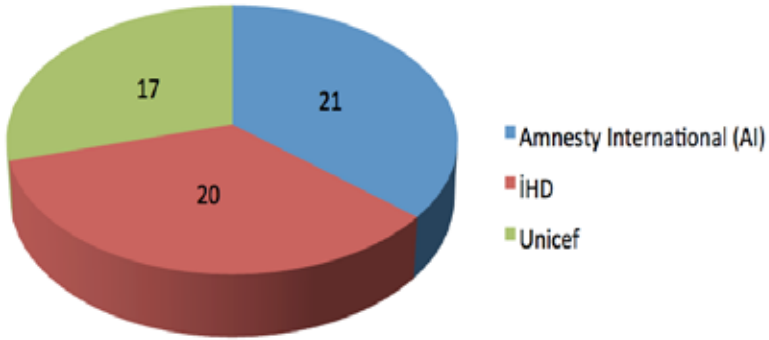**Figure 5: Non-Governmental Organizations active on Human Rights**

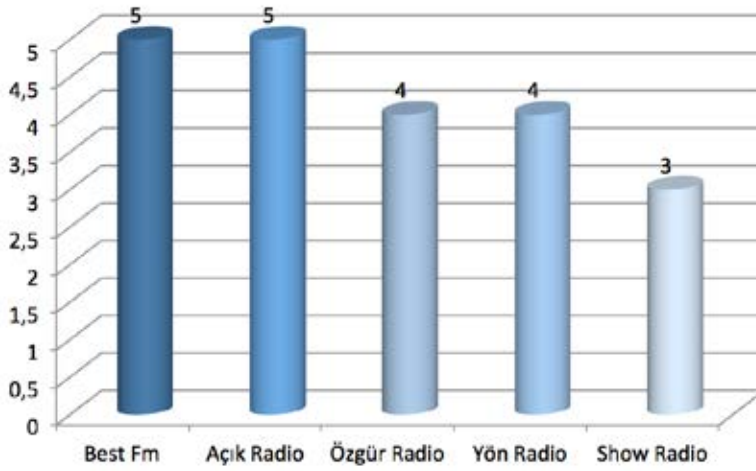**Figure 6: Radio Channels which talk about Human Rights**

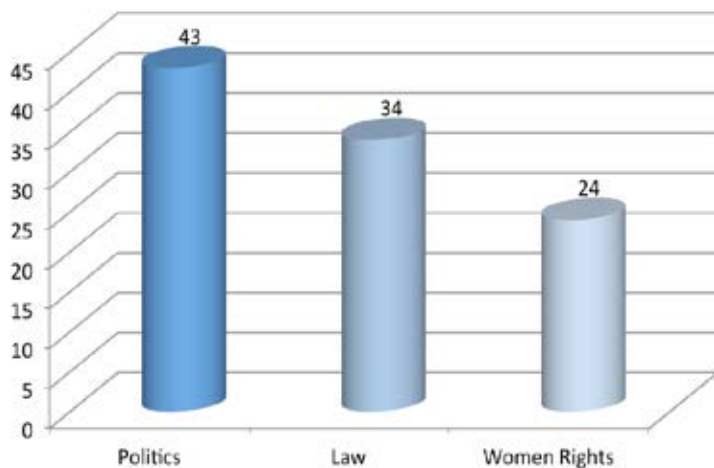**Figure 7: Fields That the Subject of Human Rights Are Discussed**

Figure 8: First Three Countries in Which Human Rights Are Protected
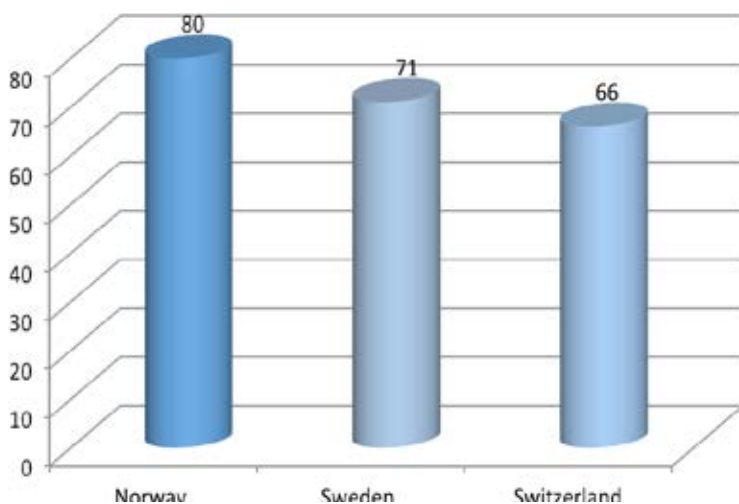
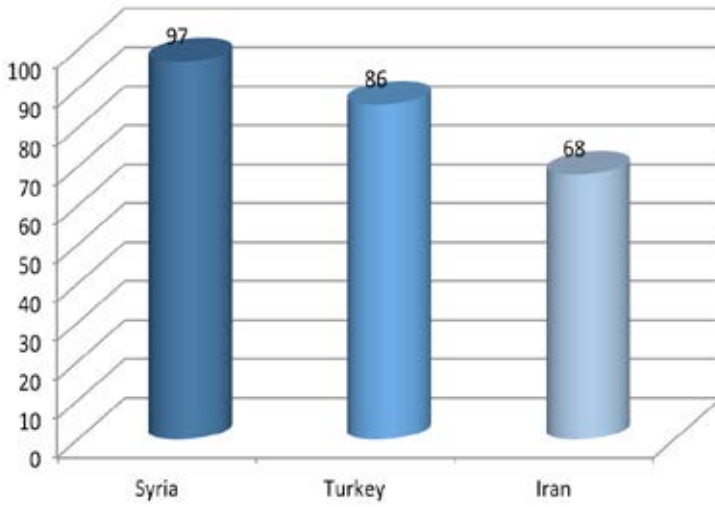**Figure 9: First Three Countries in Which Human Rights Are Violated**
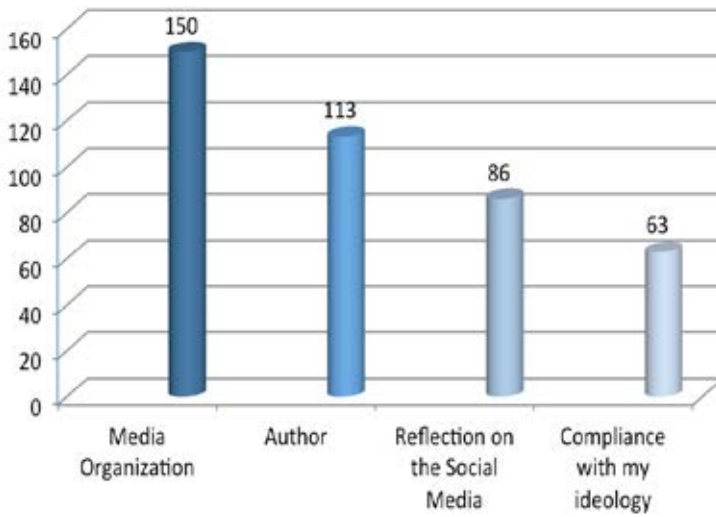

Figure 10: Evaluating the Truth

Table 1: The Answers Given by Students to the Question "What Is Your Truth In Your Opinion?"

I pay attention to the form of presentation, language and discourses.
Different ideologies are found in different publications about the same news
Every media organization publishes in accordance with its own policy. Rightness or wrongness is left to one's own free and logical thinking.
Being a part of the truth
Whether or not it shows us everything until no questions remain in my mind. I want to see what I want to see, not what they want to show.
Personal accumulations (historical - psychological)
Scientific researches
In my opinion, the filter that establishes the truthfulness or incorrectness of a news comes after the opinions of all sides are expressed.
I do not just stick to a single media organization concerning a subject
I do not think there is completely true or false information in any of them. I think that every organization translates things according to their own values framework.
Past events
Clearly, no matter how much we pay attention, we still do not know what to believe.
A piece of news is either true or false. Where both true and false news are broadcast no media ethics can be mentioned.
Supporting documentation sources, etc.
Neutral nature of true facts
Ethical value
Compliance with scientific norms
Objectivity
If the news source is trustworthy and reliable, and if the factuality of the news is proven.
Being objective
I pay attention to the relation of the news to the reality and its objectivity. (it depends on restrictions imposed)
If a news in the media was not formed in accordance with an ideology, we can say that it is true. Objectivity is quite difficult now for media organizations.
I check, i.e, is it beneficial or harmful for human rights or the society, and to what extent does it reflect the truth?
I do not look at it as true or false. I always approach with suspicion. If I see the convincing proof myself, then I believe.
By analyzing the same news in different organizations giving similar data
If the media organization is reliable and does not worship an ideology, I find the news reliable.
If the information given is true. Verifiability of its truthfulness from different sources.
I compare with the other news sources.