

# Globalization, Political Exclusion, and the Role of NGOs with Special Reference to Turkey\*

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## Abstract

*Globalization has been most effective in establishing a worldwide free market; in addition, it has been enhancing ethnical, cultural, and religious conflicts while imposing decentralization to developing countries. In this process, adult exclusion from social and political life is experienced. At the same time, especially in developed countries, civic education has been re-emphasized and the NGOs have been seen as vehicles to educate adults to be active members of society. Turkey has been increasingly experiencing similar consequences of globalization. This paper focuses on determining what kind of role globalization plays in the exclusion of adults from participating in social and political life as well as how NGOs contribute in inducing adults to participate in social and political life with special reference to Turkey.*

*Keywords:* Globalization, NGOs, participation, civic education

## Introduction

Probably, "globalization" has been the most frequently used term in the world today. Some conceive the term "globalization" as, the integration of world market economy as well as free market-free circulation of goods and capital. Simultaneously, some others see it as, availability and accessibility of massive information - that eventually may generate common values over diversified national, ethnical, and cultural values. When one looks at the last few decades, one may see that the consequences of globalization has been effective on economy, social life, education, decentralization, and exclusion of adults from politics, to mention only the most important ones, in almost all countries.

In this paper, first, these questionable consequences of globalization are discussed with a special reference to Turkey. Then, Turkish NGOs' role in the inclusion of adults in politics will be examined based on Okçabol's (2004) research. Finally, conclusions are presented along with implications for future research.

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## Consequences of Globalization

### *a) On Economy*

In terms of the economic dimension of globalization, the supranational agencies such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization For European Cooperation (OECD), and the leading capitalist countries like the United States of America (USA) emphasize that "the market knows best." In this "globalization-market way," those who control the market --"the haves"-- benefit more at the expense of "the have-nots." Because of economic globalization, all types of social benefits including free public education and health have been declining; workers have lost grounds in unionization, social, and retirement benefits, etc., (Baş, 1998). The IMF has been the most influential organization to promote the free market rules. Until 1995, 137 countries had implemented the IMF programs. But, according to a research conducted by the Heritage Foundation, the result is not promising at all; Heritage's research indicates that, 81 countries' dependency on IMF had increased, and 32 underdeveloped countries (out of 89) had become more destitute; even IMF's own report indicates that the ratio of external debt to gross domestic product of those countries that has had a long-term agreement with IMF has increased (Yıldızoğlu, 1998). Debts of developing countries have accelerated. Economic wealth of 200 multi-national firms is more than the wealth of 182 countries.<sup>1</sup> Advanced countries consume more timber, energy, and food than 75 per cent of the world. There are about a billion people who are at the edge of starvation level. Also, there are about a billion illiterate adults. Moreover, millions of people are refugees in their own countries and abroad. Concisely, the economic gap between the poor and the rich, developing and advanced countries, and the haves and have-nots have been increasing rapidly, and overall situation is not getting better.

Since the late 1940's (after the Second World War), most of the Turkish governments have been gradually trying to follow the rules of the free market. Subsequently, the free market policy and economic unrest accelerated after 1980, and especially in the 1990's when a new form of globalization became more influential. The following quotation summarizes the so called Turkish capitalist (!) development in the last fifty years: "In 1950, 12 years after Atatürk's death, the income of an average Turk was marginally higher than that of his counterpart in Spain and Portugal. ... Nowadays, the income of the average Portuguese, Spaniards or Greek is three to five times that of his Turkish equivalent" (McBride, 2000, p.3). In the last decade or so, the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots" is widening even faster in Turkey as a result of the economic globalization and the State submissive policies (free market economy, privatization, uncontrolled economic expansion, long lasting high inflation rate, inappropriate taxing, and the implementation of nearly 20 IMF programs). "Turkish society is the fifth country with the largest gap between the rich and the poor, after Brazil, South Africa, Chile and Mexico. The wealthiest 20% of the society possesses

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<sup>1</sup> *These 182 countries are part of the 189 member countries of the United Nations.*

55% of the national wealth, the poorest 20% has 2.5%” (British Council, 2002, p.1). This gap has even broadened because of the economic crises Turkey has encountered in 2001.

### ***b) Social Conflict***

Globalization not only exploits people economically but, also, aggravates the ethnical and cultural conflicts and violence by weakening the nation state through the easy flow of capital between countries. For instance, ethnic conflicts arise among neighbors and people who have lived together and shared the same resources and institutions (Sadowski, 1998). When people’s economic conditions get worse, some people move towards religion and/or to nationalism and become prejudiced about the migrants or minority groups in their country. For example, the European Council’s research, over 15 European countries, indicates that nearly half of the people perceive themselves a little bit racist; accordingly, Jews, Gypsies, Turks, and Muslims are targeted by these racists; these European countries see themselves as the Christian club and externalize the Muslims from their union, and, at the same time, try to sell democratic ideas and human rights to other countries (Yumul, 1998). There is evidence that racial conflict is on the rise in other countries as well. For instance, ex CIA member G.E. Fuller warns the USA that the “ethnic structure of the USA would endanger American democracy unless the USA overcomes to solve economic and social problems” (Fuller 1991, cited in Aydođan; 1999, p.689). Britain's figures "show the number of all 'racial incidents', crimes believed to include a racial element, increasing up from 5,876 in 1997-98 to 11,050 in 1998-99 and 23,346 for 1999-2000” (The Economist, May 13 2000, p.39). Besides conflicting issues, there are other issues such as criminal problems. According to the records of 34 countries, murder rate per 100,000 people was 5.93 in 1970-74, it fell down to 5.47 in 1975-1979 but went up to 5.82 in 1980-84, to 6.35 in 1985-89, and to 8.86 in 1990-94. As stated by the UN Global Report on Guilt and Punishment in 1999, one point deficit in the scale of income distribution difference results in one point increase in the murder rate; the rate of suicide has also increased parallel to the increase in wealth of the globalized nations (Yıldızođlu, 2000).

Essentially, multi-culturalizm and the multi-cultural approach have flourished and have been widely accepted in recent decades as fundamental human rights. Nevertheless, unfortunately in the globalization process, it is sometimes used not to promote and enrich ethnic cultures but rather to agitate conflicts even through some international “non-governmental organizations” (NGOs). “Many NGOs, lacking any base in the local population and with their money coming from outside, simply try to impose their ideas without debate. For example, they often work to promote women’s or children’s interests as defined by western societies, winning funds easily but causing social disruption on the ground” (The Economist, January 29, 2000, p.27). In this aspect, a well-known American businessman George Soros’ private NGO, named Open Society Institute, is active and financially supports some domestic NGOs in every

country over the Caucasus and the Middle Asia region, including in Turkey (Nokta, April 26, 2004, p.46-60).

Besides ethnicity, another tier of conflict generation is the faith of the people. If one looks at the history of the last 40-50 years, one may see what role the USA plays in this matter. In the 1960's, an US oil company had supported the establishment of the organization and movement of "Muslim Brothers," to blockade citizens' attempt to nationalize the oil fields and production in Arabic countries. Accordingly, the USA began to work on certain countries to built the "green belt" at the south boarder of the former Soviet Blocks to stop the expansion of socialist/communist ideas. The USA, also, supported the groups of Hikmetyar and Usema Bin Laden against the Soviet supported Afghanistan, at that time, calling them "freedom fighters" while now identifies them as "terrorist groups." After all, secular Islamic countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Libya, and Pakistan have turned out to be fully Islamic countries where the civil code is replaced by Islamic law (şeriat); Islamic fundamentalism has accelerated in other Moslem countries, like in Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Tunisia, Turkey, and even in the former Soviet allies.

The US preference of "moderate Islamic Turkey" to "secular Turkey" (Sadowski, 1998) has become a real threat with both domestic and foreign support and promotions, while Turkey tries to integrate with Europe. The US Secretary of State Colin Powell's reference to Turkey as an "Islamic democratic country" is a sign of the USA's intention. In addition to this kind of foreign affairs, there are even some foreign NGOs and writers that divert realities, provide false information, confuse people, and promote or support pro-Islamic ideas by their misleading comments. These kinds of NGOs, sometimes forget their democratic and humanistic goals. They agitate conflicts by providing false information with exaggerated and extremely political comments. Some NGOs attempt to promote "moderate Islam" (Banoğlu, 2000; Zileli, 2000) while trying to discredit Kemalizm<sup>2</sup> and values of the Turkish Republic. According to some of such NGOs, the expansion of compulsory education from five to eight years is the enmity of the Turkish Army as well as the Turkish Republic, that has crashed the Islamic faith and expression of religious feelings since the day of its establishment (cited in Zileli, 2000a). Mc Bride (2000, p.18) holds a similar position, and attacks Kemalizm by diverting realities related to expanding compulsory education from five to eight years and claiming that "the government simply shot down the religious schools for younger people."

When the Turkish government adopted a law for the benefit of the religious school graduates in May 2004, the President vetoed it on the basis of the constitutional equality and secularity. But, the editor of the New York Times did not hesitate to say, "The President's veto about the religious school act is a set back for freedom and equal opportunity" (New York Times editorial, June 6, 2004), as if everyone trained to be a priest, goes to the university to be a teacher, a man of law, or a public administrator in

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<sup>2</sup>*Kemalizim is the principles of Atatürk, namely, statism, laicism, republicanism, populism, nationalism, and revolutionary sprits. Mustafa Kemal ATATURK is the founder and the first president of the Republic of Turkey.*

the USA or other secular countries. In Turkey, the Islamic dissidents among the arrested protesters and activists may only constitute about a few percent due to the government's relaxed practices of applying the law to these people as well as other countries helping them. For instance, there are various evidences that Islamist Fethullah Gülen (who has been living in the USA for some time) is among the activists who eventually look for the implementation of şeriat along with the creation of "moderate Islam!" Even based on these realities, the British prefer unfortunately to make the following comment about Mr. Gülen: "Islamic dissidents are among those who are often arrested. Fethullah Gülen, a highly respected scholar launched a moderate religious movement supported by a wide range of Turkish society including professionals, scholars and businessmen" (British Council, 2002, p.3). Surprisingly, those who emphasize or promote moderate Islam are interestingly citizens of a secular country and/or are atheists who are aware that the ultimate goal of the "moderate Islam" is to implement Islamic law to the full extent.

### *c) Privatization of Education*

Eurich (1981) has examined higher education systems of Australia, Canada, France, Germany (then West), Iran, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Sweden, Thailand, the United Kingdom (UK), and the USA. Nearly, all higher education systems examined have similar goals and functions: Every country expected that universities contribute to economic progress, equality, democratization, social betterment, and international understanding. Sweden and many other countries realized that one of the roles of higher education is being the "critic of its society." Majority of these countries admit, "teaching and research are a public service of higher education" (Eurich, 1981, p.21-27). In spite of educational aims, globalization has affected education, and thus universities have deviated from their goals. Socially, it is hard to admit even for the advanced countries that they have active democratic citizens. Economically, universities had established strong relations with the business world long before the World Bank urged universities to find new sources besides public funds in 1994 (Currie, 1998, p.6). For instance, national higher education policies of Australia, Canada, the UK, and the USA "moved decisively toward academic capitalism which refers to the movement by universities toward the market to secure external funds. This shift is most noticeably seen in large research universities that have developed commercial arms and links with industries to exploit intellectual capital to generate funds for universities" (Slaughter, 1998, p.46) in the 1980s and 1990s. Some people easily paced with the rising values of marketing by utilizing it and turning higher education to a profit-making organization. In terms of the new providers of higher education: "662 for-profit institutions are awarding degrees in the US; ... higher education systems are expanding chaotically. Low-quality institutions mushroom in the private sector; ... Private institutions-motivated by profits, not research- are attracting a growing number of students throughout Latin America" (Amaral, 2000, 9-10). Eventually, the following situation should not be considered to be a surprising result: 83 percent of high-school graduates from the top 20 percent of the wealthiest families enrolled in colleges/universities in

1995, compared with 34 percent from the poorest 20 percent of the families in the USA (Birdsall, 1998). In Britain, "the chances of getting into a top university are about 25 times greater if you come from a private school than from a lower social class or live in a poor area" (The Economist, June 3 2004, p.39).

Such inequalities in higher education opportunities are even worse in most of the developing countries. Despite the increase in enrollment in higher education and the opening new public universities in Turkey, resource allocation by the government for higher education has remained almost at the same level proportionally during the last decade. However, while the number of private universities increase and grow by charging students about 8-10 thousands dollar per year, the government still subsidizes them by providing half of their budget needs from state funds. Consequently, those who have low scores on the university entrance exam would be able to continue their education in a private university or abroad, if they come from a rich family. Thus, it is not possible to speak about the existence of equal opportunity in higher education in Turkey.

#### *d) Decentralization*

Many developing countries have placed strong emphasis on centralized planning for their social, educational, and economic development. When there is a question of the unification of a nation and distributing limited resources on an egalitarian basis, where local and regional government are weak, central planning is preferred. But globalization attacks central planning by promoting decentralization. Decentralization is emphasized by unrealistic and misleading expectations like efficient use of resources, quality of services, greater citizen participation and involvement, and greater local autonomy to respond to local needs and demands, even though decentralization was not successful in the past and is not in its recent implementations. For instance, the USA has been a decentralized state for centuries, but the blacks have suffered tremendously until the mid 1960s. Recent implementations of decentralization are not any better, since "decentralization has its drawbacks. Along with increasing the complexity of the policy system and thereby complicating policy analysis and implementation (Bardach, 1977), decentralization increases the number of sites at which political conflict can take place (Simith, 1985). Decentralization also produces an incentive for jurisdictions to impose fiscal externalities on each other as they compete to attract wealthier residents and discourage poorer ones from migrating into the community (Weimer and Vining, 1989, p.122)" (cited in Eliason, 1996, p.91).

Despite the drawbacks of decentralization as well as the lack of local needs and interests for more independence in general, the WB and the Turkish government have been working together over a project to decentralize public administration for some time. Finally, the government has drafted a law called the Public Administration Reform for decentralization. Although the parliament officiated this law, the President vetoed some basic items of the law on the basis of the Constitution, namely the protection of the secularity of Turkey. Since the ruling party members of the parliament favor the drafted law, this draft will be come a law soon because of the legal procedures

of law making. Privatization of education and private education have been emphasized and supported by the government. The media has been promoting this thought as well: “Whoever gets education pays the bill.” This public reform draft has similar goals: “Whoever gets the services has to pay the bill.”

First draft of this law also included the decentralization of national education. Fortunately, somehow it was not included in the final draft. However, the Ministry of National Education has been regrettably functioning in a way that decentralization will take place gradually. For instance, school budgets have been cut; school maintenance and meals (in boarding schools), and similar services have been handed over to private firms where workers are employed with very low wages as well as without any security or social benefits. Total quality management is promoted in schools, where schools take the responsibility to carry (almost all of) the state functions, no matter whether there are enough resources for schools in their community and regardless of regional differences in terms of availability of local resources like capital, natural resources, production, professionals, etc. Additionally, students are seen as customer and education as goods. Unfortunately, this public reform intends to destroy the totality of public administration. It is anticipated that because of this law all public services are to be carried by private firms. Thus, if this law is implemented the countryside establishments of several ministries, namely the ministries of Agriculture and Village Affairs, Culture and Tourism, Environment and Forestry, Health, Industry and Trade, and Transportation will be shut down. Consequently, public employees will lose jobs, income, social benefits, and rights of retirement (Tansi, 2003; Azrak, 2004).

According to Güler (2004), this law draft includes three different issues, namely, federalization, governance, and privatization: According to this draft governance implies the participation of the private sector (capital holders) and the NGOs in local decision-making and problem solving. In fact, one such NGO is the Local Agenda 21, which is endorsed by the 1992 Rio Conference, aiming at participation, partnerships, and decentralization of local decision-making processes (Promotion and Development of Local Agenda 21s in Turkey Project,<sup>3</sup> September 1999). Şengül (2004) claims that the state has the full support of the capitalists and has pulled itself out of the free public services like public education and public health. Fikret Başkaya summarizes the situation very dramatically: “Westerners came first to make us Christians to go to heaven; then they came to help us be civilized; now they say, ‘will save you through globalization’” (cited in Birgün, May 3, 2004, p.12).

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<sup>3</sup> *This project has being coordinated by International Union of Local Authorities, Section for the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Region-IULA-EMME- under the auspices of UNDP-Turkey and Capacity 21 initiative.*

### *e) Exclusions of Adults From Politics*

Adults face various problems and rapid changes in their life, generated mostly by the above mentioned dubious consequences of globalization, no matter where they live and which citizenship they hold. Some of these consequences are as follows: unemployment, ethnical and/ or religious conflicts, political and economic corruption, immigration, urbanization, poverty, hunger, lack of basic education, violation of human rights, inadequate living conditions, air and water pollutions, control and domination of media and capital holders, privatization, etc. Under these conditions and the governments' political and economic policies, the youths, intellectuals, waged people, farmers, women, and the unemployed are nearly excluded from politics. Exclusion of adults from politics exists in a varying degree in even all democratic countries, and it is one of the most important issues for everybody and every country.

The majority of people are not involved in politics and do not use their democratic rights. Voting in elections is the way of political participation for the majority of the people. Indeed, the proportion of adults casting their vote is getting smaller. For instance, 36 percent of eligible and 51 percent of registered voters have casted their vote for the Congressional Election of the USA in 1998; for the Presidential Election of 2000, respective numbers were 51 and 67 percent. The exclusion of adults from political life does exist, despite the fact that the general educational level of people has been increasing and civic education has been emphasized and included in formal education for many years. People in general do not know how to involve and/or how to be effective in politics. Perhaps the basic reason is that no one sees a fully functioning participatory democracy in any country. When people are excluded from politics, i.e., from the decision-making process, decisions made by the politicians create in general new problems instead of solving existing ones. Our daily life is full of such domestic and international decisions that are problematic, unrealistic, and unpleasing for humanity and the majority of the people.

In Turkey, the situation is not that different at all; 75 percent of the eligible voters voted in the governmental election of 2003; the party that got 25 percent of eligible votes became the governing party with an overwhelming majority, due to the national election law. Privatization of public enterprises with less than their value, reduction of subsidy to farmers, shrinking of sugar beet and tobacco fields, limited wage increases well below the inflation rates, and taking a stance in the USA-Iraq affairs are some such examples of decisions which are not for the benefit of the majority of the Turkish people. Decentralization would most likely not provide any further democratic control, increase common people's involvement in decision-making, or efficiency and effectiveness in local services because of the recommended content of decentralization and the existing traditional, religious, economical, social, educational, and political conditions. Instead, local landlords or tradesmen will take full control and benefits at the expense of people with restricted incomes. Even with these severe conditions, there has been nearly no public reaction to decentralization. Moreover, the Turkish media has forgotten its basic functions of informing the public adequately and in contrast is increasingly playing an active role in political and economic life, especially in the



acceptance and the implementation of the “free market.” In general, the media does not inform the public, but provides the conditions to create apolitical people. On the other hand, several NGOs like the Association of Chambers of Turkish Architects and Engineers, the Chamber of İzmir Physicians, the Confederation of Public Laborers, the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers Union, and seven different political parties protested the public reform draft. Needless to say, the liberal and the pro-Islamic media did not even mention this event at all (Cumhuriyet, January 27, 2004, p.2).

#### *f) Expansions and the Role of NGOs*

The globalization process resulted in the expansion of the NGOs all over the world at the expense of the nation state. It is estimated that there are nearly 29,000 international NGOs (most of them established recently) around the world. In terms of domestic NGOs, for instance, in Russia where almost none existed before the fall of communism, there are at least 65,000 in 2000 (The Economist, January 29, 2000, p.25). In Turkey, the number of NGOs has rapidly increased in the last two decades. In short, the number of associations was 3,831 in 1971, 5,101 in 1980, 60,724 in 1996 (Yücekök, Turan and Alkan, 1998), and 80,757 in 2004 (Ankara Trade Chambers’ report cited in Cumhuriyet, October 11, 2004, p.8). In the last eight years, the number of cooperatives increased from about 35,000 to 58,000 and foundations from 2,421 to 4,915. Among the Turkish NGOs, there are 14,403 religious-oriented, 15,583 school construction, and 9,981 sports-oriented associations (Yücekök, Turan and Alkan, 1998).

Under these conditions, adult inclusion in political life becomes an extremely urgent matter for a democratic society and the peaceful living. Thus, NGOs draw high attention and expectations in the democratization of people. Those who are pro-free market claim that the nation state is dead. On the other hand, societies with supposedly fully functioning free market economy like the USA (Branson, 2004), the UK (Breslin, 2004), and other western countries are strongly looking for effective ways of providing civic education in schools and the vitalization democratic citizenship education for adults (Chesney and Feinstein, 1997; Bron and Malewski, 1994; Bron, Field, and Kurantowicz, 1998; Bron and Field, 2001; and Schemmann and Bron, 2001). In a nutshell, the NGOs are seen as a means to provide active democratic citizenship that eventually leads to the inclusion of adults in politics.

However, while the NGOs are highly regarded, they are strongly criticized. For instance Zabçı (2004) thinks that the concept of NGOs is expanding in a way that decisions related to societies are made by national and international elites (who know best!), basically to limit political movements and organizational actions to income generating activities. In essence, the WB has begun to promote the NGOs for two reasons: to provide services that the states do not carry anymore, and to reduce the pressures of possible radical protests against states. Still, the weekly magazine The Economist mentions various criticism of NGOs such as, “Governments prefer to pass aid through NGOs because it is cheaper, more efficient-and more at arm’s length- than direct official aid ... Politicians, or their wives, often have their own local NGOs. In the

developing world, meanwhile, increasing number of civil servants take time off to work for NGOs, and vice versa ... as they get larger, NGOs are looking more and more like businesses themselves” (The Economist, January 29, 2000, p.26-27).

#### **NGOs Role in Turkey<sup>4</sup>**

Okçabol (2004<sup>5</sup>) examines the state of NGOs perceptions of democratic citizenship and their role in training active democratic citizens in Turkey. Okçabol uses a semi-structured interview form to collect data from 58 members of 21 purposefully selected leading NGOs in İstanbul. To the research question of “What are the importance and the role of NGOs in the country’s democratic life?” the following comments are made by the interviewed participants: “It is not possible to come up with democracy through only political parties; social interference is possible through the NGOs’; the public becomes conscious; cooperation is provided; democratic platform is defended; participation starts at the core through the NGOs; variety of services raises productivity; bureaucratic despotism can be prevented; NGOs fill the gap where the government is absent; individuals can prove their worth; NGOs are tools for the political inclusion of adults; NGOs are indispensable institutions of democracy; and NGOs provide free thinking, honest people, and pluralist participation” (Okçabol, 2004).

For the question of “Do NGOs provide democratic attitudes and behaviors for their members? How?” the following answers only are detained: “Devote activities to meet the aims of NGOs; train leaders with self-confidence; implement democratic administration; have new members continuously; provide people freedom by giving them the chance to choose in an horizontal structure; let everybody say whatever they think and implement the thoughts that are accepted; take part in decision making; conduct election every two years; learn differences through experiences” (Okçabol, 2004).

For the question of “How do NGOs conceive the concept of active democratic citizens?” the following answers are given: “It is much more than voting on elections; individuals should criticize and produce solutions; individuals should be conscious citizens, take responsibility, react when necessary, change their thoughts, and turn social work into a way of living; individuals should be qualified to speak about their lives; individuals should think, express their thoughts, and fight for their rights; individuals should be modern, secular, and accept the jurisdiction of the law with the consciousness of responsibility; individuals should be interested in environmental and social problems and look for solutions; individuals should develop consciousness of democracy and take part in organizations; individuals should know their rights and protect and advocate them; individuals should apply their thoughts for the benefit of the people, and should take active roles; individuals should work cooperatively; individuals should care for others; individuals should share and diffuse sharing; individuals should

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<sup>4</sup>*This part of the paper is, mainly, based on Okçabol’s 2004-research.*

<sup>5</sup> *This research was support by the Scientific Research Fund of Boğaziçi University-Turkey.*

be free from selfishness and active about communal issues; and individuals should be sensitive toward any kind of problems, search for solutions, and improve themselves” (Okçabol, 2004).

For the question of “How could the NGOs become functional to train active democratic citizens?” members of the NGOs think that through NGOs, “citizens could become conscious; their courage could grow; individuals could prove their worth; the power of contestation could be increased; communal participation could be increased; communal transformation could take place when individuals are organized; effective activities could reach the mass; and pressures could be put on the political system” are the examples of NGOs functions to train active democratic citizens.” At the same time, there was a warning from a member of an NGO that “NGOs should not behave in an extreme way during their actions, should not cause problems, and should not estrange people” (Okçabol, 2004).

For the questions of “What kinds of educational activities are carried out to fulfill this aim? What else can be done?” some mentioned that “They do it indirectly with their activities by helping individuals to have a place in the society, by fighting for the rights of their members, by reacting when it is necessary, by organizing meetings, by discussing actual daily events, by presentations, by doing something beyond daily works, by permitting individual oppositions during decision making, and by cooperating with other NGOs” (Okçabol, 2004).

Based on the above comments, one can presume that the majority of the Turkish NGOs has thoughts about democratic citizenship, but are not concerned about training adults for active democratic citizenship. Most of the NGOs do not see training active democratic citizenship as part of their basic role. Thus, Turkish NGOs are not as active as their counterparts in the western hemisphere. However, Turkish NGOs fulfill their goals and carry educational activities that fit their overall goals.

### **Conclusions**

Developing countries have re-emphasized the importance of civic education for their citizens, where subsequently will lead citizens’ participation in the social and political life of their country. However, globalization has caused adults to be excluded from the social and political life of developing countries by enhancing ethnical, cultural, and religious conflicts while imposing decentralization into developing countries. Unfortunately, these types of exclusions have been seen all over the world. The NGOs are considered to be the most important means to educate adults to be active members of the societies.

The greater part of the Turkish NGOs does not involve training adults for active democratic citizenship. In general, they are aware about the concept of active democratic citizenship, but do not offer adult education for the purpose of preparing people for participative democracy. Despite the rapid expansion of NGOs in Turkey, Okçabol (2004) indicates that Turkish people are hesitant to join NGOs and there is still only one association per 886 people in Turkey while there is one association per 40 people in France and Germany.

Some of the justifications for people not to join the NGOs are based on the public perception toward NGOs and government, namely: “Democratic culture and consciousness about NGOs are absent; people like to exclude themselves from the society; some are insensitive to social issues; some are restless because they perceive it is illegal to be organized; there is a tradition of transferring things to god; people are state centered and expect everything from the state; understanding of participation is absent; being organized is not settled yet; experiences of injustices lower the eagerness for motivation; people should learn how to be organized and should know this is their right; people should defend their rights and use it.” Some other obstacles are generated by the government, such as, “there are legal obstacles; people should learn how to be organized and should know this is their right; people should defend their rights and use their rights to lower injustice.” Some obstacles are related to the NGOs themselves like, “some NGOs’ members draw back and become passive members; expectation of people may not be met; NGOs are not conscious about people’s interest; people are not aware of NGOs; NGOs do not express themselves properly; there is a lack of harmony between the managing members and the non-managing members of the NGOs; some do not find NGOs sympathetic; NGOs can not present themselves well” (Okçabol, 2004).

In terms of increasing the membership of NGOs based on the comments of the interviewed members of the NGOs, Okçabol (2004) makes the following suggestions: “NGOs should train volunteers and their members; NGOs should organize interesting/ attractive activities; NGOs should advertise and inform the public about their activities; NGOs should make one to one contact with people and convince them that something can be done; mistrust should be eliminated and everything must be open to the public; what counts is what NGOs do; the conceptualization of NGOs should be reconsidered; NGOs should be aware of their social responsibility and provide better services; activities should be well organized and timed; more public conferences should be conducted; effective communications should be established between members; members should be given responsibility especially through projects; members should be channeled to their area of interest; willingness and the understanding of ‘we’ should be strengthened.”

Considering the decisions and implementations of the government in the last decades and the anti-democratic structure of the political parties, the democratic NGOs’ involvement in providing active democratic citizenship education for adults still seems to be the best avenue for the inclusion of adults in the democratic political life of Turkey. It is imperative that we continue studying the roles of globalization and NGOs while providing up to date equitable solutions to meditate the consequences of their actions and, most importantly, offer guidelines and ways for adults to become and stay as active participants in the social and political life of Turkey.

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### **Özel olarak Türkiye Bağlamında Küreselleşme, Siyasal Dışlanmışlık ve STK'ların Rolü.**

#### **Özet**

*Küreselleşme serbest pazar uygulamasının yerleşmesinde tüm dünyada etkili olurken, geliştirmekte olan ülkelere yerinden yönetimi dayatmakta ve bu arada etnik, kültürel ve dinsel çatışmaları artırmaktadır. Bu süreçte, yetişkinler toplumsal ve siyasal yaşamdan uzaklaşmaktadır. Bu arada, özellikle gelişmiş ülkelerde yurttaşlık eğitimi yeniden gündeme gelmekte ve sivil toplum kuruluşlarının (STK) yetişkinlerin etkin bir yurttaş olarak eğitilmelerinde önemli bir yeri olduğu düşünülmektedir. Küreselleşmenin benzer etkileri Türkiye'de de görülmektedir. Bu bildiri, küreselleşmenin yetişkinlerin toplumsal ve siyasal yaşamdan uzaklaşmaları yönündeki etkisi ile STK'ların yetişkinlerin siyasal ve kültürel yaşama katılmaları konusundaki katkıları, özellikle Türkiye bağlamında, irdelenmektedir.*

*Anahtar sözcükler:* Küreselleşme, STK'lar, katılım, yurttaşlık eğitimi