

A Novel Operationalization Approach in Generation Phenomenon: Insights and Implications from Turkey's Generational Dynamics

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ABSTRACT

As scholarly interest in generational studies grows, so too does the scrutiny surrounding the phenomenon's validity. This study addresses both the burgeoning interest and skepticism by proposing an innovative operationalization of generations within the context of Turkey, aiming to introduce new concepts and methodologies to the field. While generational phenomena have often been approached with global or broadly applicable classifications, this research advocates for the consideration of national contexts as pivotal for accurate analysis. Using Turkey as a case study—identified through generations such as the Founders, Republican Generation, First Democrats, Military Coup Generation, First Neoliberals, and Social Media Generation—this study illustrates the application of the proposed operationalization. Conducted through a qualitative inquiry and informed by a multidisciplinary approach involving participants from various social sciences, this research not only names and defines these six generations but also elucidates their defining the initiator, finisher and internal turning points, the spheres of influence, the successor and predecessor members. Such analysis not only addresses existing criticisms but also enriches the discourse on generational dynamics in Turkey. The study emphasizes the critical need to refine operationalization strategies, thereby enhancing generational analysis's effectiveness.

Keywords: *Generational Classifications, Generations of Turkey, Turning Points, Spheres of Influence, Successor and Predecessor Members*

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1. Introduction

The discourse surrounding the generation phenomenon and its classification is not a recent development, dating back to Mannheim's seminal article "*Das Problem der Generationen*" in 1928. During this period, generation studies have been explored across various contexts, yet academic circles have increasingly scrutinized its validity since the early 2000s. For instance, there is considerable debate as to whether the generational phenomenon should be approached from a national or global perspective. Some scholars even question whether its academic merit, dismissing it as a mere "popular culture/ management fashion" rather than a legitimate academic inquiry (Costanza et al. 2012; Parry and Urwin 2011). Consequently, questions have been raised as to the existence and necessity of the generational phenomenon, as well as the practical utility of generational classification in theory and practice (Costanza, Ravid, and Slaughter 2021; Parry and Urwin 2021; Rudolph, Rauvola, and Zacher 2018). Conversely, those studies acknowledging it as an academic issue have toward enhancing its applicability (Boyle, Matthews, and Saklofske 2008). Various methodological issues have been raised in this regard, such as the proposal to replace global generation classification with culturally nuanced sub-generations (Gürbüz 2015), the critique against reducing generational boundaries solely to birth years (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Schewe & Meredith, 2004), and advocating for longitudinal study designs over cross-sectional ones (Aydn 2020; Costanza, Ravid, and Slaughter 2021). These discussions predominantly focus on the challenges associated with operationalizing the generation phenomenon rather than questioning its existence. Essentially, research in this domain can be categorized into two branches: a) studies investigating the existence and necessity of the generational phenomenon/ classification (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015; Kowske et al., 2010; Macky et al., 2008; Parry & Urwin, 2011), and b) studies focusing on enhancing the functionality of the generation phenomenon/classification (Boyle et al., 2008; Caspi & Roberts, 2001; Costanza et al., 2021; Gürbüz, 2015; Noble & Schewe, 2003; Parry & Urwin, 2021). Moreover, a holistic analysis of the relevant studies reveals that the common challenges in both groups, notably the reductionist approach to birth dates which overlook factors such as national context, gender, and the cross-sectional study designs.

This study, which initially set out to delineate the generational landscape in Turkey, aims to provide a new model applicable to all generational inquiries by refining the operationalization process. Recognizing that understanding the origins of the phenomenon is key to addressing associated challenges, the inquiry begins with Mannheim's (1952) assertion that generations are not merely defined by birth dates, but by shared temporal contexts and collective consciousness shaped by important historical events. Turner and colleagues (Eyerman and Turner 1998; Turner 1998) further reemphasized the significance of consciousness by adding the dimension of resource struggles. Building on Mannheim's foundational premises, this study re-contextualizes the discourse by examining study designs that explore critical historical events shaping collective consciousness and their impacts on generational dynamics (e.g., Schuman & Scott, 1989), while also considering variables beyond age (e.g., Schewe & Meredith, 2004).

To this end, a national classification was initially prioritized because, as various studies have highlighted (i.e., Aydn, 2020; Campbell et al., 2015; Gürbüz, 2015; Schewe & Meredith, 2004), global generation classifications are problematic since they overlook socio-cultural variations and their distinct influences on societies and individuals within them. Furthermore, the study conceptualizes missing elements within the literature to refine the operationalization of generational phenomena. Diverging from field-based studies, the study's design adopts a multidisciplinary approach, drawing upon insights from various social sciences disciplines, including sociology, in line with Parry & Urwin's (2011: 79) assertion that the generation concept is deeply rooted in sociological theory.

The findings reveal six generations in Turkey, offering a new perspective on the generational phenomenon by introducing the concepts of initiator, finisher, and internal turning points, predecessor/successor members, and sphere of influence. By showing that some of the main criticisms of generation studies stem from the absence of these concepts, these criticisms are eliminated. For example, overlooking internal turning points leads to discrepancies in findings across studies focusing on different time frames, neglecting underlying dynamics. Similarly, due to the lack of a sphere of influence concept, the presence of members exhibiting generation traits outside the generation period is cited as a contradiction to the generation phenomenon, particularly in studies focused on age or period. Longitudinal studies that consider internal turning points, successor/predecessor members, and spheres of influence not only mitigate skepticism toward generation studies but also strengthen the understanding that the generational phenomenon embodies a distinct collective consciousness transcending age or period considerations.

This article provides conceptual and empirical foundations to aid practitioners in leveraging generational insights in research and practice. Emphasizing that many individual differences, particularly nationality, have decisive effects on the application of generation studies, we advocate for the abandonment of global-based approaches in favor of national classifications. Specifically, we propose studies utilizing locally meaningful concepts over globally standardized

nomenclatures such as Generation X and Y, designed with longitudinal perspectives. Such studies stand to benefit greatly from multidisciplinary perspectives. Lastly, we suggest that policymakers consider clear markers of change, such as internal turning points, in their analyses of causality and adaptation to change.

2. Background

An analysis of relevant literature reveals a lack of consensus regarding the definitions and timelines of generations (Brink & Zondag, 2021; Dencker et al., 2008). However, despite the diversity, all relevant studies converge on defining a generation as a group of individuals born within similar time frames, who share similar life experiences, thereby being shaped by the distinctive events and trends of their era.

Mannheim (1928), hailed as the pioneer in employing the generation concept in scholarly research (Mücevher & Erdem, 2018), conceptualizes generation as a "sociological phenomenon," defining it as a group of individuals with shared habits, culture, and values. According to Mannheim, a generation comprises people of similar age who have undergone shared historical experiences (As cited by Aydın, 2020: 20). Mannheim (1952) underscores the importance of generations in understanding social structures and ideologies, positing that membership in the same generation impacts individuals' thoughts, attitudes, and experiences, demanding a shared position in the social and historical process. Furthermore, the author regards comprehension of class status, established through economic and power dynamics within society, is imperative for grasping generational dynamics. Mannheim's conception of the generation concept revolves around two fundamental components: a common position shared over a period of time and a separate consciousness shaped by important events in that period (Aydın, 2020: 19; Joshi et al., 2011: 180).

Similarly, Strauss & Howe, (1997: 14-15) assert that individuals within generations often exhibit similar views, values, attitudes, and beliefs because they share common experiences encompassing social, political, and economic events during critical periods of personality development (17–24 years). Lissitsa & Laor (2021: 2) affirm that childhood and adolescence are commonly considered periods in which lifelong communication habits are established and the entire generation's personality traits can be influenced through popular media. Consequently, these shared values, beliefs, behaviors, and expectations contribute to the formation of a generational identity perceived to endure over the years, as extensively reported in the literature (i.e., Arli & Pekerti, 2016; Inglehart, 1977, 1997; Pekerti & Arli, 2017). Moreover, a considerable number of studies emphasize the importance of clarifying what generations encompass, emphasizing that the concept transcends mere birth dates, familial lineage, or age, embodying a distinct collective identity (e.g., Aydın, 2020; France & Roberts, 2015; Parry & Urwin, 2011). Parry & Urwin (2011: 81) further stress Mannheim's viewpoint, highlighting that mere birth year alignment among individuals is insufficient, emphasizing the need to share a bond formed by shared experiences.

In the context of generational classification, multiple studies observed discrepancies in the commencement and culminating years of generations (e.g., Costanza et al., 2012: 378). These differences are attributed to the social delineation of turning points marking the end of one generation and the beginning of another (Adıgüzel et al., 2014: 170; Gürbüz, 2015: 41). Noble & Schewe (2003) posit those generational distinctions primarily stem from the impact of historical and cultural events on individuals during formative developmental stages. These experiences foster collective memories and personality traits that influence individuals in that generation (Boyle et al., 2008; Caspi & Roberts, 2001). Strauss & Howe, (1991), for example, built a life cycle based on turning points in American history between 1584 and 2069, asserting that groups corresponding to distinct historical periods would share common feelings, attitudes, and behaviors. Consequently, given the varying turning points across different societies, it is natural for classifications tailored to the U.S.A. to differ in other societal contexts.

Studies rooted in cultural relativism highlight the inconsistency of applying uniform categorization across different societies (Hofstede, 1980; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta, 2004; Triandis, 1995 as cited in Gürbüz, 2015). The profound influence of social, historical, economic and political events on the generational results in varied experiences and turning points within each country. While certain events like world wars and the COVID-19 pandemic have global ramifications, the effects of events such as the military coups of 1960 and 1980, identified as the turning point in the Turkish context, may not reverberate uniformly across other societies. Furthermore, differing effects may be observed in societies that emerged victorious from world wars compared to those that suffered defeat. Therefore, this study contends that a classification of generations originating from the U.S. cannot adequately represent other societies, including Turkey (i.e., Bayhan, 2019; Gürbüz, 2015; Nacak, 2019). Additionally, within the same society, classifications may diverge due to varying perspectives among academics from different disciplines regarding the consequences of turning points, warranting separate consideration of this issue.

Despite indications of its intellectual origins dating back to Ancient Egypt (Riggio & Saggi, 2015: 340), interest in

the topic of generations seems to have surged following the translation of Mannheim's 1928 article into English in 1952 (Gürbüz, 2015:41). Generations have become a very popular discourse, especially with the increasing interest of the popular press and gurus, and this popularity has permeated daily discourse. However, the perception that generational differences are primarily a product of "popular culture" has sparked criticism within academic circles (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015; Giancola, 2006; Kowske et al., 2010; Parry & Urwin, 2011). Numerous critiques have surfaced, ranging from insufficient empirical data on generational differences (Costanza et al., 2012; Rudolph et al., 2021), to the absence of a compelling rationale for the existence of these differences (Elder Jr, 1994, 1998; Meyer et al., 2002; Ng & Feldman, 2010; Roberts et al., 2006), to the absence of a compelling rationale for the existence of such differences (Parry & Urwin, 2011). Additionally, concerns have been raised regarding the effectiveness of studies designed to address such differences (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015), the reliance on anecdotal evidence and observations (Macky et al., 2008; Sullivan et al., 2009), and the inconsistency of findings in empirical studies on generational differences (Benson & Brown, 2011).

Some of these criticisms have been reassessed or refuted by researchers who initially raised them. For example, Costanza (Costanza et al., 2012; Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015), who previously claimed that generational differences were a byproduct of popular culture lacking academic interest, later revised his stance, acknowledging that "*the concept of generations has been broadly written about in the popular press and management books and has been widely studied by academic researchers*" (Costanza et al., 2021:1). Conversely, after the publication of Costanza & Finkelstein (2015) findings, numerous studies in the relevant academic discourse deliberated on and countered some their critiques (Beier & Kanfer, 2015; Brink et al., 2015; Cadiz et al., 2015; Campbell et al., 2015; Cox & Coulton, 2015; Gibson, 2015; Lyons et al., 2015; Nakai, 2015; Perry et al., 2015; Riggio & Saggi, 2015; Rudolph, 2015; Steel & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2015; Wang & Peng, 2015; Zacher, 2015). For example, Campbell et al. (2015) argue that neglecting cultural in generational studies can undermine their validity and caution against generalizing findings from US-based research, which constitutes the majority of generational studies, to other countries. Emphasizing that generations, like many social science topics, are abstract social structures, they affirm the existence of generational differences and advocate for their measurement using appropriate data. While acknowledging the challenges inherent in generational studies, many scholars underscore the primary issue lies in the operationalization and measurement of generational differences, proposing various alternatives to address these concerns (see Campbell et al., 2015; Nakai, 2015; Wang & Peng, 2015; Zacher, 2015). Aydın (2020) underscores the need for a critical approach to generational studies, cautioning against reductionist tendencies observed in the field and advocating for the increased use of longitudinal study designs, given the limitations of cross-sectional studies.

Research in the Turkish context mirrors critiques found in international literature, but with differences such as a dearth of interrogative studies (Aydın, 2020), a lack of interdisciplinary approaches (Öztürk Aykaç, 2019), and a tendency to focus on generational differences rather than critically examining the generation phenomenon itself (Nacak, 2019). For example, studies edited by Hicret Özkoç and Bayrakdaroğlu, such as "*An Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Concept of Generation [Kuşak Kavramına Disiplinler Arası Bakış]*" (Özkoç & Bayrakdaroğlu, 2017) and "*An Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Concept of Generation 2*" (Özkoç & Bayrakdaroğlu, 2018), are often cited as interdisciplinary endeavors. However, upon closer examination, these studies appear more as collections of separate investigations conducted by researchers from various disciplines who analyze the phenomenon solely from their respective perspectives. Consequently, as Öztürk Aykaç (2019: 274) emphasizes, rather than achieving true interdisciplinary integration, these studies could be characterized as multidisciplinary endeavors where contributions from different fields converge.

Interrogative studies are also notably scarce. The majority of such studies primarily question the appropriateness of US and European-based generational characteristics for the Turkish context. For instance, Yüksekbilgili (2013: 353) investigated whether the characteristics attributed to Generation Y, particularly in studies originating from the US and Europe, hold true for Generation Y in Turkey. Consequently, it is argued that studies on Generation Y will yield better results if they identify the distinct characteristics of the Turkish type of Generation Y and adapt their practices to account for the characteristics, rather than directly importing widely used studies from other countries. Similarly, Gürbüz (2015: 53-54) examined the existence of generational differences and discovered that out of the 18 hypotheses tested, only three were supported. The author emphasizes that the most important reason for this is that the US-based classification of generations does not fit well in the Turkish context and emphasizes the need for a generational study specific to Turkey. Finally, Aydın (2020), who conducted the most comprehensive interrogative local study on this issue, assessed the controversial issues related to generations by analyzing both Turkish and international literature. The author substantiates the aforementioned critical challenges and underscores the necessity for localized categorizations and longitudinal research methodologies (p. 29).

3. Method

This qualitative study used a form with two independent sections and interviews were conducted based on the initial data obtained from the questionnaire. The first section of the form consisted of questions on demographic information, while the second section entailed open-ended interpretation questions.

Answers to open-ended questions (henceforth OEQs) offer vital insights into respondents' potential need for clarification and can enhance survey data difficult or impossible to obtain with closed-ended questions, as noted by Neuert et al., (2021). Gillespie et al. (2021) affirm that OEQs enrich survey data by allowing respondents to provide unrestricted responses, enabling them to elaborate, qualify, and clarify their answers without constraints or potentially biased prompts (He & Schonlau, 2021; Neuert et al., 2021; Schonlau et al., 2021). While data coding approaches are commonly employed in the analysis of OEQs and interviews (Popping, 2015), in recent years, there has been an increasing interest in (semi-)automatic coding, which involves transforming qualitative data into quantitative data (Roberts et al., 2014; Schonlau et al., 2021; Senderovich & Maysuradze, 2015). In this study, OEQs were employed to give the participants more leeway and the rich data obtained were analyzed through coding.

It is known that researchers most often avoid the use of OEQs due to the challenges associated with analyzing large and complex data (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019: 2). However, with the development of qualitative analysis software, these challenges have become more manageable. One of the most frequently used software is MAXQDA, which offers a wide range of applications and can be categorized as both a methodology and a methodological toolbox (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019). Therefore, in this study, demographic data are presented solely as frequency distributions, while data obtained from OEQs and interviews were analyzed using manual coding procedures with the MAXQDA 2022 program.

In the data collection phase, invitations to participate in our study were initially disseminated via email to academics in the departments of sociology, anthropology, communication, education, business administration, history, and psychology across 146 universities in Turkey. These areas were selected based on a review of the relevant literature, encompassing all fields engaged in generational studies. According to Mailtrack software, 11388 emails were read, and 1427 people responded in the first stage. However, only one participant continued to work. A second email was then sent and 179 more academics agreed to participate, but only 11 academics completed the study, bringing the total number of participants to 12. Through snowball sampling, an additional 59 academics were interviewed, yielding nine additional participants. Therefore, devoid of any sample selection process, all individuals who agreed to participate in the study were included.

Qualitative studies necessitate identifying samples aligned with research objectives that can provide more in-depth data than larger groups, as participants may reiterate themselves to a certain extent (Baltacı, 2018; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Neuman & Robson, 2014; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Accordingly, the study was completed with 21 participants, whose demographic data are presented in Table 1, following the principle of selecting purposive samples that will yield rich data.

Table 1. Participants' Demographic Data (Number of Participants)

Department	Tenure	Gender	Age Group	Hometown	Education Level	
Anthropology (1)	4-5 Years (1)	Male (12)	26 – 35 (2)	Adana	İzmir	Master's Degree (1)
Education (3)	5-10 Years (4)	Female (9)	36 – 45 (12)	Ankara	K. Maraş	PhD (20)
Economics (1)	10-15 Years (9)		46-55 (4)	Antalya	Karaman	
Communication (2)	Over 15 Years (7)		56 and above (3)	Aydın	Kars	
Business (6)				Bolu	Konya	
Psychology (1)				Bursa	Mardin	
Sociology (4)				Elâzığ	Mersin	
History (3)				Eskişehir	Sivas	
				Gaziantep (2)	Tokat	
				İstanbul	Trabzon	

Prospective participants were provided with detailed explanations of the study requirements before they consented to participate. Participants who consented to participate received a five-page Excel-formatted study file via email: The text on the first page reiterates the study requirements and extends gratitude to the participants. The second page addresses demographic inquiries, while on the third page, fundamental considerations such as criteria for feature selection and examples drawn from the American context are explained. The fourth page presents a chronological list of all prime ministers, presidents, periods in power, and significant events in the history of the Republic of Turkey. The final page presents the basic data collection form consisting of two stages: The first stage consists of only one question: "According to you, how many generations are there in Turkey from past to present? (When answering this

question, please consider all explanations provided during our interview. If you determine how many generations there are, do not forget to give each one a name and add detailed explanations about its characteristics and why it is a unique generation!)”. In the second stage, the participants were prompted to respond to 15 different topics such as birth years, Social Signifiers/Significant Events, Popular Culture for each generation (internal breakpoints are also included here after the first interview).

In analyzing the data obtained, a first draft was prepared and shared with the participants for their review. Subsequently, a second draft was formulated based on online interviews. Participants were re-interviewed after the second draft, which was created according to the date ranges and names finalized. Necessary were made based on the final feedback received, thereby concluding the study.

4. Findings

According to the data obtained, the following turning points¹ have significantly influenced the delineation of generations in Turkey. The establishment of the Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923, marked the first turning point. The first generation, termed *Founders*, encompasses individuals born before 1923, with some participants tracing birth dates as far back as 1860. The second generation, referred to as the *Republican Generation*, spans from 1924 to 1949, with the third generation, titled the *First Democrats*, spans from 1950 to 1960, with the May 27, 1960 military coup serving as its conclusion. Subsequently, the *Military Coup Generation*, beginning with the May 27 coup and ending with the coup of September 12, 1980, was named, though it was extended to include the period until the general elections of November 6, 1983, signifying the end of military tutelage. The fifth generation, individuals born between 1984 and 2002, is termed the *First Neoliberals*, With the conclusion marked by the onset of the Justice and Development Party (henceforth AK Party). Lastly, the ongoing generation, termed the *Social Media Generation* is acknowledged to have commenced, but its conclusion remains undetermined, rendering it a work in progress. Consequently, Turkey is considered to have six generations (Table 2).

Table 2. Key Findings on Turkey's Generations

Years of Birth (Sphere of Influence)	Initiator & Finisher Turning Points (Internal Turning Point)	Adopted Generation Name [Turkish Version] (The Generation does it correspond to in the literature?)
1 1923 & Before (1860s-1929)	1877-78 Ottoman Russian War & Establishment of the Republic -1923 (Tripoli War - 1911)	Founders [Kurucular] (Silent Generation)
2 1924-1949 (1919-1954)	Establishment of the Republic -1923 & Democrat Party Rule - 1950 (Beginning of World War II - 1939)	Republican Generation [Cumhuriyet Kuşağı] (Silent Generation)
3 1950-1960 (1946-1965)	Democrat Party Rule – 1950 & May 27, 1960 Coup (2nd Democratic Party Rule - 1954)	First Democrats [İlk Demokratlar] (Baby Boomers)
4 1961-1983 (1954-1984)	May 27, 1960 Coup & September 12, 1980 Coup Period (March 12 Memorandum)	Military Coup Generation [İhtilal/Darbe Kuşağı] (Generation X)
5 1984-2002 (1973-2008)	September 12, 1980 Coup Period & November 3, 2002 General Election (Turgut Özal's Death)	First Neoliberals [İlk Neoliberaler] (Generation Y)
6 2003 & After (1997-present)	November 3, 2002 General Election & Continues	Social Media Generation [Sosyal Medya Kuşağı] (Generation Z)

As outlined in the methods section, this study began with the participants receiving a form containing open-ended questions following an interview, which they filled out. After assessing the data in this first form (Table 3), participants were interviewed again, and a second draft was developed (Table 4 - Phase 2). At this stage, the total number of generations and their corresponding year intervals were determined by majority decision. The final iteration encompassed analyses derived from the second draft and the final meeting (Table 4 - Phase 3). Tables 3 and 4 serve to elucidate the progression of participant identifications and naming contributions at each stage. While the

¹ **Turning Point:** A sociocultural event/situation that causes one generation to end and another to begin.

determinations from the last column in Phase 3 were adopted as the final decision, uncertainties regarding the naming of the last two generations persisted due to hesitations expressed by two participants.

Table 3. Participants’ generation names and numbers (Phase 1) ²

Participant Code	Generation 1	Generation 2	Generation 3	Generation 4	Generation 5	Generation 6	Generation 7
P1	<i>Founders</i>	Cultural Founders	Enlightenment - Organization	Chaos Gen.	Gen. of Prohibitions	Technology	<i>Social Media Gen</i>
P2	<i>Founders</i>	Children of the Founders	<i>Democrats</i>	Children of the Coup	<i>Neoliberals</i>	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>	
P3 ²	<i>Gen C (Republic)</i>		Gen D (Democracy)	Gen E (Oppressed)	Gen X (Blurred)	Gen T (Technology)	
P4	Founders	Gen. of Revolution	Democrat Party	<i>Coups Era</i>	City/Urban Gen.	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>	
P5	One-Man Generation		Revolution & Change Conflict Gen.	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	<i>Neoliberals</i>	Gen. of Political Islam	
P6	<i>Founders</i>	Gen. of change	Gen. of return to original identity	Idealist Gen.	Globalization Gen.	Techno Gen.	
P7	First Gen.	Gen. of change	First Liberal Gen.	Silenced Gen.	Televole ³ Gen.	Gen. of Political Islam	
P8	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>First Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	<i>First Neoliberals</i>	AK Party Gen.	
P9	Gen. of Struggle	Revolution Gen.	Gen. Change	Idealist Gen.	Blurred Gen.	Technology Gen.	
P10	Warriors of Liberation	Gen. of Children of the Republic	Children of Democracy	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	Unfortunate Gen.	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>	
P11	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	Democrat Party Gen.	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	Technology Gen.	Web Gen.	
P12	<i>Founders</i>		The First Americanists	Oppressed	Gen. of Prohibitions	AK Party Gen.	
P13	Silent Gen.	<i>Founders</i>	Baby Boomers	Gen. X	Gen. Y	Gen. Z	
P14	<i>Founders</i>	Revolution Gen.	Little America/ Americanization Gen.	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	Globalization Gen.	Internet generation	
P15	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	<i>First Neoliberals</i>	AK Party generation	
P16	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>First Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	<i>Neoliberals</i>	Gen. of Pretended [Miş Gibi]	
P17	<i>Republican Gen.</i>		<i>Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	Lost Gen.	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>	
P18	<i>Founders</i>	Social Realists	Silenced Gen.	Individualists	Virtual realists		
P19	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	The Gen. who discovered politics	Post-memorandum Gen.	Gen. away from politics	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>	
P20	Gen. of the Establishment Period of the Republic		Gen. Change	Military Coup Gen.	Technology Gen.	Millennials	
P21	Gen. of Grandparents		Fathers-mothers Gen.	Unfortunate Gen.	Mature-Adolescent Gen.	Gen. of Babies	

Table 4. Participants’ generation names and numbers (Phase 2 &3)

Participant Code	Generation 1	Generation 2	Generation 3	Generation 4	Generation 5	Generation 6
P3	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	Gen D (Democracy)	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	Blurred Generation	Technology Generation
P6	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>First Democrats</i>	Idealist Gen.	<i>First Neoliberals</i>	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>
P7	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	First Liberal Generation	Silenced Gen.	<i>First Neoliberals</i>	Gen. of Political Islam
All other participants	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>First Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	<i>First Neoliberals</i>	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>

Participant Code	Generation 1	Generation 2	Generation 3	Generation 4	Generation 5	Generation 6
P3	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>First Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	Blurred Gen.	Technology Gen.
P7	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>First Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	<i>First Neoliberals</i>	Gen. of Political Islam
All other participants	<i>Founders</i>	<i>Republican Gen.</i>	<i>First Democrats</i>	<i>Military Coup Gen.</i>	<i>First Neoliberals</i>	<i>Social Media Gen.</i>

The categorization of generations provides a framework through which we observe and analyze the socio-political dynamics of a nation. In the Turkish context, generational labels offer a distinct narrative reflecting the country’s historical, political, and cultural evolution. Each generation’s designation in this context is meticulously selected in light of historical events, political transformations, and sociological shifts, in alignment with the perspectives of the

² Here, the first letter of the Turkish versions of the words was taken as the basis by the participant: C-Cumhuriyet, D-Demokrasi, E-Ezilenler & T-Teknoloji

² Televole is a magazine program that aired on TV between 1994 and 2005.

participants. This is because the commencement and conclusion of generations in Turkey have consistently evolved in response to such shifts.

However, significant findings have emerged, proposing a novel approach by incorporating the concepts of sphere of influence, successor and predecessor members, and internal turning point phenomena of generations into the literature. While controversies have arisen regarding the data processing procedures, much of the debate has centered on the identification of turning points and associated dates for each generation. Notably, the phenomenon of generations' spheres of influence has gained prominence. In essence, a generation's sphere of influence refers to the entire period during which its defining characteristics manifest, including the pioneering effect observed before the initiator turning points and the successor effect observed after the finisher turning point (see Figure 1).

The date ranges attributed to generations are imprecise. They only refer to turning points where a change is inevitable. However, the dynamics that trigger these turning points have predecessor and successor effects; these dynamics have immediate effects on some groups, which become precursors, while effects on others are delayed, making them successors. Similarly, some are not affected at all and do not exhibit generational characteristics although they are in the relevant generational period. A turning point, which concludes one generation and initiates the next, is therefore only the most prominent and obvious factor. To clearly illustrate this, scholars acknowledge the Truman Doctrine of March 12, 1947 as the starting date of the Cold War (i.e., Edwards, 1988; Frazier, 1984; Gaddis, 1974; Merrill, 2006; Spalding, 2017). However, this is not to suggest that there were no Cold War influences or individuals impacted by it in the earlier period, does it imply that everyone in every nation experienced the impact of the Cold War immediately and uniformly on March 13, 1947. Therefore, while turning points are the most prominent circumstances or events, predecessor and successor group members³, can be impacted by the relevant situation/event in preceding or succeeding eras and exhibit the characteristics of the relevant generation.

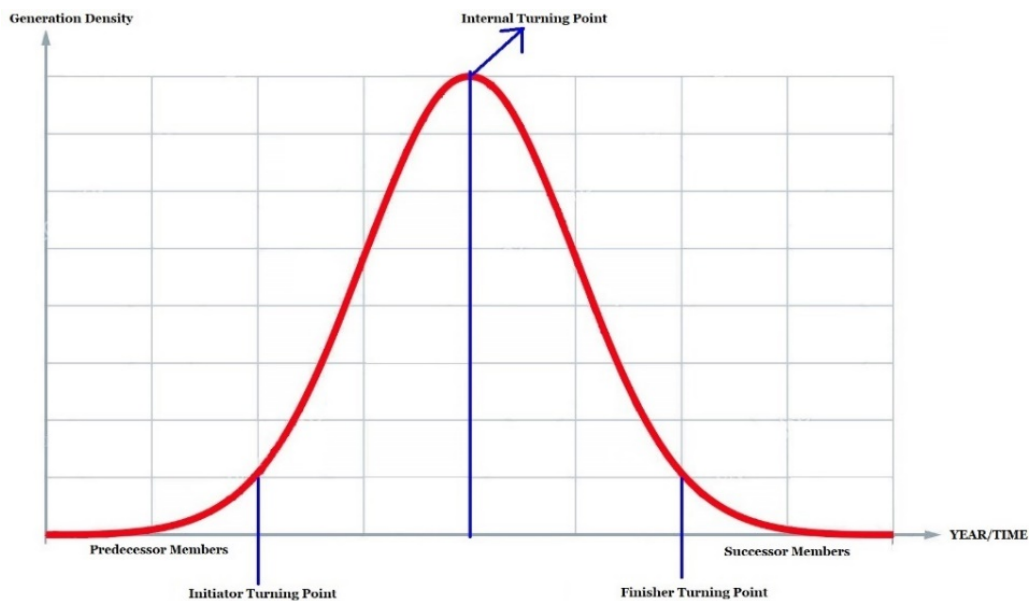


Figure 1.⁴ Sphere of Influence and Turning Points of Generations

The final issue concerns the internal turning point, a pivotal event or situation occurring in all generations, which serves the precursor to the finisher turning point, or rather initiates the series of events leading to its realization. This internal turning point effectively divides each generation into two halves. The initial is marked by predominantly positive developments in terms of generational characteristics, while the second phase typically witnessed a succession of negative developments that accumulated over time, eventually leading to a culmination.

³ **Predecessor and Successor Member Periods:** Periods found by subtracting the generational period from the Sphere of Influence.

⁴ In Figure 1, these two phases appear to represent equal date ranges, but there is no evidence to support this and the length of the periods varies as seen in Table 2.

4.1. Founders

P12: If the period preceding 1923 is considered, this group ought to be referred to as the founders. Although significant disparities exist between the general populace and the select group that established a new state in terms of personal attributes, educational attainment, and sociocultural heritage, these individuals collectively constructed this nation.

The first generation, encompassing those born before 1923, can trace its roots back to the 1860s, offering the broadest date range among participants. The onset of the 1877 Ottoman–Russian War marked the beginning of the decline of the Ottoman Empire, with events during Abdülhamid II's 33-year reign shaping this new generation. Many individuals of this generation, including Turkey's founding figures and social strata integral to the nation's establishment, perished in conflicts. Beginning with the Tripoli War in 1911, the trend persisted through the Balkan Wars, World War I, and the War of Independence Wars until 1923. Consequently, the defeat in the Tripoli War emerged as a pivotal internal turning point. Conversely, due to consistent rebellions and conflicts within the Ottoman Empire between 1897 and 1911, some participants argued that the 30-Day War in 1897 should serve as the internal turning point. However, prevailing consensus leaned toward regarding the Ottoman victory in the 30-Day War as a temporary delay rather than a definitive turning point. Regarding spheres of influence, this period begins with the intensification of the "Young/New Ottoman" Westernization movement in the 1860s, culminating in the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. It concludes with the reforms implemented by the New Republic in 1928–29 (the adoption of the Latin alphabet, secularism, the right of women to vote and stand for election, etc.). Notably, the telegraph emerged as the predominant media tool of this generation.

Disputes over the nomenclature of this generation have been minimal. In Phase 1, some participants excluded the period prior to 1923, while others extended it from 1900 to 1945. However, upon reflection, consensus emerged that the pre-1923 era should constitute a distinct generation, unequivocally known as the founders. The primary bone of contention lies in determining the precise starting point, as highlighted in the preceding discussion.

4.2. Republican Generation

P14: In this context, I agree that our second generation should be the Republican generation. After all, it is undeniable that the most significant difference from the previous generation or generations is the new regime.

The second generation consists of those born between 1923 and 1949. While the initiator turning point of the generation remains undisputed, participants identified several events as potential finisher turning points, including Atatürk's death (November 10, 1938), the onset (September 1, 1939) and conclusion (September 2, 1945) of World War II (WW II), and Turkey's first multiparty election (July 21, 1946). Particularly contentious were the dates of Atatürk's death and the end of WW II, which are typically considered as turning points in most of the generational classifications in literature. Ultimately, despite evident most debated ones. In conclusion, while there were clear signs of turmoil and transformation in the 1940s, with the pioneering effects of the Cold War becoming apparent, consensus holds that the true impact was felt after Atatürk's death, particularly during İnönü's leadership, marking the establishment of the Democrat Party Government as the decisive turning point. Similarly, although the impact of WW II on Turkey is undeniable, it has been concluded that Turkey was not as affected as the countries that participated in the war and that this did not cause a turning point in Turkish society. However, all evidence points to the outbreak of WW II as the generation's internal turning point. The policies implemented by the governments and the public's reaction to these policies due to the outbreak of the war led to the decisive break, as Turner and colleagues emphasize in the necessary struggle for consciousness (Eyerman & Turner, 1998; Turner, 1998). The period between Atatürk's launching of the liberation movement in 1919 and the elections of 1954, when the policies of the Democratic Party government began to change, emerges as the sphere of influence. While the telegraph remains the most widespread media tool, radio and cinema have also become influential among this generation.

No dissenting opinions were observed in the naming of this generation, and based on the table after phase 1, all participants adopted the name Republican Generation.

4.3. First Democrats

The initiator turning point of First Democrats, born between 1950 and 1960, is the 1950 elections, while the finisher turning point is the May 27, 1960 coup. This generation, which covers a very short period of time, has also brought with it debates about whether such a short period of time can be considered a generation. Participants agreed that this is a distinct generation, albeit brief, characterized by its unique characteristics that distinguish it from the generations that came before and after it. The internal turning point was identified as the 1954 electoral victory that ushered in the second period of the Democrat Party in power, in which it began to implement practices contrary to its founding

rhetoric. The period from 1945, the conclusion of WW II marking the beginning of the bipolar world, and 1965 when the polarization between the Republican People's Party and the Democrat Party turned into a polarization between the right and the left, constitutes the generation's sphere of influence. While radio remains the predominant media tool, the spread of American influence in the cities is also evident through the pronounced impact of cinema.

Various nomenclatures emerged during the first phase of this era (refer to Table 3). However, our study found it appropriate to adopt the nomenclature of the First Democrats, placing emphasis on the appellation of the Democrat Party. Subsequently, during the second phase, all participants, except two, agreed on the designation of the first democrats. The central tenet of this consensus was that the chosen name not only symbolized the rise of the Democrat Party, representative of the era, but also marked the establishment of a new democratic identity. This catalyzed a profound societal division, delineating the dichotomy of the "[Republican] People's Party vs. Democrat Party.": During this period, the significance of political ideology escalated to the extent that the society, which was sharply divided between "[Republican] People's party vs Democrat Party," did not even frequent the same coffeehouse in the tiniest settlements. The significant strides in the economy and living standards, particularly in rural regions where a substantial portion of the populace initially resided, coupled with religious convictions resonating with these predominantly conservative rural communities, led to a strong allegiance to the democratic party. Conversely, the implementation of stringent policies, targeting opposition factions and the media, as well as certain policies affecting communities, religion, education, system, and economics, gave rise to a dissident faction. The resulting polarization has perpetuated division in Turkish democracy. In the ensuing years, this division endured various situations, including the schism between right-wing and left-wing ideologies, and the dichotomy between secular and conservative perspectives.⁵

Two participants who dissented from this nomenclature articulated their primary rationale for their opposition. Amidst discussions surrounding the first two generations, these participants, who changed their stance in the final stage and ultimately acquiesced to the appellation, emphasized themes highlighting that these two generations were governed under a singular authoritarian regime, subjecting the populace to homogenization. They transcended mere critique by advancing arguments characterizing the period as one marked by the struggle for survival and the assertion of existence against the state. According to their assertions, this era witnessed discord between Western Revolutions and Islamic principles, resulting in contradictions and instigating conflicts and psychosocial traumas in every domain. The masses, victimized by the nascent regime, struggled to assert their existence, testing the state. Consequently, they argued that this emerging generation, liberated from the oppression and persecution of the initial two periods, should be labeled the First Liberal Generation and Democracy (or Children of Democracy). While these perspectives were duly considered, the counterarguments presented by other participants and insights gleaned from final consultation interviews were categorized as critiques, dismissing the validity of these arguments for the present generation and disregarding the contextual conditions. Ultimately, both dissenting participants agreed that the designation "First Democrats" would be more fitting.

4.4. Military Coup Generation

P21: I mean, to be honest, at first, I made a classification based only on age, but after the first stage, when I saw the answers of other participants, I realized that I had to look at the issue from a different angle. Therefore, we should look at what should be the most accurate here, rather than my opinion coming to the fore. I think this is the most ideal name for a generation that started and ended with a military coup and whose internal rupture we all agree was a military memorandum. [*referring the military coup*]

This generation began with the 1960 coup and ended with the 1983 elections that overturned the 1980 coup regime; hence, earning the name *Military Coup Generation*. In addition to the two coups, the March 12 Memorandum, which forced the government to resign in 1970 and caused an internal turning point, also took place during this period. Regarding internal turning points, participants experienced challenges choosing between the March 12 Memorandum and the 1973 oil crisis. The collapse of the Bretton Woods monetary system and the 1973 oil crisis, which brought about the end of the planned mixed economy, have been considered at least as much as the memorandum, since they were the trigger starting the process leading to neoliberal policies and the January 24 decisions. However, the March 12 memorandum was found to be more critical as an internal turning point due to its socio-cultural implications that

⁵ The following sources are recommended by the participants for those who want to read in detail about this period:

Ahmad, F., (2020). *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye 1945-1980*. (5th Ed.) Hil Yayınları.
 Ağaoğlu, S. (1972). *Demokrat Partinin Doğuş ve Yükseliş Sebepleri: Bir Soru. Baha Matbaa.*
 Apuhan, Ş. (1997). *Öteki Menderes*, İstanbul: Timaş
 Özer, İ. (2015). *Demokrat Parti Dönemi Siyasi ve Sosyal Hayat*. İstanbul: İskenderiye.
 Toprak, Z. (2013). *Lozan'dan Cumhuriyet'e İsmet İnönü*, Ankara: İnönü Vakfı.

directly targeted this generation, in addition to its economic implications. The first effects of the sphere of influence began in 1954 during the Second Democratic Party period and lasted until early 1984 when normalization began after the September 12 coup. Although radio is still the most widespread media tool of the period, cinema, television and telephones are also influential. Moreover, for the first time, music, which was not a media tool, was used to convey messages to the masses in this period.

Several names were proposed for this generation (Table 3) and at the third phase, all participants agreed that the term Military Coup Generation was more fitting.

4.5. First Neoliberals

P18: Of course, in the first stage, I made a conceptualization based on personal characteristics, and apoliticalization was my main touchstone for this generation.... I mean, I would agree that Özal was the most critical actor in this period, but frankly I was quite distant from issues like the Bretton Woods monetary system or the 1974 oil crisis that brought the planned mixed economy to an end. But now, as a result, it is clear that the big picture for this generation is being neoliberal. I especially love the characterization of "the first", very well captured by the participants, congratulations, because that first is a very good characterization of the whole period that followed.

This generation began with the 1983 general elections that ended the three-year rule of the September 12 coup plotters, and ended with another general election in 2002. With the January 24th decisions, Özal took the helm of the economy and was appointed Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the economy in Bülend Ulusu's military government to continue his economic policies. After serving for 22 months, Özal resigned on July 14, 1982, and began working on establishing his party. He was victorious in the 1983 elections, in which important actors such as Demirel, Ecevit and Erbakan were still banned and failed to enter, and ended the period of military tutelage. He thus put an end to nearly 24 years of chaos and became the most important political actor of the time, serving as Prime Minister between 1983 and 1989 and President from 1989 until his death in 1993. The name "First Neoliberals" was selected because this generation refers to an era characterized by the ascendancy of the market economy. This shift, which commenced following the oil crisis of 73 and was official endorsed through the January 24th, 1980 decisions, reflects the reality of neoliberalization along with its associated political economy factors. In terms of the generation's sphere of influence, the year 1973, marking the initiation of the transition to the neoliberal policies, serves as the starting point. Conversely, the year 2008, marked by a significant upheaval in neoliberal policies due to the financial crisis, serves as the endpoint. The most important actor of this period was undoubtedly Turgut Özal, and his death was the internal turning point. All governments after Özal's death, except for the 137-day Ecevit transitional election government (11.01-28.05.1999), were coalitions of two or three. Television was the most widespread media tool of this generation and television series and shows were popular and influential.

4.6. Social Media Generation

P7: I am not denying the influence of social media or technology, but I still think that the main characteristic of this generation is the phenomenon of political Islam in the axis of AKP vs. AKP opposition. After all, this is a generation born and raised under a lot of critical policies and factors shaped by a very powerful government. So, it is not possible for me to disagree with the arguments of the other participants. Since the majority is in this direction, the name social media is considered reasonable.

The AK Party governments and the advent of social media dominate discussions about this generation. While the 2002 elections that brought the AK Party to power are accepted as the initiator turning point of this generation, the participants struggled between the widespread use of the internet in Turkey, which led to the emergence and widespread use of social media, and the significance of this election. However, because social media's impact results from cumulative effects rather than a singular event, and considering the influence of government policies, the 2002 election was deemed the turning point. Consequently, the name "social media generation" was adopted, acknowledging the mutual social effects of social media and the increasing cultural convergence facilitated by communication technologies, despite the AK Party's ascension to power serving as the turning point. One of the two participants who disagreed with the name of this generation stated that it should be technology because technology is the primary cause, while the other stated that the main determinant of this generation in Turkey should be political Islam because it revolves around political Islam and its opposition. However, with a majority decision, the name social media was accepted.

Regarding the finisher turning point, while some argued for events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, economic issues in 2021–2022, or the emergence of web 3.0, the consensus held that this generation persists. Two scenarios emerged regarding sphere of influence: in the first scenario, the web, developed and launched by Tim Berners-Lee in 1989, marks the beginning of this generation's sphere of influence. In the second scenario, despite being referred to as the social media generation (referring to Web 2.0), domestic political issues in Turkey emerged as the main influencing factor, owing to some necessities brought about by dynamics specific to Turkey, such as the state's restrictive power

and role in Internet use, the necessity to follow technology one step behind, and the continuing influence of popular culture-oriented policies implemented after the September 12 coup. In the second scenario, the February 28, 1997 memorandum is regarded as the beginning of this generation's sphere of influence. Both scenarios recognize the sphere of influence is still active. We accept the assumption that February 28 is more significant because it was the beginning of the dynamics that brought the AK Party to power.

Regarding the internal turning point, the following events stood out: a) the third AK Party government (2011), b) 2012, when smartphones and application markets such as iOS/Google Play began to gain traction in Turkey, c) the emergence of Web 3.0 and metaverse technology, which includes advanced technology such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, machine learning, Internet of Things (IoT), virtual reality, peer-to-peer (P2P), d) the Gezi Park events (2013), and e) the two elections in 2015. In our study, since smartphones which maximize the effects of the opportunities offered by web 2.0 technology locally, are the most important factor shaping this generation and are the main mechanism in the spread of social media, 2012, when the Android market application, which is the beginning of this, started to operate in Turkey, is considered to be the internal turning point. Since the generation is still ongoing, the final decisions on all these issues will only be made when the final turning point takes place. While the recent Kahramanmaraş earthquakes of February 6, 2023, may signal the finisher turning point, the full impact is yet to be determined. It is undeniable that social media remains the most popular and powerful media tool of this generation.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

While the academic community's interest in generation studies is growing, it is also met with a range of criticisms within the academic circle. This study did not engage in debates concerning the necessity and validity of generational studies but rather addressed critiques by striving for more effective methodologies. Specifically, it seeks to develop a generational classification specific to Turkey, demonstrating how effective operationalization can be achieved. This endeavor demonstrated how and why Turkey-specific generational classification should be modeled in the micro context, as well as how and why other generational classifications should benefit from this modeling in the macro context. To achieve this, the study initially addressed relevant literature to contextualize why the global generation classification differs across societies (e.g., Campbell et al., 2015; Schewe & Meredith, 2004). Subsequently, a generation classification for Turkey was developed with the participation of 21 social scientists from various regions within Turkey, considering cultural influences and diverse perspectives of researchers across various fields. In conclusion, the study identifies six different generations in Turkey: the founders, the republican generation, the first democrats, the military coup generation, the first neoliberals and the social media generation. These generations are shaped by sociopolitical conditions prevalent in Turkey. It is important to emphasize that the entire phenomenon of generational identification in Turkey, from naming to categorization, is intricately influenced by the prevailing sociopolitical landscape.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the commonly used global generation classification in literature inadequately represents Turkey's generations. While global events such as the Great Depression of 1929, WW II, Generation 68 events, the significant change in the labor force created by women in Generation X, and the invention of the Internet, all stand out as pivotal turning points in the global generation classification, they hold secondary significance in Turkey compared to nation-specific political events like governmental changes and military coups. This supports the studies that claim that social and cultural differences affect generational classification (e.g., Aydın, 2020; Campbell et al., 2015; Gürbüz, 2015). Therefore, it is essential to stress once again that the current sociopolitical climate in Turkey profoundly shapes the whole phenomenon of generational identity, including the act of identifying and categorizing. The turning points in the worldwide generation categorization post-WWII were mostly determined by technological advancements. However, these advancements remained secondary factors as their effectiveness in Turkey depended on their impact reaching a specific degree in other nations. However, the emergence of social media and influencer phenomena have been concurrently prevalent in various regions of the globe. This also implies that the characteristics of future generations will exhibit greater uniformity worldwide, particularly facilitated by web 3.0 technologies. Thus, in other words, this study supports Nacak's (2019:25) and Bayhan's (2019:44) argument that generational similarity has evolved from a period when it could be comprehended within a certain social limitation to a period in which generational features are comparable on a worldwide scale.

Bringing together social scientists from various disciplines to identify Turkey's generations facilitated a comprehensive understanding of viewing similar events from different perspectives. Following the first draft, all participants interviewed expressed a need to re-examine their own perspectives and acknowledged that many of the issues raised in other fields should have been considered but were overlooked. This multidisciplinary approach has yielded critical and unique contributions to generation studies. These contributions include a) naming and making

more concrete *the initiator and finisher turning points*, b) demonstrating the existence of an *internal turning point* and that it occurs in all generations, c) understanding that the internal turning point is the key mechanism initiating the process leading to the finisher turning point, d) demonstrating that all turning points may exhibit individual differences in the meaning attributed to them by individuals based on their experiences. Moreover, these turning points are directly related to specific events, and some generational members may take serve as *predecessors or successors* in periods outside the generational period, and e) recognizing that each generational period and its antecedent/successor periods constitute the generational *sphere of influence*. In summary, in addition to initiator and finisher turning points, this study has introduced the *internal turning point*, *spheres of influence*, and *successor/predecessor members* of the generations to the literature.

One of the most common criticisms of generation studies is the perception of it as a "popular culture" subject. Given the ample evidence of academic curiosity (e.g., Costanza et al., 2021), further discussion on this issue is unnecessary. Another critique relates to the lack of an adequate explanation for the existence of generational differences. This study contributes to the literature by asserting that generational differences stem from distinct experiences between generations, shaping generational specificity through generational media tools. These findings are consistent with the role of media in influencing personalities, especially during their formative years, as Lissitsa & Laor (2021) noted. It is important to note that the generational differences are influenced by different factors, and not all members of a generation in the same manner. Taken together with the critique that suggests the relevant differences are also explicable by alternative approaches, both critiques are seen as rooted in the positivist approach. More precisely, different social science fields have highly different perspectives on how any social structure differs based on income, educational attainment, or gender, and thousands of researchers analyze these variances as variables. However, this does not mean that the issue under scrutiny can only be explained by the relevant variables. Therefore, the fact that it can be explained by alternative approaches should not indicate that any particular approach is untenable.

Moreover, the criticism regarding inconsistent empirical studies on generational differences can be attributed to several factors. Disparities in study results are primarily rooted in the plethora of social markers across different cultures, leading to varied generation dates. Additionally, the diverse perspectives that comes from pursuing different disciplines in the same society contribute to these inconsistencies. This study reveals that members of the generation before and after the internal turning points are impacted by distinct dynamics, with some individuals existing outside the norm as successor/ predecessor members. Disregarding these complexities often leads to findings in generational studies being perceived as contradictions or inconsistencies. The generational phenomena cannot be reduced to mere dates. Its variability does not add a negative result to the issue. Because certain generational characteristics are concentrated in certain date intervals, there is a date range that expresses the beginning and end of generations; however, these are not precise lines, as these characteristics may manifest outside of these dates, as demonstrated by successor/predecessor members. Just as dates range among cultures due to socio-cultural influences, it is typical for certain dominant influences to manifest later or not at all in other groups, or to exert effects at different levels and times. Similarly, just as observing the effects of the Cold War in a specific area and community before its official onset date of March 12, 1947, does not contradict the Cold War's recognized beginning, noting generation characteristics preceding the attributed onset date does not contradict the generation phenomenon. Therefore, the variation in research outcomes across societies, as well as differences observed within the same society due to the different degrees of exposure to relevant generational characteristics, does not contradict the concept of generational differences. Addressing this requires the operationalization of multidisciplinary longitudinal studies incorporating the phenomena presented in this study, which also serves as a solution to another criticism of the subject – the lack of effectiveness in addressing such differences. Therefore, this study supports the view that the relevant criticisms stem from cross-sectional studies, which may lead to errors in the operationalization and measurement of generational studies.

Despite time and participation constraints, this study proposed a generational classification specific to Turkey based on the perspectives of participants from various disciplines and enriched the literature by providing phenomena critical to the operationalization of generational classification studies. Future research should examine the proposed findings and operationalizations of this study and consider ways of making the generative phenomenon more functional.

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