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CONTENTS

Research Article

Exploring the Effect of Music in Promoting the Health and Well-being of University Students in the COVID-19 Era

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ABSTRACT

The therapeutic effect of music on mental and physical health is a well-known fact. However, there is a knowledge gap in understanding music's effect on university students coping with the mental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The qualitative analysis method has been used in the research. In this context, an online survey has prepared and presented to the participants. NVIVO 12™, a qualitative data analysis method, has been used to evaluate the survey results. Our study demonstrates that physical distancing measures negatively impact university students' mental health (e.g., stress, depression, anxiety) due to a lack of social interaction, support and the distinction between study and rest areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our study also reports diverging opinions regarding the virtual learning system. Some students expressed positivity towards the virtual learning system due to the absence of commuting stress and flexibility. However, many students still answered negatively due to perceived lowered lecture quality and the challenge of adjusting to the new educational environment. Musical experiences were found to be effective coping strategies that help maintain well-being and health among students due to their effectiveness in immediate mood change and distraction from reality.

Keywords: Effect of music; promoting health and well-being of University students; covid-19 era; coping strategy; health intervention; music therapy

1. INTRODUCTION

Music is an important tool that directs and influences people's emotions. It has been determined that the type of music people listen consequently affects their quality of life. Although the effect of music on people's psychology has been known throughout history, it has been seen that music has a physiological effect on people in studies conducted in recent years (Yurdalan et al., 2022). Music therapy refers to a therapy process consisting of evidence-based practices that are determined and applied according to the needs of individuals or groups by applying certain principles and rules by a specialist therapist (Torun, 2022). With the COVID -19 pandemic, negative situations have occurred caused by both distance education and the disease, with students following their education remotely It has been observed that the psychology of the students has been negatively affected, and as a result, there has been an increase in the level of fear, anxiety and anxiety in the students (Pektaş & Ilhan,2022). The therapeutic effect of music on mental and physical health is supported by a wide range of research. For instance, according to Fancourt et al. (2016), musical experience, particularly singing, increases immune responses in cancer patients. Musical experience has also been shown to have positive effects on premature infants' cardiac and respiratory functions and reduced stress and anxiety in their parents (Loewy, Stewart, Dassler, Telsey, & Homel, 2013). However, to date, there has been no research conducted to understand the use of music by university students to cope with the mental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December 2019, the newest strain of coronavirus (COVID-19) originated in Wuhan, China, and rapidly spread globally (WHO, 2020). This virus causes mild to severe respiratory infections and is transmitted from person to person by inhaling an infected person's droplet in the atmosphere (WHO, 2020). Since COVID-19 is highly infectious, many countries, including Canada, have been practicing strict physical distancing or lockdowns to prevent or slow down the spread of the disease. However, prolonged social or physical distancing has been a concern as it may cause undesirable mental health outcomes (Abel & McQueen, 2020). A qualitative research team interviewed the frontline nurses working with COVID-19 patients in China and found that the nurses experienced psychological exhaustion that even leads to physical pain (Sun et al., 2020). This phenomenon is not only a concern for caregivers but also the general public of all ages. In research by Jiao et al. (2020), the prolonged social distancing due to COVID-19 increased stress, fear and anxiety in children due to the absence of school activities. Post-secondary students are also vulnerable to negative psychological changes caused by a lack of motivation to study due to remote online classes and social events (Cao et al., 2020).

Recent studies have demonstrated the effect of music therapy or musical experience in helping mental well-being and emotional challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic (Corvo & De Caro, 2020; Giordano et al., 2020). Sun et al. (2020) discovered that frontline nurses in China developed strategies to deal with the current pandemic situation, including exposure to musical experiences to decrease anxiety and stress under stressful conditions. The effectiveness of music therapy in relieving stress was reported by Italian clinical staff who cared for COVID-19 patients as well (Giordano et al., 2020). However, there has been very little or no published research on the use of music by university students during the COVID-19 pandemic to promote health and well-being.

1.1. Purpose of the research

This study aims to assess how undergraduate students perceive and maintain their mental and physical health during the COVID-19 pandemic and to understand whether various musical experiences effectively promote mental and physical health during periods of physical isolation. Our study also examines how music may be used as a therapy method for the psychological improvement of students. The sample used for this study is restricted to Ryerson University, Toronto students.

2. METHODS

2.1. Study design

Our study uses a qualitative research approach using an online survey. We received approval from the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board. The survey was administered in November 2020. The study population of interest was undergraduate students who had to continue their studies virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In November 2020, we sent an email containing a research survey link to the program coordinators of undergraduate programs at Ryerson University. Once approved, the coordinators circulated the recruitment email to students in the program. Only full-time undergraduate students enrolled at Ryerson University with an active email address were included in the study. To encourage participation, students could provide their name and email address to win a $10 Starbucks e-gift card. All the collected answers were saved in Ryerson University's secure server. In total, 30 participants were recruited.

2.2. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire consisted of nine open-ended questions. The survey questions asked about changes in students' psychological wellness due to physical distancing practices enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and their experience as undergraduate students during this time. Some questions focused on whether musical experiences had helped the participants cope with the current situation and whether music would be used as a coping strategy in the future. The online questionnaire was planned to be completed within 15 minutes, and the survey questions were pilot tested by two students.

2.3. Data analysis

Survey responses were analysed by using NVIVO 12™, a qualitative data management software program, to identify themes within the data for further thematic analysis (TA). TA is a method that can be used to extract "patterns of meaning (themes)" from qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2014). Through the NVIVO 12™, the codes created from the open-ended answers were further analysed, and the answers were classified into three themes to identify and summarize the key elements of the answers. Two researchers independently conducted the coding to ensure the accuracy of the analysis.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Characteristics of respondents

A total of 30 eligible participants responded to the online survey. Every participant used their Ryerson University email address to complete the survey and answered as they were enrolled in full-time undergraduate programs at Ryerson University. We identified three themes, and they are summarized here with representative quotations for each theme.

3.2. Findings

Theme 1: COVID-19 pandemic, the era of emotional turmoil

The initial question was if the COVID-19 pandemic situation had affected participants' moods or emotional well-being. Almost every participant (n=29) said they had experienced changes in mood or emotions while practicing physical distancing. Most of these answers (n=27) were related to negative emotions. More than half of these responses (52%, n=14) indicated that students felt lonely or isolated due to a lack of or limited social interaction caused by the lockdown. One participant stated: "I am isolated and overlooked due to limited contact with the outside world." Another participant added that "Loneliness, screen fatigue, and negative thoughts are all by-products of my experiences during COVID-19".

Increased anxiety and depression were the second most frequently mentioned issue arising from uncertainty regarding the pandemic and limited physical activity due to social distancing. Many students also mentioned that they had difficulty adapting to the "new normal" since they had to change almost every aspect of their lives (e.g., not being able to make physical contact with loved ones, being unable to go out for physical activities, etc.). As one participant explained, "Quarantine brought up a lot of past feelings/thoughts which made it hard to adjust to the situation and increased anxiety due to COVID-19".

Furthermore, feelings of hopelessness were expressed along with anxiety and depression, which led some participants to lose their self-esteem. Some participants (n=5) responded that they were becoming less motivated and more bored due to the prolonged lockdown, which led to a loss of concentration and a lack of energy. One respondent noted that remaining in the same space for extended periods of time contributed to their boredom and fatigue: ". . . I felt incredibly bored and it started to feel like I was just rotating through the same day over and over. . .".

Other respondents spoke about the impact of reduced access to support and services. For instance, one student expressed that they were overwhelmed by parental duties and the demands of undergraduate study when childcare facilities were shut down. Physical distancing requirements also meant they could not get support from family members who lived in different households. The student wrote, "I felt completely overwhelmed as a single parent, especially when the daycare was closed. I wanted to ask for help, but I didn't want to risk coming in contact with extended family and friends."

Theme 2: Not all doom and gloom

We received a range of responses to the question, "how do you feel about being an undergraduate student during the COVID-19 era?" Most students offered negative responses (n=23), four responded positively, and three said there

was no effect on them. With respect to negative responses, students offered a range of factors that made life as an undergraduate student more difficult during the pandemic. Some factors were specifically related to their studies: reduced quality of lectures, challenges adapting to an online learning environment, decreased concentration, losing in-person opportunities such as field placements, and inability to secure personal space at home. Other factors making undergraduate life more challenging were connected to emotional difficulties: feeling lost, difficulty dealing with an unfamiliar situation, burnout, financial problems or challenges arising due to lack of social interaction. Some students pointed to adverse physical outcomes related to online learning, such as increased frequency of headaches and screen fatigue.

More than half of the study participants complained that the new situation made time management more arduous. Since the beginning of the pandemic, many professors have provided pre-recorded lectures for students' convenience. Despite the added flexibility provided by recorded lectures, our results suggest that many students have found that time management has become more difficult because of the sudden transition to a virtual learning system. Many students struggled to adapt to the new system throughout the academic year. Participants said:

> "It is very difficult being home and trying to get through the semester. Being home means less time for yourself (e.g., studying, self-care) when you have to take care of others"
> "... it's a very hard transition. . ."
> "... isolated in the context of working virtually as it is a very dramatic difference (working is harder by yourself)"

Furthermore, participants described their current remote learning environment or system as stressful, overwhelming, odd, and demotivating. Many students also pointed out that the current virtual learning system did not provide the same quality of education as in-class learning. Due to these struggles, some students mentioned that their grades had been negatively impacted. For instance, one student wrote: "My grades have decreased significantly. I struggle with online tests and retaining information when I'm distracted at home."

Other students expressed concerns relating to the loss of access to services or in-person opportunities. For instance, one student explained that it is "frustrating to be paying the same amount of tuition when many of the services we are paying for are not being used...". Another wrote, "I'm missing out on meaningful in-person experiences." A lack of a stable Internet connection was also mentioned as another downside of remote learning: "I am scared that my internet will cut out. The teachers are not accommodating with this."

Although most students reported that the pandemic negatively impacted their undergraduate experience, a few wrote about positive outcomes. These positive responses touched on themes of increased flexibility, reduced commuting stress, and a feeling of added safety. For instance, in contrast to those who felt that time management had become more difficult with remote learning, one student wrote: "I feel lucky in a way because of the flexibility my professors and courses have given me. . .". Another stated, "I enjoy online learning because it saves time on commuting and keeps us safe." Provision of a more manageable number of exams was also mentioned as a benefit of the virtual learning system as most of the tests were conducted using an open-book format.

Theme 3: Music helps so much

Students were also asked whether any musical experience (e.g., listening to music, playing/learning musical instruments, singing/rapping, music composition, beat making, writing lyrics, etc.) helped them cope with psychological changes caused by the pandemic. Most students (n=24) answered in the affirmative, while six students said musical experiences were not effective as a coping strategy. Twenty participants answered that they had used musical experiences to cope; these experiences included listening to music, singing a song, discovering new genres, and learning musical instruments. For some, musical experiences were a way to distract oneself from the reality of one's situation.

> "Music always puts me in a zone where I can forget about everything for a while and release some stress."
> "It was a short escape to dance it out, sing, be happy while it felt like the world around me was crumbling."
> "It feels like a happy distraction and can pull you out of the current moment you are in."

Many participants stated that musical experiences assisted them in de-stressing or elevating their moods. They used words like excitement, happiness, brightness, joy, less alone, calm or relaxation, and in general, expressed positivity in their answers. Increased productivity, creativity, motivation, and concentration were also reported.

> "Listening to calming and relaxing music helped my stress and allowed me to relax."
> "Playing or listening to slow music decreased my anxiety with the current situation."
> "It brings me so much peace and joy playing the violin. It helps me stay calm and centred, and there's a certain euphoria when playing."

A few participants answered that listening to music encourages them to be physically active.

"I started walking to music and going on runs to songs that would just make me feel slightly more hyped or give me energy."

"It helped increase productivity, motivation, and a general sense of happiness to get out of the bed each day."

While most students reported using musical experiences as a coping strategy, six participants said they did not find music helpful and offered various explanations. One participant said listening to music has no impact on their mood. Another participant said music intensifies their mood; therefore, listening to other resources, such as podcasts, would be more helpful as a coping strategy. In contrast to those who said they used music to distract themselves, one participant said it was precise because they found music distracting that they did not use it and instead preferred to work in a quiet space. Of the six students who did not use musical experiences as a coping strategy, half said they might use them in the future, while the other half said they would not.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Discussion

Most participants experienced various negative emotions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and measures taken to respond to it, including loneliness, anxiety, and depression. These negative emotions were mainly caused due to a lack of social interaction and support caused by physical distancing and other lockdown measures. Researchers like Galderisi, Heinz, Kastrup, Beezhold, and Sartorius (2015) have found that social interaction plays a vital role in mental health. They note that since body, mind, and environment are influenced by each other, the environment surrounding an individual may significantly impact mental and physical health. Therefore, disturbing this relationship may cause adverse mental health events in individuals. This was certainly the case for most of the participants in this study, who experienced extremely restricted conditions that severely disturbed their social relationships and access to support. Rudenstine et al. (2020) have found that there is a significant association between COVID-19-related stressors and depression and anxiety symptoms among urban university students. Therefore, immediate and enhanced mental and physical health interventions for university students should be enacted.

However, most participants expressed negativity regarding their undergraduate experience during the pandemic. Students noted a range of factors such as lack of in-person interaction, decreased perceived education quality, challenges in adapting to new systems, absence of personal space, non-separation of study and rest area, and lack of family support. The school's lack of understanding and academic planning for students who do not have quiet study spaces and access to stable internet caused more stress on several participants. Students with dependents were additionally experiencing more challenges due to the closure of childcare support facilities. If such circumstances become prolonged or recur, it may lead some students to discontinue their education, potentially increasing the health inequity gaps between students in different socioeconomic groups. It is because socioeconomic factors such as income and education are critical social determinants of health that significantly impact one's lifespan (Adler, Glymour, & Fielding, 2016). Individuals with higher education tend to adopt and promote healthier lifestyles compared to those with low education levels due to their high health literacy levels and ability to access healthier environments and resources such as adequate housing and well-balanced nutrition (Braveman, Egerter, & Williams, 2011).

The participants strongly felt that institutions should develop a more situational reflective agenda with a feasible strategy to support their students' health and well-being during the pandemic. This approach should apply to all levels of educational institutions.

At the same time, some participants in this study suggested that physical distancing measures had allowed for increased time and flexibility in their studies. Some participants expressed increased satisfaction with the virtual learning system due to the absence of commuting stress. According to Wener and Evans (2011), commuting causes a negative impact on both mental and physiological health, such as increased stress and blood pressure. Thus, freedom from commuting may offset some of the stress created by physical distancing and the financial burden on some participants.

Finally, evidence from our study suggests that musical experience could become a meaningful and effective coping strategy for university students during the COVID-19 era. The majority of participants answered that music helped them cope with the current situation by distracting them from reality and facilitating positive emotions to emerge and replace painful or undesired emotions (e.g., stress, depression, anxiety, loneliness). It is because pain is relieved when external stimuli create positive emotion, and music is known to be a powerful external stimulant that can have analgesic effects (Garza Villarreal, Brattico, Vase, Østergaard, & Vuust, 2012). Mastnak's (2020) research found that musical activity boosted immune systems and improved respiratory disease symptoms among children. Music, particularly group singing, also erodes feelings of loneliness by hardening community solidarity by connecting and sharing emotions with other community members, which is an essential element in human society as humans are social beings (Corvo & de Caro, 2020). A recent study from Australia suggests that music listening can enhance university

students' life satisfaction compared to other media use during the COVID-19 era. Using online questionnaires, a study from Krause, Dimmock, Rebar, and Jackson (2021) examined university students' media use behaviour, frequency and life satisfaction during the early COVID-19 pandemic. The study chose the four primary media to listen to music, play video/computer gaming, watch TV or movies, and use social media. Among the four media, the participants who answered that they actively listened to music indicated improved mental health and well-being, whereas users who watched TV stated the opposite. It is because listening to music gives freedom in selection compared to other media sources, and listeners have more control over their activity, which can provide higher satisfaction to the particular media user (Krause, North, & Hewitt, 2014). An increased feeling of perceived control can aid an individual's well-being by mediating reaction to stress and pain (Krause et al., 2014).

Music has also been shown to have a positive association with academic performance. A Canadian study observed an increase in academic performance among secondary students who participated in music courses compared to those who did not (Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac, & Cabanac, 2013). Furthermore, the study by Perlovsky, Cabanac, Bonniot-Cabanac, and Cabanac (2013) found that students who listened to pleasant music improved their academic performance and extended their stress tolerance.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on students' lives. Feelings of social isolation and loneliness caused by prohibitions on social gatherings may be mitigated by musical experiences (Krause et al., 2014; Schäfer et al., 2020). Our findings suggest that musical experiences can be adopted as a coping strategy amongst student populations as they are an easily accessible and cost-effective tool. Therefore, we suggest post-secondary institutions promote using musical experience to support their students' health and well-being. For instance, free music streaming services, virtual group singing programs, or school-wide music events, such as online music contests or concerts, may help facilitate physical and mental wellness. In particular, group music classes may promote feelings of inclusion that can help reduce the loneliness experienced by students in lockdown.

In 2020, Perkins, Mason-Bertrand, Fancourt, Baxter, and Williamon conducted meta-ethnographic research regarding the association between mental well-being and participatory music engagement. The research found that music participation can support mental well-being by involving processes that meet each individual's needs and situations, such as helping manage emotions, assisting self-development, providing rest, and offering social connection (Perkins et al., 2020).

4.2. Study Limitations

The qualitative nature of our study limited our sample size within our own university. It also meant that we could not reach out to students from other universities. Therefore, the experiences of other post-secondary students outside our university need to be further explored. Our study is also limited by its short-term focus. It provides a snapshot of students' experiences at a given time. We recommend that longer-term research be conducted to assess the utility of music experience in future health promotion.

5. CONCLUSION

Our study assessed the health and well-being of students at Ryerson University during the COVID-19 pandemic and how music can be used as a coping strategy as a cost-effective and accessible tool. Our study found that physical distancing had led to negative mental health outcomes for many undergraduate students in our sample. Moreover, most students expressed dissatisfaction with remote learning via the university's virtual learning system. Musical experiences were found to be a useful coping strategy for most participants because of their power to improve participants' moods, their ability to encourage physical activity and their capacity to reduce stress by offering a distraction from reality. Our results suggest that promoting the music experience may be an effective strategy for mental and physical health promotion for post-secondary students during the pandemic and beyond.

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Crony Capitalism and Corruption in the Middle East and North Africa*

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a perspective on the political economy of crony capitalism and corruption in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, and Yemen, severely affected by the Arab Spring, to propose that these factors triggered the uprisings. The crony capitalism in Egypt shows military dominance and its conglomerates in various sectors. Tunisian capitalism was around President Ben Ali and his wife, Leïla Ben Ali, who controlled about 30-40% of the economy. In Syria, President Assad and his cousin Makhloufi's families controlled 60% of the country's GDP, whereas the Qaddafi family controlled the economic paradigm in Libya. Lastly, in Yemen, certain tribes, families, and acquittances of Saleh dominated the Yemeni economy. After the Arab protests, all of these countries changed their regimes except Syria, where the demonstrations ignited a civil war. However, the pre-existing powers continued their dominance, heavily in Egypt and partially in Libya and Yemen. The so-called successful example is Tunisia, which struggled with the democratic transition that hindered its systematic economic development. The analysis elucidates dominant state-class relations pre- and post-Arab Spring and stipulates the channels through which crony capitalism and corruption may be eliminated.

Keywords: Capitalism, Corruption, Political Economy, Arab Spring, MENA
JEL Classification: E02, F59, N15, N45

1. Introduction

Corruption and its impacts on micro and macroeconomic indicators have been widely researched over the past few decades. Although some studies in the literature have found positive and non-linear relationships (Mironov, 2005; Podobnik et al., 2008; de Vaal and Ebben, 2011; Ahmad et al., 2012) between corruption and macroeconomic indicators, most research demonstrates the consensus that corruption lowers economic growth (Mauro, 1995), increases income inequality (Glaeser et al., 2003) and unemployment (Dimant et al., 2013; Pappa et al., 2015), and hampers trust among citizens (Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005). The Arab Spring, the chain of protests in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), exemplifies how corruption could lead to major societal incidents. The incidents in Tunisia in 2011 that were the catalyst of the Arab Spring resulted from rampant political and bureaucratic corruption (Feldman, 2020). Therefore, examining the level of corruption regarding the political economy of countries in the MENA region is essential to understand to what level a homogenous understanding of the region is inaccurate.

When it comes to the phenomenon of crony capitalism, scholars have also concentrated on everyday business transactions in the MENA region. There is a correlation between the macroeconomic indicators and crony capitalism. For example, Diwan (2012) argues that crony capitalism increased inequality and diminished the share of the middle class. Crony capitalism also failed to produce sufficient job opportunities. In another study, Chekir and Diwan (2014) show how connected firms employ fewer people even though they benefit more from government procurements and profits than non-connected firms in Egypt. There is also a connection between the state's role (i.e., government expenditure) and crony capitalism. When government expenditure decreases, crony capitalism rises, as in the MENA (Cammett and Diwan, 2016). This shows the relationship between crony capitalism and corruption as well as the level of interconnectedness in how they reinforce each other. That is, more crony capitalism leads to more corruption and vice versa. This is common in the MENA region, where although crony capitalism is experienced in different formats in each MENA country, the essence is analogous.

This study sheds light on the heterogeneity of the magnitudes of the Arab protests, especially in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, and Yemen (henceforth, severely affected countries) from a comparative political economy methodology. First, it analyzes each country's pre-Arab Spring political-institutional setting and then explains how the prevalence of crony capitalism combined with corruption reinforces the political-economic framework. Different institutional frameworks of corruption might help explain the distinctive experience of the Arab Spring across the countries. However, a phenomenon like the Arab Spring entails further research from the political, social, and economic perspectives due to the intertwined and complex structures of these spheres. Therefore, this paper neither claims to comprehensively explain the sole reason behind a multifaceted series of events that led to the Arab protests nor is it sufficient to be certain of all the causes. It instead advocates that the phenomena of crony capitalism and corruption are the channels that may explain the fundamental cause of the Arab protests in severely affected countries. To the best of our knowledge, no other study in the literature comprehensively examines the political economy of cronyism and corruption in severely affected countries altogether.

Following this introductory section, the next section of this paper reviews the literature. The third section elaborates on the political and institutional heterogeneity in corruption in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, and Yemen. The fourth section explains the structure of crony capitalism and corruption after the Arab uprisings. The fifth section makes a cross-country comparison of the two extreme cases (Tunisia-Yemen) after the Arab protests. Finally, the sixth section talks about limitations and presents the conclusions of the research.

2. Literature Review

The MENA region was characterized by a more sophisticated economic system, intellectually improved judicial and legal areas, and more advanced culture than the West from medieval times until the mid-19th century (Springborg 2020). Many Arab countries, including Egypt and Syria, were known for their accomplishments through commercial activities using the coasts and railways, which constituted higher GDP than East Asian countries and Japan during the 1950s and 60s (Springborg, 2020). Nevertheless, since the early 19th century, colonialism and imperialism shifted the dominance from the MENA to the West (Springborg, 2020).

Today, long-lasting political instabilities, cruel dictatorships, social contract breakdown between the governments and citizens, and economic problems, including high youth unemployment, inflation, and public debt, are shared among the MENA countries (Springborg, 2020). These issues are the accumulated outcomes of the deteriorating relations between the state and citizens after the 1980s and the neoliberal policies of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) (Hanieh, 2021).

Due to the policies of the IFIs (e.g., deregulation, privatization, and liberalization) combined with lower government

expenditures, crony capitalism has become more embedded in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, and Yemen. The disrupted systems changed the structure of crony capitalism after the Arab uprisings due to the lack of the rule of law and political instability but mostly maintained the crux of it. Douglas North refers to crony capitalism as a "limited access order" where political elites appropriate the economic resources and provide privileges by preventing outsiders (Springborg, 2020). MENA countries underperform with limited access order and authoritarianism (Springborg 2020) since small elites concentrate the wealth, preventing systematic entrepreneurial development and the providing of goods and services to the public (Wahab, 2019).

Moreover, the absence of inclusive institutions (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; Wahab 2019; Noha and Jhonsa 2014) and social mobility limits sustainable economic growth (Wahab, 2019). The private sector's slow growth and government dominance worsen institutional quality, reducing the incentive for investment and private activity (Kandil, 2009). According to World Governance Indicators (WGI), which measures institutional quality with six indicators (voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence and terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, the rule of law, and control of corruption), the MENA received lower scores compared with the rest of the world on five out of six indicators between 1996-2017. Only regulatory quality remained unchanged (Springborg, 2020).

Further evidence for the deterioration of the economies of these countries is the globalization of the world. Most MENA countries, including Egypt, Syria, and Yemen, came at the bottom of the world globalization index in 2018. The lack of integration with the rest of the world has adverse effects on the economic performance of the MENA countries. On the other hand, the Arab region is the largest financial aid recipient on a per capita basis (Springborg, 2020). This changes regional politics and helps current dictators permeate their authoritarian policies and crony capitalist mindsets. Over that last four decades, the MENA region has suffered from crony capitalism, rampant corruption, and lower institutional quality. However, the impacts of these problems are not homogenous across the five countries examined in this study.

3. Crony Capitalism

The term crony capitalism (or cronyism) is linked or interchangeably used with rent-seeking (Krueger, 2002) or corruption (Haber, 2002). Technically, crony capitalism is conceived to be an economic process (Aligica & Tarko, 2014) that is a type of social and cultural system that works under certain conditions, such as trust, family or kinship ties, and lobbying. It is a systematic trend that functions under weak institutional settings where the rule of law, government effectiveness, and regulatory quality are largely absent, and only a small group of elites economically benefit due to clientelism and other social, political, and economic ties. Cronyism describes an economic culture likely to exist in a weak institutional framework and where class-state formations are shaped by certain clientelism and networking. The system produces elites who have more access to resources than the general public, exacerbating this feature with rampant political corruption.

As previously mentioned, crony capitalism has become common in the MENA region after the decrease in government spending (e.g., public jobs, social safety nets, subsidies) and the policies offered by the IFIs to be the conditions to accomplish the developmental improvements of the 21st century. As the state capacity and institutional quality could not handle the policies conditioned to get funds from IFIs, crony capitalism and corruption have become prevalent. The dictatorships and their iron-grip ruling benefitted certain families and their relatives, or only the ruling elites. The fostering of affluence among the elites, combined with the wealth and income gap between the richest and poorest quantiles, ignited certain social uprisings. As the countries examined below are the first five countries inflamed by the Arab Spring, this comparative political economy analysis offers a new understanding of how crony capitalism might have been the reason behind the uprisings.

3.1. Egypt

In Egypt, public expenditure declined to 25% from 62% between the 1970s and 1998. Further, government services decreased since the 1970s, with neo-liberal policies accelerating during the 1980s and 1990s, eventually leading to higher unemployment and inequality. Egypt has the highest population in the MENA region, with a military that has a massive impact on the economy. Changing the international order from government interference to a free-market system benefitted the military heavily in Egypt, which controls approximately 30% of the economy (Chekir and Diwan, 2014; Beck and Hüser, 2012). However, since most its operations remain classified, the apparent dominance is expected to be higher than 30%, as it is known that the military controls gas stations, bus operations, factories, and even bakeries.

Besides the army's economic dominance, evidence has shown that firms which are closely affiliated with the state has had higher access to credits and operationalizing under high non-tariff barriers. The study by Diwan et al. (2013)

has shown that 71% of connected firms were protected with more than one non-tariff measure, whereas only 3% of all other firms were protected. Affiliated firms operate primarily in energy and infrastructure because corruption is more accessible in these sectors. However, they employ only 11% of the labor force, despite receiving 60% of net profits and 92% of total bank credits (Diwan et al. 2013), which caused the size of the informal sector to grow. Assad (2014) mentions that the informal sector employed 40% of the total labor force in 2005, which was 5% in the 1970s, and the share of the private sector declined in that employment rate. Diwan et al. (2015) found that 30 businessmen on the board of 104 firms controlled 385 companies directly or indirectly, which indicates the magnitude of this concentration.

Most connected firms were operated by family members of Hosni Mubarak or his wife, Suzanne Mubarak. The president's sons, Gamal and Alaa, have obtained discounted land from the Ministry of Housing for investments but were not held accountable for how they received these shares. During his 30 years tenure, Mubarak was reported to have earned between forty and seventy billion dollars putting him in the same rank as Bill Gates (Combating Corruption 2014), which demonstrates that few families control the colossal public wealth by suppressing opponents and rivals. Another symptom of crony capitalism is the extraction by the Egyptian government of around $23 billion from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait in the name of oil shipments, cash grants, and deposits within 18 months of Mohamed Morsi leaving office (Hanieh, 2018).

Thus, it is easy to see that crony capitalism is deeply embedded into the political economy of Egypt by observing the limited government role in social developments (e.g., low public expenditure, privatization, and liberalization of the markets). Such a situation led to unrest during the Arab Spring, as cronyism increased youth unemployment, income, and wealth inequality, all of which lowered living standards (Sika, 2012).

3.2. Tunisia

Tunisia shares similar characteristics with Egypt in terms of public expenditure. In Tunisia, government expenditure decreased from 45% to 29% from the 1970s to the 1990s, lowering state effectiveness and the quality of public goods and services (Diwan and Akin 2015). Hence, certain families close to the ruling families produced and strengthened the inner circle of cronyism. Even if a revolution occurred and the so-called democratic transition was initiated, the negative impacts of crony capitalism were maintained in Tunisia because it was so embedded into the country's political economy, much like Egypt. The advantage of Tunisian society compared to Egypt could be its lower population and democratic political transition. Also, the difference in Tunisia's institutional quality is mentioned in the upcoming section.

Two families dominate the Tunisian economy and control a significant share of wealth in Tunisia. The Ben Ali family controlled 220 firms, many of which collected benefits from non-tariff barriers and operated in fields where government approval was needed (Rijkers et al. 2017; Malik 2015). The Trabelsi family, the wife of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, controlled billions in significant sectors, such as telecommunication, banking, tourism, manufacturing, real estate, and construction. The economic dominance of these two families began when Ben Ali came to power in 1987 and dominated all opponents (Malik, 2015). According to the French head of Transparency International, the Ben Ali and Trabelsi families controlled between 30-40% of the Tunisian economy (Lewis, 2011).

Combating Corruption (2014) reports that the Ben Ali and Trabelsi families, known as "the Mafia," by many controlled more than half of all enterprises in the country. The study of Rijkers et al. (2017) showed that although these companies control about half of the nation's wealth, they produce produce 3% of total output and employ only 1% of the labor force. In the anecdote of Alvi (2019), the brothers of Leila Trabelsi found an office to take care of the legal problems of Tunisians for a fee, and the office bribed judges to win the cases. Further, clientelism and petty corruption, where bureaucrats demand bribes even for birth certificates and simple documents, exacerbated adversities for ordinary people in Tunisia. This clearly shows the symptom of deep-rooted corruption.

Besides the deterioration in government expenditure and prevalent corruption, the role of IFIs in producing the system of cronyism in the country should not be overlooked. Tunisia signed its first IMF stand-by agreements in 1986-87 (Malik, 2015). Because of the diminishing middle class and neo-liberal policies, unemployment increased from 3.8% in 1994 to 29.2% in 2011. Tunisia's unemployment rate was approximately 20% in 2020, and youth unemployment was around 36% in 2019.

In contrast to corruption, cronyism, and imposed neoliberal policies, Tunisia made relatively better progress on poverty alleviation, social inclusion, and equitable growth compared to the other four countries. It is also ahead on government effectiveness, the rule of law, and control of corruption (Arab Development Challenges Report 2011). However, these features have been apparently insufficient in solving crony capitalism (Malik, 2015). Since the Arab Spring, Tunisia has also struggled with lower GDP per capita. Matta et al. (2019) found that Tunisia had a lower GDP

per capita after the Arab Spring. Using the synthetic control method, Tunisia had a $600, $574, and $735 less GDP per capita in 2011, 2012, and 2013, respectively. This indicates that even though the protests started in 2011, the GDP per capita shrank more in 2013 than in 2011, implying that the Arab Spring was not a one-year exogenous shock, but rather a long-run phenomenon for the region.

3.3. Libya, Syria, and Yemen

Libya is another country that struggles with corruption and crony capitalism. The middle class in Libya has complained that they do not get any share of the economy since the ruling elites block them. Muammar Gaddafi ruled Libya for almost four decades until his death in 2011, with his close associates controlling the economy. It was reported that "the [Gaddafi] family and its close political allies own outright or have a considerable stake in most things worth owning, buying or selling in Libya" (Combating Corruption 2014). Gaddafi's regime embezzled public resources, hired only loyalists to higher bureaucracy, and misappropriated funds through them. The Gaddafi family also had billions of dollars of houses and other investments in the United Kingdom (UK), which insisted on not transferring the money to the current administration due to procedural issues (Peachey, 2022).

With sufficient oil resources for a population of six million, crony capitalism detached Libya's economy. Khan (2014) found that Libya had negative economic growth in 2010 because of the decline in oil production due to the civil war and the United Nations (UN) sanctions on Libyan foreign assets. According to the World Bank (WB) data, low growth (falling 62% in 2011 compared with 2010) and high levels of public resource fraudulence with impunity (Warf, 2015) aggravated income inequality after the Arab unrest. Due to civil war and amplified political instability, Libya grappled with crony capitalism for over a decade after the strife.

Yemen and Syria have had a similar experience as Libya. In Yemen, the central government controlled the country's oil wealth. It was responsible for distributing this wealth among the tribes and military establishments since their support was necessary for political power and stability (Combating Corruption 2014). The country's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, who is no longer in control, established a circle of nepotism, clientelism, and distributing wealth among his family members and other prominent tribes.

In Syria, President Bashar Al Assad entrenched his regime through structures of crony capitalism. In fact, before Bashar Al Assad, his father, Hafiz Al Assad, ruled the country in the same manner for three decades until his death in 2000. According to Syrian officials, the Assad family and their political associates receive 85% of the country's oil revenue from their bank accounts. Clientelism is increasing in Syria, where successful firms must either share their profits with the regime or shut down their operations. Bribery exists at all levels of society (Combating Corruption 2014).

It is said that Rami Makhlouf, the president's cousin, controls 60% of the Syrian economy through complex company structures in telecommunication, energy, the financial sector, and transportation (Owen, 2012). Many outsiders believe it is almost impossible to conduct business in Syria without contacting Rami Makhlouf. The Assad and Makhlouf families have monopoly power over the Syrian economy (Borshchevskaya, 2010). Considering the significant repercussions of cronyism in Libya, Syria, and Yemen and their current civil war or political instability, Springborg (2020) calls these three countries "failed states."

Corruption leads to a drain of resources because the profits are not spent or invested domestically in the MENA, but rather in Europe and/or Asia. Citizens and the domestic economy do not benefit from the earnings of crony capitalists, so the income and wealth gap between families with close connections to the governments and ordinary citizens became enlarged before the Arab Spring. Consequently, youth unemployment rose steeply because of insufficient domestic investment, even if people were more educated than their ancestors. On average, Egypt and Tunisia lost about five and one billion dollars respectively per year due to capital flight from the early 2000s until the Arab Spring. (Diwan, 2012). Billions of dollars were also flown from Yemen, Syria, and Libya (Warf, 2018).

This account suggests that crony capitalism is the primary channel by which the impact of corruption on economic growth and income inequality, unemployment, and lower government spending is mediated in severely affected countries. Crony capitalism and elite capture dominate the economies; therefore, cronyism can be considered the key mechanism underlying the political economy of corruption in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, and Yemen. The crony relations also help explain the severity of the uprisings in these countries. In this vein, how these relations have maintained or changed after the uprisings is important as the role of dominant powers or confrontations between groups to take power answer how the embeddedness of cronyism and prevalent corruption are needed to keep the current system in order.

4. Crony Capitalism After the Arab Uprisings

In cronyism, a few families affiliated with the ruling elites are prioritized in government procurements and privileges for investments in transportation, energy, health, tourism, and telecommunication sectors. The economic collapse faced by these five countries after the Arab Spring is key to understanding the impact of crony capitalism. The economic growth of each country decreased after the Arab Spring (World Development Indicators), but Libya, Syria, and Yemen suffered from more severe negative growth rates. The downfall of growth might explain how the shrank size of the economic pie might increase crony capitalism through corruption. This is also because of political instability, which exacerbates all economic indicators.

The institutional framework of crony capitalism for specific groups or families helped to acquire inegalitarian distributions in the wake of the political crisis triggered by the Arab Spring. The immediate destruction in these affiliated families' economic, social, and, most notably, political lives pushed them to do whatever it took to get the biggest share of the pie. Along with the families in question, other groups linked with the government have behaved similarly and attempted to hoard the economic material under complete administrative failure. In other words, the competition between groups allied with the government from the first, second, and perhaps tertiary degrees caused them to get as much as possible from the economic pie.

In the case of Egypt, the army, which controlled approximately 30% of the economy before the uprisings (Chekir and Diwan 2014; Beck and Hüser 2012), became relatively weaker immediately following the unrest. After Mursi became the president, he wanted to change the constitution. He tried to rule the country freely with his party, which was impossible due to the army's political dominance. After the protest grew in Egypt against Morsi, a military coup led by Abdelfattah Sisi began to rule the country and control the economy. This revitalized the role of the army in Egypt. It is much stronger than before as the Sisi government received a large portion of military aid from the US, the second highest after Israel in the MENA region (Reuters 2011), and social aid from other Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait. According to the figures, three Gulf countries assisted by giving over $23 billion to Egypt the 18 months after the military coup (Reuters 2015).

Assistance from the West and its neighbors to solidify the army's dominance in Egypt reinforced the military's control over the country and economy through cronyism. Henceforth, the adverse impacts of crony capitalism metamorphosed into a new circle of relationships due to the absence of law and political instability. The ongoing political instability during the tenure of Mohamed Morsi pushed the army to regain control of the economy. Since the military coup, the Egyptian army has controlled many sectors of the Egyptian economy, including telecommunication, health, transportation, and energy. The cronyism that was present before the Morsi administration returned stronger under the Sisi administration, with the help of Gulf finance capital.

In Tunisia, which has similar crony relations and limited government, the democratization of politics has been relatively smoother than in the Egyptian case. Before the Arab Spring, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and his wife controlled 30-40% Tunisian economy (Lewis, 2011). After Ben Ali left, the country entered a new phase of democratization. The Islamists led by Ghannouchi joined a coalition with secularists to have a more stable government and transition period. Nonetheless, they could not solve the critical politico-economic problems, administrative predicaments, and uncertainties about the future.

While the current government is dealing with post-revolution ground-level corruption, other types of corruption have been fostered in bureaucracy (e.g., bribing judges and doctors using networking for jobs), which, like in Egypt, transformed into a new form of cronyism (Yerkes, 2017). Although a certain family or relatives do not control the economy, petty corruption is more prevalent than before the revolution. This is substantiated by the polls that Tunisians believe there is more corruption after the Arab Spring than under Ben Ali's regime. (Yerkes, 2017).

According to many sources, the president, Kais Saied, declared a constitutional coup in July 2021 (Aljazeera, 2021) that exacerbated Tunisia's political and economic problems. With that so-called "coup," the cards are being reshuffled in Tunisia, where the first signs of Arab Spring protests were seen. Although crony capitalism changed its form, it is still active in fields where large conglomerates and firms dominate the political economy of Tunisia because political parties need financing to stay in power after the Arab Spring (Diwan, 2019). Nevertheless, their operations and the operations of the previous regime are scrutinized as the government concentrates on the systematic elimination of the concentration of illicit wealth. In other words, during the Ben Ali regime, nobody talked about corruption in the government (Yerkes, 2017), and now everybody can speak about crony corruption, which continues in a quieter format.

A similar link between crony capitalism and corruption between pre- and post-Arab Spring is experienced in Libya, Syria, and Yemen. After Gaddafi's death in Libya, a civil war between rivals to rule the country and an economic collapse occurred. Since Libya has 3% of the world's oil reserves, its money is claimed by the new cronies – with intensifying

rivalries in the country's East and West – as the country struggles with economic growth and has unprecedented levels of unemployment. Levels of inequality fell with the Arab Spring, as the Gaddafi regime cronies' access to the oil bounty was cut off. That said, new crony relations emerged in the country (Marzari, 2020). During his more than four decades of de-facto leadership, Gaddafi misappropriated $200 billion (Durgy 2011) and provided opportunities only for people who were loyal to him.

After his death, the country entered a political crisis, with a civil war breaking out that continued for several years. The contest between two groups, one based in Tripoli and the other in Benghazi, over control over oil reserves and revenues produced a new cycle of cronyism after the Arab risings, with each group claiming rights to the country's oil (Marzari, 2020). The conflicts continue between various groups, not in the form of war, but as a political confrontation that accelerated the corruption and cronyism in Libya.

Yemen, the poorest country in the region pre- and post-Arab Spring according to the World Bank, has been dealing with a war that is going on between the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis, a Shia group that is supported by Iran. Yemen was already suffering from poverty and famine under Ali Abdullah Saleh's tenure for more than two decades. Before the uprisings, Ali Abdullah Saleh supported certain tribes and kins, the strongest in population and power. The political crisis erupted after he fled to Saudi Arabia when the protests started in Yemen. Since 2014, the Saudi-led coalition has sought to protect the region from Shi'a dissemination. That war has been continuing for almost a decade now. The war worsened the living conditions of Yemenis, who are dealing with record levels of inequality. The new relations in Yemen are not necessarily a new type of cronyism, but are nonetheless the leading factor in explaining the causes behind the war.

Lastly, the cronyism around the Assad family and their cousin Rami Makhlouf has been solidified in Syria. The Assad regime is currently ruling Syria with even more repressive power than before the Arab Spring, with the support of other countries in the region. Any reduction in the impact of the Arab Spring on income inequality was entirely counteracted due to high corruption levels in Syria. Assad's family controls most of the Syrian economy in one way or another. Without Makhlouf, the cousin of Assad, it is impossible to run a business in the country. By receiving military aid from Russia and China, it is relatively easier to digest the crowd in Syria and continue to control a significant portion of the economy. There is almost no store or shop run in Syria without paying a bribe or fee to the regime. After the attempted revolution, it is much harder for the Syrians to protest and rebel against the regime, as they have no power. Thus, Syria struggles with the regime's extreme dominance over its population.

The investigation of severely affected countries and their battle with cronyism following the Arab Spring is more complex than it seems. A transformation of cronyism can be observed in Egypt and Tunisia. Libya, Syria, and Yemen had or are still experiencing civil wars with two possible outcomes: the consolidation or the transformation of the crony regime. As new reports from prominent institutions (such as Oxfam International and the World Bank) show, the famine and poverty level in Yemen has reached unbearable levels. The condition of the Syrian people is not very different from Yemen. Although Libya's case is relatively better than Syria and Yemen, they also struggle with political instability. Hence, the hopes of these countries swing between cronyism and deadly revolts against the regimes.

5. The Political Economy in Extremes: Tunisia and Yemen

The comparative political economy of Tunisia and Yemen, which are the two extreme cases not only in the severely affected countries but also in the entire MENA region, helps to comprehend how attempts to transform a country may benefit the citizens in the long run. In this context, Tunisia accomplished higher institutional quality and lower corruption and crony capitalism, even if it remains lower than global benchmarks. On the other hand, Yemen skirmishes with civil war after the Saleh regime. According to Looney (2015) and Springborg (2020), it is now considered a failed state due to complete administrative and economic malfunctioning. The comparison helps distinguish different paths consequent to the Arab Spring.

5.1. Post-Arab Spring Tunisia

The corruption scores of Tunisia have been steady according to the World Governance Indicators (WGI) data set since 2011. Considering that WGI data shows both political and bureaucratic corruption, it is an achievement for Tunisia to keep it stable, although the Tunisian society fundamentally disagrees with that (Yerkes, 2017). Tunisia's corruption score fell to 0.06 in 2011 from 0.26 in 2010 and has been around the same level since that time. This clearly illustrates the democratization process of Tunisia, where the Islamists made a coalition with secularists (Amara, 2014). However, it was a short-lived government as the country entered a new crisis phase (Gall, 2013). Despite the country's political crises, Tunisia has the relatively lowest corruption scores compared with the rest of the severely affected groups.

Crony capitalism, which has transformed to be petty corruption and smuggling after the Arab Spring as Tunisian administrations started cases against the Ben Ali and Trabelsi families and new potential cronies who obnoxiously tried to hoard the corruption pie after the revolution, has affected Tunisia and Tunisian society; however, its impact has not been that much considering lower corruption scores and decreasing income inequality levels. This is at least apparently the case for Tunisia because other countries, especially Libya, Syria, and Yemen, have either failed or are heading to be failed states. Below, the Yemeni case is evaluated after the Arab Spring, as Yemen has the highest corruption scores among the severely affected countries.

5.2. Post-Arab Spring Yemen

The corruption scores of Yemen are the lowest in severely affected countries after the Arab Spring. While the pre-Arab Spring corruption score average was 0.95 between 1996 to 2010, it is 1.47 from 2011 until 2020, which is a sharp increase considering the WGI corruption scores vary between -2.5 and +2.5. The decrease signals the political and bureaucratic corruption environment of Yemen after the revolution. This is reasonable, as Yemen is one of the countries most destructed by the Arab Spring in the entire MENA region. The political, social, and, most notably, economic repercussions of Yemen's unrest are now felt as poverty and famine (Al-Akhali, 2021). No functioning administration and bureaucracy are left in the country, which the Saudi-led invasion has exacerbated in their fight against the Houthi guerillas. The war has been ongoing since 2015, although the Houthi attacks began in 2014 (Hubbard, 2022). Thus, the cronies that were around President Ali Abdullah Saleh before the revolution are not around anymore, as the devastating impacts of the war have been felt more severely.

Yemen is struggling politically and economically. With its political and institutional character, it was challenging to implement democracy in a tribal society in Yemen, in contrast to Tunisia. After the revolution, people did not know how to rule the political life and economy, as they were under the same regime for more than two decades, and earlier than that, the country was split into two, South and North. Therefore, Yemen has been dealing with political issues for a long time. Ironically, during Saleh's tenure, the country was relatively stable under crony capitalism, especially with respect to the tribes.

Overall, Yemen and Tunisia suffered from crony capitalism before the uprisings of the Arab Spring. However, immediately following the unrest, Tunisia entered a new political phase, albeit a very fragile phase, while Yemen could not manage this, with the ongoing war making it impossible. The crony relations before the Arab protests have transformed into new types of corruption in Tunisia as petty corruption and smuggling. This is less evident in Yemen due to the war which occupies more space in the political and economic lives of the Yemeni people. However, new cronies are likely to appear around the Saudi-led coalition and Houthis who control the oil, who do not have as much poverty as the rest of Yemeni society. These two examples of severely affected countries show that in Tunisia, cronyism was not restored fully after the Arab Spring, whereas strong crony institutions, relations, or war swamped any impact of the Arab Spring in Yemen.

6. Conclusion

Crony capitalism (or cronyism) is common practice in the MENA regions due to the low-quality institutions and socioeconomic and political structure. As a consequence of prevalent corruption, the elite-state relations formed a systematic pattern of cronyism that was hard to break before and particularly after the uprisings. Egypt's elite class and state relations revolved around the Mubarak family and the army before the Arab uprisings. Although there were democratic attempts after the toppling of Mubarak, they did not last long, and the dominance of the state, specifically the army, was strengthened following the 2013 incidents; thus, cronyism continues in Egypt. The same arguments can be made for Tunisia, except that Tunisia's democratic transition is still in progress. The problem in Tunisia is that even though the Ben Ali and Trabelsi families were overthrown, new phases of cronyism have started, and newer parties have attempted to obtain shares of the pie. However, as mentioned above, this is not as massive as it used to be under the Ben Ali regime, which is also proven with relatively better corruption scores in Tunisia.

Regarding Libya, Syria, and Yemen, whose cases are similar in that cronyism occurred around the Gaddafi, Assad, and Saleh families, their cronyism continued with different forms following the Arab Spring, where the worst case is found in Yemen due to the war against the Houthis. In Libya, despite the fall of Gaddafi, cronyism continued with the pie being distributed between different groups. In Syria, Assad was not overthrown; hence, his dominance intensified following the uprisings.

The nature of the Arab Spring has interwoven and complex relations. The incidents resulted from several combined social, political, and economic problems. There are numerous theories around the fundamental causes of the unrest,

with it being challenging to know the exact reason behind the situation, due to the unique experience of each country. Accordingly, a more profound understanding would require case-by-case research. Thus, interpretations of this paper are suggestive rather than exhaustive. In addition, although severely affected countries experience higher corruption and crony capitalism, this does not mean that other phenomena do not play any role. Qualitative and quantitative studies are needed to make better conclusions since it is also challenging to know the precise triggers for the Arab Spring among these complicated structures. However, analyzing the Arab Spring incidents in each severely affected country from cronyism perspective helps to enrich the literature of the MENA region, which has already been understudied.

The difference in the specific institutional form of corruption explains the heterogeneity of crony capitalism in these countries. After a decade since the Arab unrest started, it will be impossible to solve the political predicament without simultaneously finding remedies for social and economic issues (Sika, 2012). Without addressing crony capitalism and clientelist networks, all of which imply rampant corruption with different names, it will be challenging to tackle economic and political problems in the MENA region.

Regarding policy recommendations, problems cannot be solely resolved by having a laissez-faire economic system while preventing social inclusion, egalitarian distribution, and justice (Sika, 2012). Population growth, high youth unemployment, social exclusion, declining middle classes, and widespread corruption caused protests in severely affected countries (United Nations 2018), with the remedy for these problems coming from ameliorating institutions and implementing policies to lower crony capitalism and corruption. These countries also need structural political, social, and economic reforms; otherwise, they will be in a vicious cycle of corruption and cronyism.

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Socio-Economic and Regional Determinants of EU Ignorance in Turkiye

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ABSTRACT

The European Union is mostly criticized for its so-called democracy deficit. To tackle this, citizens are expected to have information about European integration so that they can make conscious choices. Nevertheless, it has been well documented in research conducted over the years that EU citizens are generally ignorant of the EU. This study aims to investigate the factors underpinning the lack of EU knowledge. Although socio-economic and demographic factors affecting EU ignorance in European countries have been investigated in previous studies, the factors affecting the EU knowledge level of Turkish people has only been examined in one study in the literature, which failed to include the regions (cities) variable. To close this gap, this research examines the effects of regions (cities) in Turkey on the EU ignorance by controlling for other variables frequently mentioned in previous research. In order to run the analysis, data from Eurobarometer 93.1 and 94.3 surveys were used and binary logistic regression was employed as a method of analysis because of the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable. The results of the two regression models show that citizens living in cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Antalya, and Gaziantep are less likely to be ignorant of the EU than those living in other cities. Moreover, in both models, the regions (cities) variable is a stronger factor than factors such as age, education, occupation, gender, and political opinion.

Keywords: EU Ignorance, democratic deficit, regions, binary logistic regression

Introduction

Turkey has been neglecting the EU membership process for a long time. Although there was serious momentum on EU membership in the first years of its rule, the AKP government has neglected the EU membership process since 2011. Coming to power for the third time after the 2011 general elections, the AKP government began to reject some of the criticisms in the EU progress reports with increasingly harsh language. A quick look at the EU progress reports from 2012 onwards will show this divergence. First only visible as a passive reluctance, this neglect turned into clear opposition to the EU, especially after the second half of the 2010s. Nevertheless, considering Turkey's geopolitical conditions, EU membership is not an issue that can be neglected for a long time. In the near future, either with a change of government or a possible change in the party leadership of the current government, Turkey may go through a sudden change of understanding. As a result, the EU membership process may become salient again in Turkey. In that case, public attitudes towards the EU will inevitably return as a subject of discussion in Turkey. However, as a factor that affects the public's attitudes towards the EU, the scope of the research was limited to the level of EU knowledge. Therefore, the EU attitudes and policies of governments, as well as the relevant literature, are not the focus of this research.

While matters of the EU were a foreign policy issue shaped by the political elites in the first years of the integration process, this situation has gradually changed since the Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1993. Nowadays, EU policies cannot be carried out in a manner that ignore public opinion (Hobolt, 2007). After the French and Dutch vetoed the Maastricht Treaty in their national referendums, the interest in the determinants of the public attitudes towards the EU surged among both the political elites and academic circles that conduct research related to public opinion. The most important studies shaping the literature on this subject emerged after this period (Hooghe & Marks, 2005).

Research on the factors affecting attitudes towards EU membership have generally been classified under three headings. These are studies that highlight economic calculations (Gabel, 1998), studies that examine identity factors (McLaren, 2002; Carey, 2002; Luedtke, 2005), and those that focus on factors related to cues by parties and the media (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006; Hellstrom, 2008; Maier & Rittberger, 2008; Vliegenthart, et. al., 2008). According to this literature, opinion of the EU is affected by: citizens' individual economic backgrounds and economic expectations, the extent to which people feel connected to their nation-states, the parties and the media they prefer to follow, together with their age, gender, education level, occupation, and political ideology. In addition to all these factors, cognitive mobility and knowledge levels of individuals have been shown as factors affecting EU attitudes in various studies (Inglehart, 1970; Hakhverdian, et. al., 2010). For a comprehensive overview of this literature, see Boomgaarden et al (2011), Hobolt & De Vries (2016), and Hooghe & Marks (2004).

The impact of all these factors varies from research to research and from country to country. Among these factors, the effect of EU knowledge level on EU attitudes is also controversial. Although it is seen in some studies that being ignorant about the EU reduces the possibility of approving EU membership, in other studies a relationship between these two variables could not be determined (Hobolt, 2007). In his seminal work, Inglehart (1970) argued that having higher education levels increases the cognitive mobility of individuals and this leads to a better understanding of European integration, which eventually leads to approval of its policies. Similarly, Hayo (1999) found that higher level of knowledge about the EU increases the possibility of approval for its policies. However, these assertions have not gone uncontested. Janssen (1991) found no statistically significant correlation between education and EU support. Similar conclusions can be found in Hobolt (2012) and Clark (2014).

Although there appears to be no consensus on the causal direction between political knowledge and EU support, it has been widely accepted that there is a massive knowledge deficit among European peoples about the EU (Anderson, 1998; McCormick, 2014). This is mostly because of the complex institutional nature of the EU. Understandably, citizens perceive the EU as a faraway entity whose working mechanisms are complex and policy outputs are not very much visible. That distance from the daily lives of citizens leads to a disinterest, which in turn endangers European democracy. Lack of EU knowledge leaves European people vulnerable to manipulation by extremist political groups. On the other hand, Anderson (1998) argues that the lack of EU knowledge is not necessarily harmful as citizens use cues from their preferred role models when they need to make a choice on subjects they know little about. He uses the term proxies to describe how voters choose to vote on subjects they know nothing about, by using clues from their parties or the media they follow. In addition, there is the issue of terminological differences between EU awareness and EU knowledge. Although Fanoulis (2018) differentiates between EU awareness and EU political knowledge and argues that the lack of both restrains the normative potential of civic involvement, in this study, I find no use for such terminological differences.

Although there are many studies looking for answers to the question of whether the level of EU knowledge affects

attitudes towards EU membership, it appears that there have been minimal studies on the factors that affect the level of EU knowledge (Kentmen, 2010). The factors that come to the fore frequently in these studies include: age, education level, gender, occupation, media, and political interest (Kentment, 2010; Rapeli, 2014; Clark, 2014; Carl, et al., 2019). In his study, Clark (2014) reveals that variables such as education, income, and occupation (professionals, managers, and supervisors) are strong predictors of EU knowledge. In addition to those variables, people who work in the industry, agriculture, and finance sectors, which are subject to EU regulations, are less likely to be EU ignorant (Clark, 2014). However, in Rapeli's (2014) study, only the education and gender variables were shown to be statistically significant. The other variables, such as type of community, marital status, and age, did not produce statistically significant results. Finally, according to Carl, et al. (2019), the previous literature has found that age, gender, education, and political interest are positively correlated with knowledge about the EU (Carl, et al., 2019).

As for Turkey, the first study investigating the factors affecting EU knowledge was carried out by Kentmen (2010), which found that exposure to television and newspapers has a strong influence on individuals' EU knowledge levels, with no evidence for such an effect by exposure to radio. Kentmen (2010) argued in her study that the media is an important factor that determines the level of EU knowledge. However, she also stated that the low R square values of her models meant that there must be some other factors that affect the level of knowledge of the EU by Turkish citizens. She also found no statistical evidence for a relationship between education and interpersonal communication with EU knowledge (Kentmen, 2010). Moreover, the internet use variable was not included in her study. Another factor that Kentmen's (2010) and other previous studies did not include in the analysis is the city of residence variable. This research aims to examine the effect of cities variable on the EU knowledge level.

It is undeniable that the cities where we live affect our cognitive development. Cities affect the individual's perception of the world with the diversity and heterogeneous structure of the people that make up the population. With their different social and cultural activities and with the governmental and non-governmental institutions they host, cities help us form a kind of world perspective. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that if a person lives in a cosmopolitan city that hosts global institutions, industries, and sectors which deal with international trade, they are more likely to have information about global institutions such as the EU. In this research, I will test whether cities with the above-mentioned characteristics in Turkey host citizens who are more knowledgeable about the EU compared to other cities. I expect that people who live in cities that are more homogenous, less integrated into business with EU countries, and lack foreign institutions (like embassies) will be more ignorant of the EU. Accordingly, the hypothesis of this research is as follows:

H1 = The cities in which individuals live in Turkey affect their level of EU knowledge.

In the following sections of this paper, I will first describe the models and method of analysis by giving a detailed description of the variables included in both models. Then in the results section, I will present the findings of both models and their statistical validity. In the discussion section, I will evaluate the findings of both models in light of the previous literature and explain the limitations of this study and its implications for future studies.

Method

For this research, data sets of Eurobarometer surveys 93.1 (2021) and 94.3 (2021) were used. The reason behind this choice is the fact that those two data sets were the only surveys that include a sampling for Turkey among the most recent surveys.

In these two datasets, there are three standard true-false questions that measure the level of EU knowledge. The first of these questions is a statement about the number of states in the Euro area, with the answers given to this question coded as follows: Euro Area 19 States; 1= "True (Correct)," 2 = "False," 3 = "Don't Know."

The second question is a statement indicating that the members of the European Parliament are elected. The answers for this question are coded as: EP Members Election; 1 = "True (Correct)," 2 = "False," 3 = "Don't Know."

Lastly, the third question states that Switzerland is a member of the EU, with the answers to this question coded as: Switzerland is Member; 1 = "True", 2 = "False (Correct)", 3 = "Don't Know".

To give some descriptive statistics of both data, the percentage of those who answered the first question correctly is 40.8%, those who gave wrong answers is 29.9 and those who answered as "I don't know" is 29.4% for the data set 93.1 (2020). These rates are 42.5%, 29.5%, and 28%, respectively, for the same question in the 94.3 (2021) data set. As for the second question, the percentage of those who answered the question correctly is 38.4%, those who gave wrong answers is 31.9%, and those who answered as "I don't know" is 29.7%. These rates are 44.6%, 27.5%, and 27.9%, respectively, for the same question in the data set numbered 94.3. Finally, the percentage of those who answered the third question correctly is 31.7%, those who gave wrong answers is 41.5%, and the percentage of those who answered

as "I don't know" is 26.8%. These rates are 33.9%, 38.9%, and 27.2%, respectively, for the same question in the data set 94.3.

The answers given to these three questions in the Eurobarometer data sets are grouped under dummy variables as those who answered all three questions correctly, those who answered only two questions correctly, those who answered only one question correctly, and those who gave zero correct answers.

It is controversial to assume that a score of three correct answers would necessarily be a good indicator of a high level of EU knowledge. Moreover, since the number of those who gave correct answers to all three questions in both data sets in the Turkish sample were few in number, it would be statistically problematic to operationalize a logistic regression analysis with many cases not included in the models. For this reason, it was deemed more appropriate to measure EU ignorance rather than EU knowledge in this study. In line with this, the variable that groups all those who gave wrong answers to all three questions about the EU was considered as a good indicator of EU ignorance.

Therefore, the "0 Correct Answer" variable was chosen as the **dependent variable**. This variable is tagged as "EU Knowledge - 0 Correct Answer" with a dichotomous coding as 0= "(Not the Case)," 1= "0 correct answer." According to this classification, 67.2% of the 1,015 participants in data set 93.1 answered at least one question correctly, while 32.8% could not answer any question correctly. For the 94.3 data set, these rates are as follows: 71.5% answered at least one question correctly, while 28.5% could not answer any question correctly.

The **independent variables** that are expected to have an effect on this dependent variable were coded in two data sets as follows: "Age Exact" variable is a scale data coded as ages between 15-99. The highest percentage in the age group is between the ages of 20-45.

The "Left-Right Placement" variable asks the political opinions of individuals. It is coded as a scale ranging from 1 to 10 as 1 = "Left" and 10 = "Right." While 24.2% of the participants marked the number 5 in this scale, 10.6% marked the number 6, 12.4% marked the number 7, and 10.4% marked the number 8. The remaining numbers decreased as single digits towards the Left and Right ends. This shows that Turkish participants are more inclined to political Right than political Left. These ratios are also similar in the 94.3 data set where the biggest accumulation is seen around number 5 with 26.7%.

Answers to the "Education Country-Specific" variable are coded as follows: 0= "Not received any official education," 1= "Primary school (5years)," 2 = "Primary education (8 years)," 3 = "Junior high school or vocational school at the same level," 4 = "High school or vocational school at the same level," 5 = "University (Associate Degree) / Higher Education Schools (2 years)," 6 = "University graduate (4 years and above)," 7 = "Master/Postgraduate." Of the participants, 57.9% had a high school diploma, while 13.9% are university graduates, and 16.0% are 5-year primary school graduates. The rest of the participants are in the minority on a single percentile. For the same variable in data set 94.3, these rates are 54.7%, 13.4%, and 17.9%, respectively.

The "Gender" variable is coded as 1 = "Man" and 2 = "Woman." The rate of men was found to be 49.1%, while that of women is 50.9%. These rates are 51.7% and 48.3%, respectively, in data set 94.3.

The "Occupation of Respondent" variable is coded as: 1 = "Responsible for ordinary shopping, etc.," 2 = "Student," 3 = "Unemployed, temporarily not working," 4 = "Retired, unable to work," 5 = "Farmer," 6 = "Fisherman," 7 = "Professional (lawyer, etc.)," 8 = "Owner of a shop, craftsmen, etc.," 9 = "Business proprietors, etc.," 10 = "Employed Professional (employed doctor, etc.)," 11 = "General management, etc.," 12 = "Middle management, etc.," 13 = "Employed position, at desk,", 14 = " Employed position, travelling, " 15 = "Employed position, service job " 16 = "Supervisor," 17 = "Skilled manual worker," 18 = " Unskilled manual worker, etc." The skilled manual worker category is the most populous of all occupations, with 27.6% of participants choosing this option. The rates of other categories are as follows: 18.1% Responsible for ordinary shopping, 10.2% Student, and 8.3% Owner of a shop, craftsman. For data set 94.3, these rates are: 25,7%, 17,4%, 12,5%, 11,0%, respectively.

The "Type of Community" variable is coded as 1 = "Rural area or village," 2 = "Small/middle town," and 3 = "Large town." According to the data, 20.9% of participants live in rural areas, 11.7% live in small towns, and 67.3% live in large towns. For the same variable in data set 94.3, these rates are 21.1%, 12.2%, and 66.7%, respectively.

The "Internet Use (Index)" variable is coded as: 1 = "Everyday/Almost everyday," 2 = "Two or three times a week," 3 = "About once a week," 4 = "Two or three times a month," 5 = "Less often," 6 = "Never/No Access," 7 = "No Internet access at all." Most of the participants have internet access, as 89.1% chose the "Everyday" option. The rest of the participants chose the other options gradually decreasing to 0.4% at option 6. These rates are 86.6% to 0.5% from the first option to the sixth option in dataset 94.3.

The "Social Class - Self-Assessment (5 Cat)" variable is coded as: 1 = "The working class of society," 2 = "The lower middle class of society," 3 = "The middle class of society," 4 = "The upper middleclass of society," 5 = "The higher class of society." Descriptive statistics show us that 46.9% of the participants identify themselves as middle

class, while 23.9% identify as working class and 23.0% say they are lower middle class. For the same variable in the 94.3 data set, these rates are 24.1%, 25.2%, and 47.2%, respectively.

The "Turkish Region" variable is coded as: TR1 – Istanbul, TR2 – Tekirdağ, TR3 – Balikesir, TR4 – Izmir, TR5 – Aydin, TR6 – Manisa, TR7 – Bursa, TR8 – Kocaeli,TR9 – Ankara, TR10 – Konya, TR11 – Antalya, TR12 – Adana, TR14 – Kirikkale, TR15 – Kayseri, TR16 – Zonguldak, TR17 – Kastamonu, TR18 – Samsun, TR19 – Trabzon, TR20 – Erzurum, TR22 – Malatya, TR23 – Van, and TR24 – Gaziantep.

The "Media Trust Index" variable was only available in the data set 94.3 and it is coded as: 1 = "High trust in the media," 2 = "Medium trust in the media," 3 = "Low or no trust in the media." Of the participants,18.3% chose high trust, 29.6% medium trust, and 52.1% low trust.

The "Media Use Index" variable was not asked to Turkish participants so it could not be included in any of the models.

It should be easy to see that the dependent variable in both data sets is a dichotomous item. Therefore, binary logistic regression analysis is the most appropriate method of analysis for this study. In order to run both analyses, the Turkey sample was first separated from the general sample, and then the "0 correct answer" item was placed in the dependent variable section. After that, the above-mentioned variables were put in the independent variables section. The first option was chosen as the reference value for categorical data. Both models were operationalized with the Enter method. The results of both of the binary logistic regression analyses are described in the results section.

Results

Binary logistic regression analyses were performed in two models to measure the effects of the independent variables of age, gender, education level, occupation, internet usage index, left/right political ideology, social class, community type, media trust index, and region (cities), on the dependent variable "0 correct answer." Both models were statistically significant with the following values of omnibus tests of model coefficients respectively: χ^2 = 375,736. p < .001 and χ^2 = 409.131. p < .001. Model 1 explained 43.0% (Nagelkerke R2) of the variance in EU ignorance and classified 79.5% of cases correctly. Model 2 predicted 82.1% of cases correctly with a Nagelkerke R2 of 48.0%. Both models' high R-square values are indicative of their high explanatory power. Moreover, both regression models were shown to fit, as the Hosmer and Lemeshow test was statistically non-significant (p> .050).

Table 1 shows the Exp(b) values that indicate the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable in both models together with the standard errors SE. The numbers in parentheses contain the Wald statistics showing the weight of the variables in the model.

Since it is more convenient to interpret the odds ratio Exp(b) values in a logistic regression analysis, I will refer to the Exp(b) values instead of the B values while presenting and commenting on the effects of the independent variables in both models. When we look at **Table 1**, the results of the two models show that the Age, Social class, the Media Trust index and Left- Right scale variables are all statistically non-significant in both models.

The Gender variable is statistically significant only in the first model with an odds ratio (OR) of 1,676 (95% CI 1,141 – 2,462), which can be interpreted as women are 67% more likely to be included in the *0 Correct answer group* than men.

The Type of community variable is statistically significant in both models. However, there is an apparent contradiction between the results of the two models. In the first model, OR for Type of community is 0.700 (95% CI .553 – 0.887), while in the second model it is, 1.418 (95% CI 1.057– 1.904). The result of the first model indicates that there is a negative relation between a unit increase in the dependent variable and the independent variable. Accordingly, a unit increase from 1 (rural area, village) to 2 (town) decreases the likelihood of belonging to the 0 correct answer group by a factor of 3%. That is to say, living in larger social environments helps one to be more informed about the EU. On the other hand, the result of the second model shows a contradictory figure, which means an increase in the independent variable results in a positive increase in the dependent variable. According to this contradictory result, living in a large town increases the likelihood of being in the 0 correct answer group by a factor of 41%. These opposing values between the two models need to be explained, which I will attempt to do in the discussion section of this paper.

The Internet use index variable is statistically significant in both models, with the results being in compliance with each other. The odds ratios for internet use frequency are 1,184 (95% CI 1,015– 1,381) and 1,175 (95% CI 1,006– 1,372), respectively. This means a unit decrease in internet usage frequency leads to an 18% (for one model) or 17% (for the other) increase in the likelihood of belonging to the 0 correct answer group.

As for the Education variable, have a Junior high school, Associate degree, and University degree are statistically significant variables in the second model, with the odds ratios being: 0.279 (95% CI 0.078– 0.997), 0.153 (95% CI

Table 1. Binary Logistic Regression Model Results

Predictors	Model 1[a]			Model 2		
	b	SE	Exp(b)[b]	b	SE	Exp(b)
Age exact	,005	,010	1,005(,305)	-,002	,009	,998(,049)
Left- Right	,001	,004	1,001 (,045)	-,024	,019	,976(1,665)
Gender (ref: man)	,516	,196	1,676 (6,919)*	-,111	,216	,895(,266)
Type of community	-,357	,121	,700 (8,751)*	,350	,150	1,418(5,412)*
Internet use (index)	,169	,079	1,184(4,605)*	,161	,079	1,175 (4,139)*
Social class	-,082	,113	,921 (,526)	-,113	,112	,893(,867)
Media Trust index				,146	,154	1,157(,897)
Education (Ref: None)			(5,963)			(13,621)
Primary school (5 years)	-2,069	1,447	,126(2,045)	-,878	,621	,416(2000)
Primary education (8 years)	-2,719	1,504	,066(3,268)	-,901	,743	,406(1,473)
Junior high school	-2,437	1,462	,096 (2,777)	-1,275	,649	,279(3,862)*
High school or vocational school	-2,345	1,464	,096 (2,566)	-1,526	,636	,217(5,755)
Associate degree	-2,560	1,508	,077(2,882)	-1,879	,696	,153(7,286)*
University graduate	-2,204	1,489	,110(2,190)	-1,854	,708	,157(6,861)*
Master / Postgraduate	-1,449	1,934	,235(562)	-21,767	40192,97	,000(,000)
Occupation (ref: sales rep)			(21,784)			(22,431)
Student	,259	,391	1,296(,439)	-,205	,428	,815(,230)
Unemployed	1,033	,402	2,811(6,606)*	-,220	,425	,803(,267)
Retired	,317	,471	1,373(,453)	-1,323	,453	,266(8,544)**
Farmer	1,450	,539	4,263(7,328)*	1,397	,654	,247(4,559)**
Fisherman	1,728	1,588	5,628(1,183)	21,424	40192,97	201454 (,000)
Professional (Lawyer etc.)	-,016	,949	,984(,000)	-1,272	1,178	,280(1,165)
Owner of a shop	,613	,377	1,846(2,642)	-1,211	,394	,298(9,458)**
Business proprietors,	-20,799	16335,111	000(,000)	-20,177	21842,662	,000(,000)
Employed Professional (Doctors etc)	,631	,737	1,880(,735)	-,915	,919	,401(,991)

Predictors	Model 1[a]			Model 2		
	b	SE	Exp(b)[b]	b	SE	Exp(b)
General management, etc	-19,772	40192,970	,000(,000)	21,125	27376,7	14946776(000)
Middle management	-,776	1,361	,460(,325)	,104	,630	1,109(,027)
Employed position, at desk	,152	,448	1,164(,115)	,024	,778	1,024(,001)
Employed position, travelling	-,796	1,149	,451(,480)	-,762	,951	,467(,643)
Employed position, service job	,055	,462	1,057(,014)	-,467	,491	,627(,903)
Supervizor	-18,891	15232,470	,000(,000)	-2,195	1,154	,111(3,618)*
Skilled manual worker	,378	,288	1,459(1,724)	-,573	,346	,564(2,748)
Unskilled manual worker	1,264	,436	3,544(8,419)**	-,968	,590	,380(2,687)
Region (ref: Istanbul)			(176,235)***			(126,994)***
Tekirdağ	,937	,511	2,552(3,358)	1,992	,544	7,329(13,400)***
Balıkesir	2,510	,618	12,308(16,504)***,	170	,548	1,186(,097)
İzmir	2,583	,401	13,230(41,408)***	1,591	,363	4,911(19,221)***
Aydın	1,332	,420	3,790(10,067)**	1,106	,457	3,022(5,854)*
Manisa	1,065	,415	2,900(6,575)*	,538	,452	1,713(1,420)
Bursa	1,872	,390	3,029(23,090)***	,103	,444	1,109(,054)
Kocaeli	-,033	,439	,968(,006)	2,386	,452	10,866(27,878)***
Ankara	-2,967	1,037	,051(8,188)**	-3,128	1,055	,044(8,794)**
Konya	2,462	,491	11,614(24,987)***	1,554	,509	4,732(9,316)**
Antalya	-3,398	1,119	,033(9,228)**	-2,465	1,058	,085(5,426)**
Adana	-1,236	,438	,291(7,965)**	-18,761	4006,187	,000(,000)
Kırıkkale	-2,603	1,222	,074(4,540)*	-19,585	9540,048	,000(,000)
Kayseri	-,637	,600	,529(1,126)	-,498	,561	,608(,786)
Zonguldak	-20,173	10529,179	,000(,000)	1,145	,647	3,141(3,130)
Kastamonu	-,243	,817	,784(,089)	2,461	,779	11,711(9,983)**
Samsun	,073	,468	1,076(,025)	-,036	,508	,964(,005)
Trabzon	1,023	,443	2,781(5,322)*	1,910	,455	6,753(17,594)***
Erzurum	,041	,516	1,042(,006)	,393	,568	1,482(,480)
Malatya	1,131	,532	3,099(4,521)*	-1,917	1,081	,147(3,145)
Van	2,149	,601	8,573(12,795)***	1,711	,558	5,535(9,395)***
Gaziantep	-,958	,409	,384(5,487)*	-1,668	,600	,189(7,712)**
Constant	1,224	1,614	3,402(,575)	-,194	1,008	,823(,037)
Models summary						
Hosmer and Lemeshow (Chi-Square χ²)		,502 (7,321)				,892(3,595)
Nagelkerke R²		,431				,480
-2 Loglikelihood		908,072				790,620
N		1015				1004

*p< .05, **p< .005, ***p< .001
a.Dependent variable; "0 Correct Answer" is the case (= 1).
b. Values in the brakets are Wald statistics.

0.039– 0.598), 0.157 (95% CI 0.039–0.627). These results indicate that junior high school students are 72% less likely to answer all the questions incorrectly than the reference category group who have no formal education. In addition, those who hold Associate and University degrees are 84% less likely to give 0 answers to all three questions.

For the occupation variable, only three categories (unemployed, farmer, and unskilled worker) are statistically significant in the first model. The odds ratios for the unemployed are 2.811 (95% CI 1.278– 6.181), 4.263 (95% CI 1.492– 12.179) for farmers, and 3.544 (95% CI 1.507– 8.318) for unskilled workers. This means compared to the reference group sales reps, the unemployed are 181%, farmers are 326%, and unskilled workers are 254% more likely to belong to the group of 0 correct answer. As for the second model, the following occupations are statistically significant: retired, farmer, owner of a shop, and supervisors. They have the following odd ratios respectively: 0.266 (95% CI 0.110– 0.647), 0.247 (95% CI 0.069– 0.892), 0.298 (95% CI 0.138– 0.645), 0.111 (95% CI 0.012– 1.069). These results indicate that compared to shop assistants, the retired are 73%, self-employed (owner of a shop) are 70%, and supervisors are 88% less likely to belong to the 0 correct answer group. However, in the second model, farmers were found to be 75% less likely to be in the group who answer all the three questions incorrectly as compared to sales reps. There appears to be a curious contradiction between the odds ratio results for the farmer category in the two models, which I will discuss in the discussion section below.

For the region (cities) category, the Tekirdağ province is statistically not significant in the first model but statistically significant in the second model, with and odds ratio of 7,329 (95% CI 2,523– 21,293) which means people in Tekirdağ are 632% more likely to answer all questions incorrectly than people in Istanbul. Balikesir is only statistically significant in the first model and its odds ratio is 12,308 (95% CI 3.666– 41,321), which means that people living in Balikesir are 11.30 times more likely to be in the zero correct answer group. Similarly, the following cities are statistically significant in at least one of the two models with odds ratios increasing the probability of being in the zero correct answer group: İzmir 13,230 (95% CI 6.025– 29.052) and 4.911 (95% CI 2.411– 10.02), Aydın 3.790 (95% CI 1.664– 8.633) and 3.022 (95% CI 1.234– 7.400), Manisa 2,900 (95% CI 1.285– 6.544), Bursa 3.029 (95% CI 3.029– 13.948), Kocaeli 10.866 (95% CI 4.482– 26,344), Konya 11.614 (95% CI 4.440– 30.377) and 4.732 (95% CI 1.744– 12.837), Kastamonu 11.711 (95% CI 2,545– 53,890), Trabzon 2,781 (95% CI 1,166– 6,630) and 6,753 (95% CI 2,766– 16,486), Malatya 3,099 (95% CI 1,093– 8,793), and Van 8,573 (95% CI 2,641– 27,825) and 5,535 (95% CI 1,853– 16,532). These results indicate that people living in the above mentioned cities are more likely to answer all the questions incorrectly than the people living in Istanbul.

However, the following cities are statistically significant in at least one model with odds ratios decreasing the probability of being in the 0 correct answer group: Ankara 0.051 (95% CI 0.007– 0.393) and 0.044 (95% CI 0.006– 0.346), Antalya 0.033 (95% CI 0.004– 0.299) and 0.085 (95% CI 0.011– 0.677), Adana 0.291 (95% CI 0.123– 0.686), Kırıkkale 0.074 (95% CI 0.007– 0.812), and Gaziantep 0.384 (95% CI 0.172– 0.855) and 0.189(95% CI 0.058–0.612). These results show that people living in Ankara are 94-95%, Antalya 96-91%, Adana 70%, Kırıkkale 92%, and Gaziantep 61-81% less likely to be in the zero correct answer group.

In the discussion section, which is the next and last section, the contribution and limitations of the current findings to the literature will be discussed.

Discussion

In this research, the factors affecting the EU ignorance of individuals living in Turkey are analyzed by binary logistic regression method. According to the results of the research, the factors affecting EU ignorance are Gender, Type of Community, Internet Use Index, Education, Occupation and Region (cities).

Confirming the previous literature, the Gender variable turned out to be effective (Carl, et al., 2019; Rapeli, 2014; Kentmen; 2010). Accordingly, women are more likely than men to be ignorant of the EU. However, since this effect is not seen in both models, it would be more convenient to interpret this cautiously.

As for Type of Community variable, it appears to affect having knowledge about the EU as well. However, the nature of this effect gives contradictory results in the two models. In the first model, it appears that those living in big cities are less likely to be EU ignorant, which is consistent with the previous literature. In the second model however, this relationship shows the opposite direction, which means that living in a big city increases EU ignorance. This inconsistency in the results for type of community variable shows that it is vulnerable to contingencies. For this reason, it should be repeatedly included in the analyzes in future studies and tested until it can be proven to have a consistent effect on the EU knowledge level. Rapeli (2014) also found no relevance for this variable.

The internet use index variable reveals that the probability of being EU ignorant increases as the frequency of internet use decreases in both models. In her research, Kentmen (2010) stated that she did not analyze the effect of the internet

on EU knowledge level. The present research has made a contribution to the literature by proving the positive impact of the internet.

In accordance with the literature (Carl, et al., 2019; Clark, 2014), the education variable confirms that educated people are less likely to be EU ignorant. Here, the low number of people with higher education (such as a doctorate degree) has caused these levels to be statistically non-significant. However, an inverse relationship was found between the increase in education level and EU ignorance at the high school and university levels with sufficient number of participants.

As for the occupation variable, it can be said that the results are generally compatible with the literature (Clark, 2014). In this sense, individuals with professions that are more international and more competitive and require more qualifications are not EU ignorant compared to individuals working in professions that do not have these characteristics. Farmers are the only occupational group that appear to have contradicting results in both models. The reason for this difference may be the difference in the number of respondents in both models and the region of residence of the farmers surveyed. Some agricultural products are subject to EU regulations, making the farmers who produce these products more knowledgeable than other farmers who do not produce these products.

The effect of the regions (cities) variable on EU ignorance has not been investigated in any previous study. This research shows that in Turkey, the cities people live have a strong influence on EU ignorance. As Turkey's most cosmopolitan city, Istanbul is an influential city with a high degree of EU level. The impact of other cities on EU knowledge was measured by taking Istanbul as a reference. Thus, compared to Istanbul, only the individuals living in the Ankara, Antalya, Adana, Kırıkkale, and Gaziantep provinces are less likely to be EU ignorant. On the other hand, compared to Istanbul, the probability of being EU ignorant is extremely high with individuals living in other provinces. It is necessary to explain the differences of the cities which have positive effects on EU knowledge level. First of all, since Ankara is the capital of Turkey, it hosts many international official institutions. Being the center of bureaucracy, it is expected that living in Ankara will make it easier to be exposed to some information about the EU. Although there are consulates and similar official institutions in Istanbul, it can be understood that they are more effective in Ankara when the impact of the population rate is taken into account. Antalya is the most touristic and famous holiday region of Turkey. This makes Antalya a frequent destination for foreigners from many countries, especially European countries. This cosmopolitan environment encourages local tradesmen and people living in Antalya to be more knowledgeable about the outside world. Adana and Kırıkkale are statistically significant in only one model, that is why these results maybe contingent for the two cities. Future analyzes will be needed to see a more precise effect for both cities. Before making a binding assessment for these two cities, it should be seen whether these two cities have an inverse relationship on EU ignorance in the coming years. Gaziantep, on the other hand, was effective in both models. Gaziantep is known in Turkey for its gastronomic richness and being an industrial hub. Since it is a city with a high level of foreign exports and hosts many EU projects with its cultural richness, it is possible that the residents of this city have learned some things about the EU.

Variables such as age, social class, the media trust index, and left–right scale have no effect on EU ignorance in the present study. Since these variables show different results from research to research (Carl, et al., 2019; Rapeli, 2014; Kentmen, 2010), the extent of their effect is controversial.

As a contribution to the previous literature, the present research has shown that internet usage and regions (city) in Turkey are important determinants of the EU knowledge. Nevertheless, some variables such as political parties and preferred media organs (newspaper, TV, or radio) were not included in the analysis due to lack of data.

Finally, as for the limitations of this study, although it is a well-established application in the EU studies literature to use three objective Eurobarometer questions to evaluate EU knowledge, it can be argued that such a few numbers of questions are not enough to have a firm say on individuals' EU knowledge. Correct answers to these three objective questions may not be enough to accept an individual as knowledgeable or ignorant about the EU. In addition, since categories such as some PhD graduates and various occupations are not sufficiently represented by the participants for some variables, their relationship with the EU knowledge level cannot be seen clearly. These concerns can be stated among the limitations of this research. In future research, a more comprehensive scale measuring the EU knowledge level can be prepared and variables such as political parties and media organs can be tested in a single model, in addition to the variables included in the models in this study.

Ethics Committee Approval: Since the research in question is based on Eurobarometer surveys, ethics committee approval is not required.

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İSTANBUL UNIVERSITY P R E S S

Research Article

An Analysis of the Social Wellbeing of Youth in Turkey Based on the "2017 Global Youth Wellbeing Index"*

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ABSTRACT

Social wellbeing is critical in assessing the social status of the youth and revealing both their opportunities and problems. The '2017 Global Youth Wellbeing Index' (GYWI) is an international index explaining the social wellbeing status of the youth of different countries in terms of 'civil participation', 'economic opportunities', 'education', 'health', 'information and communication technologies', 'safety and security', and 'gender equality'. In the current study, the social wellbeing of the youth in Turkey was analyzed on the basis of the data related to the specified domains of this index. Aiming to reveal a view of the social wellbeing of the youth in Turkey, the social wellbeing of young people was compared using the '2017 GYWI,' and the data in the current national statistics database in Turkey (Turkish Statistical Institute [TurkStat], 2020, 2021). This comparison places a sociological emphasis on the urgent need for a general social wellbeing indexing of the youth. The indexing on the social wellbeing of young people reveals in which areas young people do not sufficiently benefit from the opportunities and resources of the society they live in. In this respect, the results of this study will guide social policies in related fields.

Keywords: Youth, Social Wellbeing, 2017 Global Youth Wellbeing Index

1. Introduction

Besides being shaped by the society they live in, young people have the power to shape the future of their societies with their ideas, energy, skills and potential. Due to the nature of society, this two-way interaction determines the desires, development, opportunities and status of young people. The factors that shape the development of young people are multidimensional, including the economic, cultural and political conditions of the society (Isiugo-Abanihe & Oyediran, 2004). The field and social conditions related to youth can be clarified by defining youth. Youth can be defined not as a special category that is reduced to age in sociology, but as a social relationship (Baker, 1983). In addition, youth as a subculture expresses subordination and resistance to adult domination, an area where the young-old dichotomy is reproduced (Tait, 1993). Bessant (1995), on the other hand, similar to Baker (1983) and Tait (1993), focused on the state's reproduction and shaping of youth with the opportunities provided to the youth. Youth is seen as a social category that is reshaped by the state through economic opportunities such as job opportunities offered to young people. Furlong, Woodman, and Wyn (2011) emphasize the need for youth cultural and subcultural studies to take into account the changing nature of young people's cultural identities. Looking at the definitions of youth in sociology, it is seen that it is defined as a category that includes age, class and gender as a social process and is visible in social relations. Periodic characteristics of youth, including the above definitions in sociology, are important for societies in terms of determining the problem areas related to youth.

Youth is a period that covers the transition in many domains such as the labor market, educational expectations and family relations. This transition includes changes in the lives of young people that contribute to an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability. Young people are the actors whose skills, motivation and energy are essential for the development, transformation, and growth of their societies. Youth is a period when participation in the labor market, education, and politics begins. This period often encompasses rapid changes that contribute to an atmosphere of uncertainty. As Bucheli (2021) states, it is a period that covers the transition in many areas such as the youth labor market, educational expectations and family relations. This uncertainty is pivotal in identifying the problem domains as well as the opportunities offered by the society, which is only feasible through an evaluation of their social wellbeing (Bucheli, 2021).

Identifying the current status and problems of the youth and opportunities offered to young people in all spheres of society, is only possible with a holistic view. This view is explained through the *social wellbeing of the youth*. Wellbeing has been defined by McLeod and Wright (2016) as a measure of a 'good life'. A good life refers to an overall assessment that includes indicators of health, subjective happiness, economic wellbeing, and basic security needs. Similar to the term used by McLeod and Wright (2016), Teghe and Rendell (2005, p.3) associate wellbeing with a single dimension of subjects such as economics, politics and health, but this concept is actually used to determine the general condition of the society as a whole. In other words, it is used as a criterion in determining society's access to and ownership of resources.

A social wellbeing perspective in sociology provides a holistic view in determining the problems in society and offering solutions to these problems. In other words, the concept of social wellbeing is used to evaluate the problems in the lives of individuals in different stages of life (children, young and old) and to develop solutions. Social wellbeing is a dynamic phenomenon that is shaped by economic, psychological, and environmental changes in society (Surtaeva, et.al., 2017, p.394-396). Interventions aimed at increasing the social wellbeing of young people have been increasingly implemented to draw attention to their problems, such as unemployment and an uncertain future, and to seek solutions to these problems. This concept enables the measuring of the problems they experience particularly in finances, education, health, and housing. Thus, the social wellbeing of young people is important in terms of preparing and organizing their future (McLeod & Wright, 2016). Social indicators are used as the basic tools to determine the complexity, the dynamic structure of society, various social processes, and phenomena. This allows an assessment of the developmental aspects of social conditions, tendencies and actions in terms of quantity and quality. Various indicator systems for wellbeing are used to determine the social wellbeing level of a population. Indicators of social wellbeing allow a holistic analysis of a society and the determination of the degree of social risk (such as unemployment and deprivation of education rights) (Surtaeva, et.al., 2017, p.396). In this study, the welfare of the youth was expressed as 'the social welfare of the youth', supported by definitions of the youth period in sociology. From this point of view, this study focuses on the social wellbeing of young people, starting from the focal points in the sociological definition of youth.

With regard to certain indicators of the social wellbeing of young people, researchers have mainly focused on issues such as juvenile delinquency (Durrant, 2000), their use of time (Møller, 1992), an inability to access material resources (Makiwane & Kwizera, 2009), security, positive relationships with others, and opportunities for development (Eriksen & Seland, 2021). As youth participation in voluntary activities increases, they attach more importance to

interpersonal values and increase their employment opportunities (Dávila de León et.al., 2020). Similarly, Cicognani et.al. (2015) found that being a member of an association and participating in voluntary activities positively affect the social wellbeing of young people. On the other hand, young people who are neither educated nor in the workforce are faced with risks such as low economic status, poor mental health, a low rate of working in voluntary jobs, and a higher rate of tobacco consumption of (Muir & Powell, 2012).

The wellbeing of the youth is even more important for developing countries such as Turkey, where the percentage of young people (15-24 years) is 15.4% (TurkStat, 2021a). One of the studies on the welfare of young people in Turkey was conducted by Aysan and Avcı (2015). The changing roles of public institutions within the scope of youth wellbeing education, housing, social security and employment policies are discussed through social policy and welfare. The findings by Özmete and Bayoğlu (2008) reveal that young people are concerned about their social wellbeing, economic conditions, poverty, and job opportunities. Kahya (2020) emphasizes that the youth are generally satisfied with their living conditions, but they lack opportunities for educational, cultural, social and sports activities. Apart from these three studies (Aysan & Avcı, 2015; Kahya, 2020; Özmete & Bayoğlu, 2008), no studies on the wellbeing of the Turkish youth could be identified.

The research related to this subject has been conducted on the basis of factors affecting the wellbeing of young people. The studies mostly focus on certain indicators of social wellbeing and are limited in reflecting the opportunities, current situation and problem domains in the lives of young people. Moreover, mapping a range of indicators together to have a general and comparable understanding of the social wellbeing of young people is important. In other words, comparing the social wellbeing of young people at national and international level is only possible with an indexing. The 2017 GYWI prepared by Sharma, Henneman, Qadri, and Vignoles (2017), is the first index in the literature to focus on the wellbeing of young people. It was created with an effort to develop an understanding of the social wellbeing of young people on the basis of wellbeing, both at a national and international level. Therefore, this study is based on the data of the 2017 GYWI, which is an indexing study for the social wellbeing of young people. Evaluating the social wellbeing of the youth in many spheres such as education, health and economy is important to determine the current opportunities and problems experienced by the youth in Turkey, which has very dynamic demographics. In the current study, each domain in the 2017 GYWI and the indicators related to these domains were compared and sociologically interpreted on the basis of TurkStat (2020, 2021), which is the national database of Turkey. Based on these definitions, it can be said that the youth will contribute to being aware of the problem areas in society by understanding the complex and intersecting processes of social change in society.

1.1. *Social Wellbeing of Youth*

Youth has been classified by international organizations on the basis of age periods. Youth is defined as the period between 15 and 24 years by the United Nations (UN) (2013) and by the TurkStat (2021a), while this age range is given as 15-29 by the European Union Statistical Office (EUROSTAT) (2009). In Turkey, youth is defined as individuals between the ages of 14 and 29 by the decision of the Council of Ministers dated 15/11/2012 and numbered 2012/4242 (Council of Ministers Decision on the National Youth and Sports Policy Document, 2012). The age-based lower limit for youth usually coincides with the age at which education ends. Therefore, the starting age of the youth period varies according to the age of compulsory education in countries. The upper limit, on the other hand, has been increasing in recent years due to the prolonged duration of education and uncertainties in labor markets (Genç Hayat Vakfı, 2017, p.12). 'Youth' is just a term. Youth can be classified by age or generations. However, these boundaries are completely fluid. Since the relationship between social age and biological age is quite complex, the definition of youth cannot be reduced to age. 'Youth' and 'age' are actually constructed in the struggle between young and old and are part of a struggle for classification (Bourdieu, 1993, p.94-95). Social cohesion is necessary for the reflexive development of a young person's identity, which explains individualization as defined by Giddens (Gill, 2009, p.34) through an approach that questions the policies that affect the lives of individuals. Giddens (1991) focuses on the life span of the individual, which is organized in terms of the predicted life span. He evaluates it from a temporal perspective that involves the colonization of the future and the control of time. In this respect, a young person is one who wanders around and has no thought of the future (Gill, 2009, p.100). Giddens (1991, p.148) defines youth as a transitional stage within the life cycle. This transitional stage is an identity crisis for the youth. In fact, the course of life is built on the individual's awareness of the crises in this period, his/her confrontation with these crises and his/her anticipated needs to solve them.

As can be seen, there is no consensus on the exact age range to describe the youth. However, youth is a social category in which physiological, psychological and sociological changes are experienced, covering a rapid transition period

between childhood and adulthood (Burcu, 1997, p.7). The definition of youth, the description of the characteristics of this period, and its problem domains are explained by sociology through social factors. Many factors such as the youth's integration with the social structure, social problems and solutions to them, the expectations and hopes of the society from the youth are explained on the basis of sociological theories (Burcu, 1998). While young people experience age-related social, cultural, biosocial, physiological and psychosocial changes like other individuals in all age groups, the opportunities provided by their society also affect these changes (Furlong et.al., 2011). Therefore, as stated by Bourdieu (1993), Burcu (1997, 1998) and Furlong et.al. (2011), rather than covering an age period, youth is a social category shaped by many changes in the society.

The concepts of 'happiness', 'life satisfaction', and 'wellbeing' are used interchangeably by Veenhoven (1991, 2000) to determine the general condition of the society. A statement that demonstrates life satisfaction also shows the level of happiness. Although there is a tendency to associate wellbeing with a single dimension of social life such as economy, politics, health, it is actually used to evaluate the general condition of the society. In other words, it is a term that is used to evaluate the general public's access to and ownership of resources (Teghe & Rendell, 2005, p.3). Wellbeing has been built on the idea of how individuals perceive services and conditions in many domains of society such as family, consumption, labor force participation, leisure time, health, finances. This perception affects individuals' general view of wellbeing, commitment to society and life satisfaction (Sirgy et.al., 2010). According to Awartani et.al. (2008), wellbeing is often associated with happiness or health, and as a result, it allows an assessment to be made of the structural conditions related to poverty, education, employment, housing and health services. More specifically, this holistic assessment of young people's wellbeing is only possible through a multi-faceted approach (Bourke & Geldens, 2007).

The individualistic tendency of concepts such as wellbeing has been criticized by youth sociologists, who draw attention to the importance of structural conditions such as poverty and access to education, housing, employment, health care that shape youth's 'feel-good' potential (Bourke & Geldens, 2007). The social wellbeing of young people is a process that includes structural, institutional and individual factors in a relational approach (Wyn et.al., 2015). In other words, the social wellbeing of young people is beyond their control and depends on much broader circumstances. In addition to the socio-economic conditions of the youth, factors such as family and friend support are also important in their social wellbeing. More recently, a holistic view of youth wellbeing has been developed, including many domains such as stress, abuse, trauma, financial difficulties, friendships, family, and work (Coffey, 2022). In this study, based on Bourke and Geldens (2007)'s definition of welfare, the social welfare of young people is examined from a relational perspective. Elements related to welfare, more specifically social welfare, are related to each other and are discussed holistically in a framework that explains social wellbeing and many related problems, opportunities and the current situation.

The social wellbeing of young people takes into account their cultural differences, the way they perceive the society they live in, and the differences in their transition to adulthood (Cahill, 2015; MacDonald & Shildrick, 2013; Petrova, 2002). Therefore, conducting an analysis of the social wellbeing of young people allows a multidimensional evaluation to be made to determine the opportunities, the current situation and the problem areas of the youth. The wellbeing of young people, who are considered to be the most dynamic segment of society, has drawn particular attention in youth research, as pointed out by McLeod and Wright (2015), because while wellbeing reflects an 'ideal' situation, a 'lack of wellbeing' helps detect and solve problems. With this aspect, wellbeing guides the policies aimed at improving the lives of young people.

1.2. *2017 Global Youth Wellbeing Index*

After the 1960s, quality of life studies paid less attention to measuring the quality of society in general, while efforts to develop reliable and valid measures of individual wellbeing began to increase (Møller et.al., 2018). One of these efforts is the indexes developed to portray the wellbeing of young people accurately, the most recent of which is the 2017 GYWI. This index was created for the first time in 2014 in collaboration with the 'International Youth Foundation', 'Hilton and the Center for Strategic and International Studies'. This index, the second of which was published in 2017, consists of youth wellbeing measures, their, *'civil participation', 'economic opportunities', 'education', 'health', 'information and communication technologies', 'safety and security' and 'gender equality'*. The index includes data from 30 countries, including Turkey. These domains that shape the transition of young people to adulthood allow an assessment of their support status in these domains. Each indicator belonging to these domains has been prepared for the goals of 'Transforming Our World, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' (SDG) published by United Nations, (2015). More precisely, each of the seven index domains is associated with at least one of the 17 SDGs. As

such, the index can serve as a tool for measuring and understanding progress towards the 2030 global goals and for visibility into investments in youth.

Each domain in the index include some indicators that are not specific to youth (such as per capita income, internet use, and global competitiveness), factors affecting young people (such as adolescent fertility rate) and young people's perceptions (satisfaction with services such as education, and health). This index was created by combining data containing objective (democracy, election age, income, youth unemployment, youth borrowing, youth literacy, public investments in education, suicide) and subjective (youth perceptions of government, expectations about living standards, satisfaction with education, perceptions of health, perceptions of violence, perceptions of gender, etc) factors related to social wellbeing.

2. Methodology

2.1. *Data Collection and Method*

The method of this study is secondary analysis through descriptive statistics. Accordingly, the 2017 GYWI and TurkStat (2020, 2021) data were used in the study. Two main data sources, the 2017 GYWI and TurkStat (2020, 2021) were used in the study. The first of these is the 2017 GYWI, which measures the social wellbeing of young people. This index explains the social wellbeing status of young people in terms of *'civil participation', 'economic opportunities', 'education', 'health', 'information and communication technologies', 'safety and security', and 'gender equality'.*

Each domain and its indicators are scaled with a score between '0' and '1'. Here, the highest (or lowest) value gets '1' and the lowest (or highest) value gets '0' points. In all cases, one (1.0) represents the highest relative score for youth wellbeing and zero (0.0) represents the lowest relative score for it (Sharma, et.al. 2017, p.146).

In this study, the national database TurkStat (2020, 2021) was used as the second data source. There is no indexing for the social wellbeing of young people in Turkey. However, the data on the seven domains in the 2017 GYWI and the indicators in these domains were drawn from multiple reports in TurkStat (2020, 2021). The data in TurkStat (2020, 2021) reports cover all cities and towns within the borders of Turkey.

In the current study, the data on the domains and indicators of the 2017 GYWI for the social wellbeing of young people were compared with the most recently published data of TurkStat (2020, 2021), the national official database in Turkey. As such, TurkStat (2020, 2021) data for Turkey were used, based on the seven domains of the index and 35 indicators belonging to these domains. Thus, the wellbeing of the youth and the social wellbeing of the youth in Turkey were compared by using the findings comprising these domains and indicators.

2.2. *Limitations*

In this study, a comparison was made regarding the wellbeing of young people in Turkey through the data in the 2017 GYWI and the data obtained from the TurkStat (2020, 2021), which clearly revealed the necessity of an indexing that evaluates the social wellbeing of young people holistically. An indexing of youth wellbeing allows comparison of the living standards of young people both within a particular country and from the perspective of other countries. Therefore, 2017 GYWI stands out among the indexes focusing on the wellbeing of young people. One limitation of this study concerns the accessibility and thus comparability of the indicators related to each domain. The data for Turkey regarding the indicators of the indexed domains were obtained from the TurkStat (2020, 2021) database. However, no data are included for some indicators in the TurkStat database. Therefore, the accessibility and comparability of the data is the first of the limitations.

The second limitation is that the seven domains in the index for the wellbeing of the youth and the indicators of these domains are insufficient to make a valid assessment. In other words, not being able to make comparisons by the development status of countries and regional differences is another limitation of this study.

Considering these limitations, and comparing the data on the index countries and Turkey, the sociological necessity of an indexing for the social wellbeing of the youth is strongly highlighted.

3. Results

In this study, a comparison was made regarding the wellbeing of young people in Turkey by using the 2017 GYWI data and TurkStat (2020, 2021) data. For this purpose, a comparison was made for each index domain and its indicator values. The comparisons of the index values obtained for the data of 30 countries in the 2017 GYWI and the data of TurkStat (2020, 2021) are presented in tables. The indicator value of Turkey, its rank among these 30 countries and the current values in the TurkStat (2020, 2021) database are included. However, it should be noted that since data on some

indicators were not available in the TurkStat database, the indicator values for them were not included. This comparison was made by using the current values that were available.

3.1. *Civic Participation Domain*

As can be seen in Table 1, there is no data in the TurkStat (2020, 2021) database for the indicators of democracy, youth volunteering, and youth government perceptions for civic participation.

Table 1. Index score, ranking and TurkStat values in the domain of civic participation for Turkey

Indicator	Band Score	Rank	TurkStat value
Democracy	0.41	20	-
Youth volunteering	0.04	28	-
Youth policies	1	1	1
Minimum age to be elected	30	25	18
Youth perceptions of government	0.98	2	-
Civic Participation	**0.425**	**24**	

It expresses the existence of youth policies (0= no policy, 0.5= policy is being revised/developed, 1= there is a policy). This value is '1' for Turkey in the 2017 GYWI. The existence of a national youth policy is an indicator of how much attention governments pay to the special needs and potential of their youth. *The minimum age to be elected* is another indicator of civic participation. The age to be elected in the 2017 GYWI is 30 for Turkey in 2016, and thus ranks as the 25th out of 30 countries. However, with the amendment made in the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey (16/4/2017-6771/3 article 76) in 2017, the minimum age for election eligibility was reduced to 18.

The average of the civic participation domain in the index is 0.573. Turkey's value for this domain is 0.425, and it ranks 24th out of 30 countries. With this value, Turkey ranks below the average index score. Regarding this domain, the social wellbeing of the Turkish youth is negative. However, in the current data in this domain, lowering the election age to 18 in Turkey can be considered a development that supports their more active participation in governance. However, the data are inadequate to compare the index and TurkStat (2020, 2021) values. While youth policies and minimum age to be elected as elements of youth social wellbeing seem to be positive for their civic participation, youth social wellbeing should be considered together with structural, institutional and individual characteristics.

3.2. *Economic Opportunities Domain*

As seen in Table 2, no data on global competitiveness, early entrepreneurial activities, youth borrowing, and future expectations of youth about living standards are available in the TurkStat (2020, 2021) database.

According to the 2017 GYWI, Turkey's per *capita income* was 11,522 USD, and it ranked 10th with a score of 0.20. However, this is reported to be 8,598 USD in the 'Gross Domestic Product by Province, 2019' report of TurkStat (2021b) for 2020, which indicates a significant decrease in income. The ratio of *youth NEETs* is in 24th place, with a score of 0.24, according to the data of TurkStat (2021c) 'Sustainable Development Indicators, 2010-2019'. The 15-24 year-old youth make 0.26 (26%) of the total, of whom 34% are women and 18.3% are men. The high rate of women who are not in education or employment is noteworthy. Regarding *youth unemployment*, Turkey ranks 20th with 0.74 points according to the '2017 GYWI.' However, according to the TurkStat (2021d) 'Labor Force Statistics, October 2021' data, 24.07% of youth (15-24 years) are unemployed (34.0% women and 18.3% men). The high unemployment rate among young women is remarkable.

The overall index average for economic opportunities is 0.452. Turkey's index value is 0.38, and it is in 19th place among the 30 countries. This value portrays an even worse picture regarding the social wellbeing of the youth in Turkey. The most recent TurkStat (2020, 2021) data available make it clear that the negative situation in this domain continues due to the decrease in per capita income, the increase in the rate of young NEETs, and the increase in youth unemployment in Turkey. It is observed that the social wellbeing scores of young people related to economic

Table 2. Index score, ranking and TurkStat value in the domain of economic opportunities for Turkey

Indicator	Band Score	Rank	TurkStat value
GDP per capita in dollars	0.20	10	8.598 dollars
Global competitiveness	0.43	17	-
Youth not in education, employment, or training (NEETs)	0.24	24	0.26
Youth unemployment	0.74	20	24.07%
Early entrepreneurial activities	0.34	11	-
Youth borrowing	0.30	18	-
Future expectations of young people regarding living standards	0.74	10	-
Economic Opportunities	**0.38**	**19**	

opportunities are high. However, it is important to evaluate factors such as a lack of education, an inability to find a job, the region of residence and gender in relation to the economic opportunities of young people.

3.3. *Education Domain*

Education is the third domain for the social wellbeing of young people as seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Index score, ranking and TurkStat value for the domain of education for Turkey

Indicator	Band Score	Rank	TurkStat value
Youth literacy	0.99	12	0.99
Public investments in education	0.09	29	5.40%
Low enrollment in secondary education	1	10	95.70%
Low completion in secondary education	94.57	10	94.57%
Youth satisfaction with education	0.61	26	59.50%
Education	**0.69**	**21**	

According to the 2017 GYWI, the literacy rate of youth (15-24 years) in the population ranks 12th, with 0.99 points (99%). This rate did not change with 0.99 (99%) for the youth (15-24 years old) in the TurkStat (2021e) 'National Education Statistics Database, 2008-2020' report. The percentage of expenditure on education in total government expenditure is 5.4% according to TurkStat (2021f) 'Educational Expenditure Statistics, 2020' data. The indicator of low enrolment in secondary education refers to what percentage of the population who are of the official age range for secondary education, regardless of age, is enrolled in secondary education. According to the 2017 GYWI, it is 94.57% of the population in this age range. According to the TurkStat (2021f) 'Educational Expenditure Statistics, 2020' report, this rate is 95.7% (95.9% for women and 95.5% for men). Secondary education completion indicator, on the other hand, shows the percentage of those who complete primary and secondary education for both men and women. According to the 2017 GYWI, this indicator is 94.57% for young people (18-24 years old). According to the TurkStat (2021f) 'Educational Expenditure Statistics, 2020' report, this rate is 97.1% (96.8% for women and 97.4% for men). While the rate of women starting secondary education is higher, girls are less likely to complete secondary education than boys, which means that a higher number of girls than boys are excluded from the formal education system. The indicator of the *satisfaction of young people with education*, on the other hand, shows the percentage of those who are very satisfied and satisfied with the education system and school. According to the index, this rate is 61% in Turkey. According to

the TurkStat (2021a) 'Youth with Statistics, 2020' report, 59.5% of the youth (18-24 years old) were satisfied with their education and 23.5% stated that they were moderately satisfied with it.

While the index average score in education is 0.71, Turkey's score in this domain is 0.69. With this score, Turkey ranks 21st and remains below the index average, thus depicting a grim outlook. According to TurkStat (2020, 2021), the budget allocated to education has increased, but the satisfaction of young people with education has decreased. Therefore, it can be said that the negative picture regarding the social wellbeing of the youth in Turkey still holds. Education, which is another component of youth social wellbeing, seems to be closely related to youth literacy, public investment in education, low enrolment rates in secondary education, low completion rates in secondary education, and youth satisfaction with education.

3.4. *Health Domain*

Health, which is the fourth domain for the social wellbeing of the youth, as seen in Table 4 no data were available on the youth stress indicator in this domain.

Table 4. Index score, ranking and TurkStat value in the domain of health for Turkey

Indicator	Band Score	Rank	TurkStat value
Adolescent birth rate	26.81	14	15
Self-harm rate	15.27	17	11.24
Youth stress	0.72	29	-
Perceptions of youth regarding health	0.82	6	84.6%
Tobacco use	0.27	23	28.0%
Health	**0.63**	**19**	

The *adolescent birth rate in* represents births given per 1000 women aged 15-19. According to the index, the adolescent birth rate in Turkey ranks 14th, with a rate of 26.81 per thousand. According to the TurkStat (2021g) 'Birth Statistics, 2020' report, this rate has decreased to 15 per thousand among the young people (15-19 years old). The rate of *self-harm among young people* (suicide rate per 100.000 in the 15-24 age group) is 15.27 per hundred thousand for Turkey in the index, and it ranks 17th. According to the TurkStat (2020a) 'Death and Cause of Death Statistics, 2019' report, this rate is 11.24 per hundred thousand for young people (15-24 years old). There appears to be a decrease in youth suicides. *The health perceptions of young people* shows the percentage of the Turkish youth who agree with the statement 'My physical health is near perfect'. Accordingly, the ratio of young people's perceptions of their health is 0.82, and with this score, Turkey ranks 6th among the index countries. A percentage of 84.6% of the youth (18-24 years old) (82.2% of women, 86.9% of men) state that they are satisfied with their health in the 'Youth with Statistics, 2020' report of TurkStat (2021a). *Tobacco product use* refers to those among people aged 15 and over who use tobacco products. According to the index, this rate is 27%, and it ranks 23rd among the index countries. According to the TurkStat (2020b) 'Turkey Health Survey, 2019' report, 28.0% of the population aged 15 and overuse tobacco products.

While the overall average for this domain is 0.65, Turkey is below the index average, with 0.63 points (19th). It can be said that its outlook is more negative in terms of health. Among the indicators in this domain, the birth rate in adolescence and the rate of self-harm decreased and their perceptions of health were positive; however, the increase in the use of tobacco products is one of the negative changes, while the social wellbeing of the youth is negative according to the health index value, there is a better change according to TurkStat (2020, 2021).

3.5. *Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Domain*

Information and communication technologies, as seen in Table 5, no data on the indicators of the development of information and communication technologies and the access of young people to the Internet at home are available in the database of TurkStat (2020, 2021).

Table 5. Index score, ranking and TurkStat value in the domain of ICTs for Turkey

Indicator	Band Score	Rank	TurkStat value
Development of ICTs	5.59	12	-
Youth access to the Internet at home	55.58	11	-
Use of the Internet	0.78	10	79%
Mobile phone subscriptions	96.02	23	97.37%
Information and Communication Technologies	**0.59**	**12**	

The use of the Internet indicator shows the 'percentage of individuals of all ages who use the Internet'. According to the index, the rate of internet use in Turkey is 0.78 (78%), and it ranks 10th among the indexed countries. This rate is 0.70 (79%) for individuals aged 16-74, according to the TurkStat (2020c) 'Household Information Technologies (IT) Usage Survey, 2020' report. This indicator is not included in the index for young people, and this rate is 95.7% for young people (16-24 years old) in the 'Youth with Statistics, 2020' report of TurkStat (2021a). The mobile phone subscriptions indicator shows the 'mobile subscriptions per 100 people (all ages) as a percentage'. According to the index, this rate is 96.2%, and Turkey ranks 23rd among 30 countries. According to the TurkStat (2020c) 'Household Information Technologies (IT) Usage Survey, 2021' report, the data for the same indicator is 97.37%.

The overall average score of the information and communication technologies domain is 0.54. For this domain, with a score of 0.59, Turkey ranks 12th out of 30 countries. TurkStat (2020, 2021) data for this domain also supports this positive conclusion. In other words, the social wellbeing of young people in Turkey fares better regarding this domain.

3.6. *Safety and Security Domain*

As seen in Table 6, in indicators, data on internal peace, violence among youth and perceptions of violence are not available in TurkStat (2020, 2021).

Table 6. Index score, ranking and TurkStat value for the domain of safety and security for Turkey

Indicator	Band Score	Rank	TurkStat value
Road fatalities (per hundred thousand)	5.59	13	8.9
Internal peace	55.58	24	-
Violence among youth	8.06	16	-
Human trafficking (per hundred thousand)	0.50	10	74
Perceptions of violence	0.93	3	-
Safety and Security	**0.69**	**14**	

The *road fatalities* indicator shows the death rates in traffic accidents per 100,000 young people (15-24 years old). According to the index, this rate is 5.59 in Turkey, which ranks 13th. This value is 8.9 for young people (15-24 years old) in the TurkStat (2021c) 'Sustainable Development Indicators, 2010-2019' report. According to the same report, the number of victims of *human trafficking* per 100.000 people in Turkey (18-29 years) is 74 per hundred thousand.

The overall average for safety and security is 0.67. Ranking 14th, Turkey's index score in this domain is 0.69. The current indicators of TurkStat (2020, 2021) clearly shows that road fatalities and human trafficking have increased, and thus, it can be said that the social wellbeing of the youth in Turkey has become relatively worse in terms of security and safety. The safety and security dimension plays an important role in the social wellbeing of young people. Therefore, the situation of young people regarding road fatalities (per hundred thousand), internal peace, violence among youth, human trafficking (per hundred thousand), and perceptions of violence affects their social wellbeing with a focus on safety and security.

3.7. *Gender Equality Domain*

As seen in Table 7, TurkStat (2020, 2021) offers no data regarding limited civil liberties and young people's perception of gender.

Table 7. Index score, ranking and TurkStat value in the domain of gender equality for Turkey

Indicator	Band Score	Rank	TurkStat value
Limited civil liberties	0.54	20	-
Early marriage among women	0.10	21	2.7%
Women's fear of walking alone	0.52	20	49.6%
Young people's perception of gender	0.89	18	-
Social gender	**0.51**	**24**	

The *rate of early marriage for women* is between the ages of 15-19 and represents the percentage of those who are married. This ratio is 0.10 in the index. The proportion of women aged 16-17 getting married is 2.7% in the TurkStat (2021h) report titled 'World Population Day, 2021'. In the same report, the rate of women aged 20-24 who got married before the age of 18 is 4.6%. However, no data are available to make a one-to-one comparison for this indicator due to the age range difference. The indicator of *women's fear of walking alone* represents percentage of female participants who answered 'Yes' to the question '*Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or region you live in?*' Regarding this indicator, Turkey is in 20th place, with 0.52 points in the index. According to the TurkStat (2021c) report titled 'Sustainable Development Indicators, 2010-2019', 49.6% of women and 73.8% of men feel safe while walking on the streets.

While the overall average of this domain is 0.63, Turkey ranks 24th with 0.51 points and is below the index average, which demonstrates that Turkey has a more negative outlook regarding gender. Nevertheless, the decrease in the ratio of women who are afraid of walking alone according to the current TurkStat figures portrays a better picture in terms of the social wellbeing of the youth. The social wellbeing of young people may differ depending on their gender roles. In particular, female youth may be in a more unequal position in terms of gender than male youth. Therefore, gender equality is an important factor that increases social wellbeing.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

Looking at the results of this comparison, it is observed that the index averages are higher in the domains of *health, information and communication technologies*, and *safety and security* vis-à-vis the 2017 GYWI. On the other hand, the index reveals a negative social wellbeing picture for the youth in Turkey in the domains of *gender equality, economic opportunities, education and civil participation.* The comparison in this study demonstrates that the negative situation in *economic opportunities* and education continues.

According to Bourdieu (2016, p.81), the focus of relational sociology is to analyze social actors through interrelated processes. Again, according to Emirbayer (1997, p.282), relational sociology requires a focus on social processes rather than an individualist or general view. Therefore, in terms of relational sociology, social reality is dynamic, continuous and processual. In this respect, when the social wellbeing of young people is to be explained and understood, all the elements that determine social wellbeing should be considered based on the dynamic structure of that society and the

continuity of relations with each other. The social wellbeing of young people is dynamic and involves an ever-changing process. Therefore, through this relatedness, social wellbeing studies should be emphasised by addressing the thoughts, feelings, problems, needs and demands of young people in a relational process. Therefore, the social wellbeing of young people represents a relatedness that includes many interactions from economic opportunities to educational opportunities and from institutional support to individual characteristics. Although the current study portrays a positive picture regarding the social wellbeing of the youth in Turkey, it also reveals a problem when the current social wellbeing indicators of the youth are analysed in terms of difficulties and opportunities. This outlook for the social wellbeing of young people is important in emphasising the importance of youth-oriented policies, services and future plans for countries. It should be taken into account that the lack of opportunities, opportunities and services offered to young people will bring risks such as brain drain and impoverishment.

The social wellbeing of the Turkish youth was compared using the 2017 GYWI and TurkStat (2020, 2021) data. With this comparison, a holistic analysis of the social wellbeing of the Turkish youth was attempted. Accordingly, among the index domains, Turkey has a relatively more positive status in the domains of *health, information and communication technologies, safety and security,* and *gender equality* compared to the index average. On the other hand, according to the index average, Turkey has a negative standing in the domains of *economic opportunities* and *education*. However, the data on the domain of *civil participation* are not sufficient enough to allow a valid comparison.

Achieving a true understanding of the social wellbeing of the youth is only possible with a holistic view of their problem domains, opportunities and current status in society (McLeod & Wright, 2015). Inequalities in access to ICTs contribute negatively to the youth identity formation, development of their connections with the society they live in, and their health (Lotrean et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2021). On the other hand, young people are an important part of providing information as a sub-field of ICTs, creating change in society and responding to changes (Rice et al., 2016). ICTs have an important role in the development of health and identity, which is a key element in the integration of young people into the society (Rice et.al., 2016; Walker et al., 2021). According to Görgün-Baran and Erdem (2017), who state that young people's internet literacy is related to computer usage skills and e-safety, there is a relationship between young people's IT usage skills and gender, education, computer, internet and mobile phone usage. In addition, the social wellbeing of the youth hinges on the support and assistance offered to them in coping with problems such as being immigrants, a lack of employment opportunities, language barriers, and access to education (Heyeres et al., 2021).

Revealing the social wellbeing of young people is important in terms of identifying the opportunities, current situation and problem domains offered to them. Giving family support to young people (Burgos et al., 2017) is a positive factor that increases their social wellbeing. In addition, their good social wellbeing status, their belonging to school, an increased participation in political life and voluntary activities increase their belonging to society (Arslan et al., 2020; Cicognani et al., 2008; Teare et al., 2021). However, the related literature reports more findings that negatively affect the social wellbeing of the youth than those affecting it positively. Young people in NEET, which is one of the indicators of the social wellbeing of young people, are considered marginal in their society and are the group that is excluded from education and/or the labor market. Therefore, young people are more likely to face risks such as poverty and not benefiting from health services (Dieckhoff & Gash, 2015) and poor socio-cultural and structural conditions of the families of NEET youth negatively affect the youth's wellbeing, because these conditions are reflected in the young person's thoughts, decisions, and therefore their involvement in social life (To et al., 2021). The low social wellbeing of the youth causes deprivation of economic opportunities, decreased access to health services, and increased levels of stress and anxiety. Furthermore, the socioeconomic conditions of the youth prevent them from being in the fields of education and employment (Kivijärvi et al., 2020). Health, which is one of the determinants of the social wellbeing of the youth, is closely related to the socio-economic status. The socio-economic status of the family limits young people's access to economic opportunities and health services, with a negative impact on the social wellbeing of the youth (Plenty & Mood, 2016). The social wellbeing of young people is closely related to their physical and psychological health. The demands of modern life cause young people to feel more overwhelmed and anxious than the previous generation. This negatively affects their psychological health (Eckersley, 2011; Woodhead, 2022). In the case that young people are immigrants, they are viewed as marginalized individuals and are excluded from social networks. This leads to a negative outlook on their social wellbeing (Buchanan et al., 2017). Global economic crises cause a decrease in youth wellbeing (Parker et al., 2016). Riordan and Claudio (2021) found that immigrant youth's access to education creates facilitates their adaptation to their host culture, and leads to an increase in their employment opportunities. Therefore, the better social wellbeing of young people positively affects the wellbeing of their families, friends, and the rest of their society.

Gender represents the social and cultural characteristics of the individual. This distinction emerges in society as

'femininity' and 'masculinity' and emphasizes the social differences between men and women (Burcu, 2020, p.85). In this respect, young people's inequalities in education and the labor market may increase according to their gender and family structures. Moreover, while these inequalities are less in developed countries, they are more pronounced in Eastern European countries (Iannelli, & Smyth, 2008). Gender roles influence young people's choice of school, career and occupation (Tinklin et.al. 2005). In addition, as reported by Basu et.al (2021), young women feel less safe than young men when walking on the street at night and using public transportation. Young people's gender roles and especially their education, safety and economic opportunities play an important role in social wellbeing. In addition, depending on gender, young women may differ from young men in their ability to participate independently in social life, feel safe and make independent decisions. One set of the conditions that affect the youth social wellbeing most strongly is the economic conditions. The young people in Turkey experience negative economic opportunities compared to the youth living in the other index countries. In support of these index-based findings, Özmete and Bayoğlu (2008) found that young people are most concerned about their wellbeing, economic conditions, poverty and employment. The rate of unemployed young university graduates in Turkey is 13.7% (15.4% for women and 9.8% for men) according to the TurkStat (2021d) report titled 'Labor Force Statistics, October 2021'. Youth unemployment has many negative outcomes such as poverty, social inequality, alcohol and substance use, depression, and deterioration of health (Kıcır, 2017).

5. Suggestions

In analyzing the social wellbeing of young people, it is necessary to address social realities on a relational basis through elements that reflect social realities in terms of quantity and quality. In the process of evaluating the social wellbeing of young people, structural conditions such as poverty, education, housing, employment, cultural differences, and the way young people perceive society and the conditions of the transition to adulthood should be taken into account. These noteworthy factors are important to see the reality that determines the social wellbeing of young people in a relational way and to show the social position of young people. It is highly recommended that future research use the wellbeing framework to better understand the societies in which young people live, youth experiences and perceptions, and what consequences these have. Doing this requires a reconsideration of not only how the youth interacts with their families, friends and community, but also the methods applied to measure these interactions. To put it more clearly, future research needs to apply objective and subjective measures to understand to what extent young people perceive their lives as positive, negative, or neutral. This study, which reflects the effort of looking at the social wellbeing of young people in a holistic manner, can provide a deeper perspective on the problem areas, expectations and opportunities of young people by using a qualitative and mixed research design.

There is an obvious need for further research involving detailed analyses of the social wellbeing of the youth based on gender, disability status, residential setting (ie. urban vs countryside), regional development differences, and the development status of the countries. In the study, the visibility of the lack, inadequacy and inefficiency of the policies for the youth has been made visible with this analysis of the social wellbeing of the youth. There is also a need for both academic studies and official statistics on the holistic assessment of the social wellbeing of young people in Turkey. Efforts to create a database that reveals the factors that positively/negatively affect the social wellbeing of young people in Turkey and that complies with the standards of international organizations in this context seem important. Undoubtedly, these efforts will also enable the comparison of the social wellbeing status of young people in Turkey with young people living in other countries.

Studies conducted with a holistic perspective on the social wellbeing of young people and having data that allows comparison with international standards are important in improving the social wellbeing of young people living in Turkey. These studies can also play a critical role especially in the formulation of development plans and can guide social policies regarding the Turkish youth. The social wellbeing lens can be used to identify young people's individual experiences and perceptions, risky situations in society, and problems that need to be addressed. Thus, it will help determine both the effect of their current situation on their social wellbeing and their future aspirations on their wellbeing perceptions.

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Research Article

Digital Panopticon Dilemmas: A Study on Contact Tracing Apps Carried Out by the Ministry of Health

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ABSTRACT

Panopticon, often referred to alongside Michel Foucault and Jeremy Bentham, is a theory that explains the relationship between power and knowledge. Surveillance has gradually become a digital phenomenon as technology has developed, taking on a post-panopticon feature. Thus, it has become possible to monitor the entire flow of information. Although some individuals see this situation as a positive because it saves time and provides digital satisfaction, discussions around it mention that it restricts personal rights and freedoms in most societies. Although individuals voluntarily accept being watched in digital public spaces, they often forget that such surveillance will place them in some extraordinary situations that they might not agree with. During the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected the entire world, governments implemented some digital applications in order to track and manage their population. Through these applications, known as contact tracing systems, there was an attempt to control the spread of the illness. These systems used mobile phone applications to record personal data. This study analyzes 49 countries whose Ministries of Health applied contract tracing applications during the Covid-19 pandemic process through the digital panopticon perception, which would be labeled as classified data according to their democracy indexes.

Keywords: Digital Panopticon, Surveillance Cultures, Contact-tracing Apps, Covid-19

1. Introduction

The panopticon phenomenon emerged in 1785 with the prison model drawn by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham, which was not able to be built at the time. The purpose of the panopticon, which includes a geometric structure and is defined as observing (opticon) the whole (pan), is to control the problems that may be experienced in a crowded human community. Throughout history, those who have held the power of government have constantly utilized a watchful element to control societies. With globalization, the phenomenon of surveillance, like many other elements, has undergone changes, has taken different forms, and has become one of the important power issues in our lives. People are now more curious about the lives of people of other societies, especially with the developments in technology, and want to follow global societal developments closely. For this reason, governments attempt to surveil others to protect their own people and themselves, especially during extraordinary situations. Surveillance, which is the basic form of power control, has easily spread to all areas of life with today's technological developments, forming an area of influence that even reaches the smallest social units. In addition, those in power are sometimes forced to take measures that will ensure the order and security of their societies, to maintain their existence, and to prevent unwanted behaviors. In doing so, they impose sanctions on their individuals, surveil them through the mass media, and thus attempt to establish a social order. Although the digitalization that occurs with technology is welcomed by many as a positive development, many believe that it restricts freedom. When looking at the issue critically, effective database use and management, the recording of electronic transactions, and the formation of an online tracking system has led to the emergence of a structure that observes everything done through information technologies, which may cause individuals to feel that their privacy is being violated. In today's world, where the digital environment is increasingly included in people's lives and the panopticon has shifted into a post-panopticon, the phenomenon of surveillance through the use of mass media has sometimes become a threat to fundamental rights and freedoms. The fact that most people unconsciously or voluntarily hand over their personal data to surveillants negatively affects not only their own privacy, but also social privacy through discrimination, marginalization, and fear. Personal data is stored by the power structures through digital surveillance and is used according to their need.

The source of motivation for this study is the feeling of being threatened in terms of privacy, rights, and freedom due to globalization and developments in communication technologies. The level of tolerance of individuals to this threat perception is expected to be higher due to the higher benefit they receive, despite privacy violations in health-related practices. As a matter of fact, in the study titled "*Contact tracing apps and values dilemmas: A privacy paradox in a neoliberal world*" written by Frantz Rowe in 2020, a qualitative study was conducted on whether contact tracing systems violate privacy. It was found that the access permissions requested for the applications violate privacy, but since it is a health application, people are more tolerant. In addition, Duan et al. (2022) investigated the privacy paradox in the adoption of contact tracing apps in Australia with a survey study titled "*Exploring privacy paradox in contact tracing apps adoption,*" which found that contact tracing systems have both benefits and risks.

Based on these studies, the present study examines 49 contact tracing applications which are thought to show higher tolerance because they are issued by the Ministries of Health. While studies on contact tracing practices exist in the literature, they generally do not go beyond a superficial examination of the practices of one or several countries. On the other hand, Bengio et al. descriptively discussed the privacy limitations of decentralized contact tracing systems in their study "*Inherent privacy limitations of decentralized contact tracing apps*". In the study "*Adoption of COVID-19 Contact Tracing Apps: A Balance Between Privacy and Effectiveness*" by Emily Seto et al. (2021), 11 applications from different countries were descriptively compared regarding the privacy and technological features of the respective COVID-19 contact tracing applications. In the article titled "*COVID-19 contact tracing apps: UK public perceptions*" by Samuel et al (2022), semi-structured interviews were conducted with practitioners on the privacy issue of COVID-19 contact tracing applications in the United Kingdom. In the study titled "*Privacy Analysis and Comparison of Pandemic Contact Tracing Apps*" by Piao and Cui, a comparison of centralized and decentralized contact tracing systems in terms of privacy was carried out. The study of Eismann et al. (2022) titled "*Applied Ethics and Digital Information Privacy: Informing the Design of Covid-19 Contact Tracing Apps*" is based on a descriptive comparison of the contact tracing practices of five liberal democracies.

The democracy comparison tool that Eismann et al. used in their study was further developed in this study, which investigates the contact tracing systems carried out by the Ministries of Health. They were classified according to the democracy indices of the countries and examined according to four classes, as: full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime, and authoritarian regime. Through this distinction, more valuable outputs have been obtained. In this respect, this study makes a valuable contribution to the literature as it includes all original ministry practices.

2. Digitalization of Panopticon

In the 18th century, empires focused on authoritarian control systems in order to control the indigenous people. In 1785, Jeremy Bentham designed a structure to assist the power structures in terms of surveillance, which became a very valuable design for states that wanted to maintain control (Steadman, 2012). Throughout history, capitalist power has used the eye symbol as a sign of control over society, so that societies that are constantly under the control of the eye have been kept in a position where they cannot even attempt to do anything other than live in a state of constant surveillance. The concept of surveillance, which has changed according to social changes, has become the basic phenomenon of power and has brought human life into a prison-like system of order. The phenomenon of surveillance, which has spread to all areas of life, especially with the advancement of technology, restricts personal freedoms and attempts to control all areas of life by constantly recording what the citizens are doing. Although the panopticon is seen as an architectural structure, it has been stated that it is actually a form of management (Boyd & Crawford, 2012). When looking at the panopticon design, it has a ring-shaped architecture that allows surveillance, which means to observe (-opticon) the whole (pan-) and consists of single-chamber cells on several floors. Each cell opens to the inside of this ring, with a window present on the outer wall of the ring. In the middle of the ring is a guard tower where observers remain completely hidden from prisoners. The basic logic of the panopticon is that the one-room cell does not leave a hiding place for the prisoner, whereas the external light coming from the window of the outer wall allows the guards in the tower to watch a silhouette of the prisoner's every move. According to Bentham's approach, the prisoners in the observed position are people who know that every wrong behavior will result in punishment, however, they do not know when their behavior is actually observed so they have to act accordingly.

Foucault describes the panopticon as a phenomenon that is the basis of power and discipline, that today explains the authority of power over society (Mattelart, 2010) which makes its presence felt everywhere. The panopticon, which has a very strong influence on the discipline of societies, prevents the oblivion of power (Foucault & Meirelles, 2015). In this surveillance model, where privacy is not allowed because everything is under surveillance, the behavior of prisoners is put into a single pattern and discipline is ensured in this way. Prisoners who do not know how and when they are being surveilled, but know that they are being monitored, shape their attitudes and behaviors accordingly. Bentham expressed the panopticon as "a new model of a higher mind attaining power" (Bossewitch & Sinnreich, 2012). In fact, the concept of the panopticon is a surveillance system that goes beyond the metaphor of a prison. Foucault used this architectural structure as a metaphor for the modern surveillance society. Bentham's panopticon plan is based on the philosophy of asymmetrical surveillance. Asymmetric surveillance is based on not knowing when the person is being surveilled (Haggerty, 2006; Light, 2010). This practice of closure performs an effective function to enforce oversight more strongly and to provide the discipline that capitalism needs (Foucault, 1980a).

The panopticon, which consists of the prison project designed by Bentham in 1791, is a metaphorical concept used by Foucault to describe surveillance in modern society and is used in the sense of the spot directly in front of the eye (Oscar & Gandy, 1989). Bentham (2011) stated that this designed structure can be used for various purposes such as detention, isolation, forced labor, and training, and can also be adapted to different places, with the principle of invisible surveillance needing to be applied in order to achieve these objectives and conduct effective surveillance. Seeing without being seen reveals the main function of the surveillant. The feeling of constant surveillance in the space produces pressure and anxiety on the prisoners and shapes their behavior by maximizing their self-control (Bossewitch & Sinnreich, 2012). As can be seen in Figure 1, the classic panopticon is realized in a circular building. The perimeter of the round and domed structure is divided into cells with two windows. One is opening from the outside, allowing light to pass through, while the other is another window that opens towards the courtyard. In the center, in the courtyard section, there is a tower with windows opening towards the cells around it, and in the tower, there is a person in charge of surveilling the cells that are separated from each other and individualized. While each cell is constantly visible from the tower, and while the tower is visible from the cells, prisoners never know if they are actually being surveilled at a given time (Hamann, 2020; Safaei, 2020; Foucault, 1980b). In this way, it is possible for the surveillant to more easily establish authority over those who are monitored and to maintain this dominance.

Habermas (1992), one of the most important representatives of the Frankfurt School and critical theory, states that surveillance is intertwined with the private and public spheres in which we live and that this process strengthens the power of both the state and capital groups, which shapes the power relations in the new capitalist order. In the surveillance society, privacy becomes under threat, with information about all areas of both public and private life in danger of being presented to the ruling powers at any time. In his novel 1984, George Orwell (2003) focuses on the life of a totalitarian society trapped in a network of surveillance that monitors and records everything, surveilling the population at all times. Orwell draws attention to a social culture based on fear, oppression, and obedience, where thinking and acting against
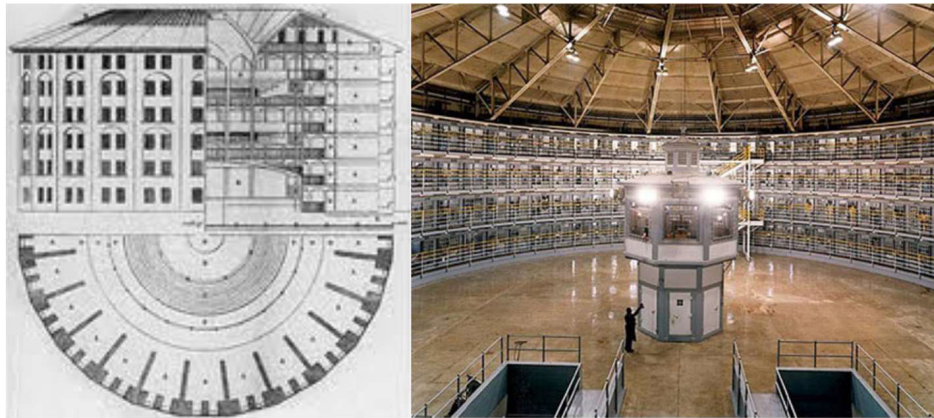
Figure 1. Architectural Design of Panopticon Source: Guardian, 2022

the power is considered a crime, with the "thought police" constantly surveilling and pressuring the population. Within the totalitarian social structure depicted by the novel, people are systematically, constantly, and forcibly surveilled in order to be kept under control. In recent years, with the accessibility provided by communication technologies, surveillance has been gradually spreading to a large part of society (Lyon, 1997). Especially in the capitalist order, the increasingly developing communication technologies facilitate surveillance practices in all dimensions and cause the continuity of control (Caluya, 2010).

The panopticon, which was put forward by Bentham and has gained depth in Foucault's discourse, has been very useful in understanding how the process of power works today. It is especially powerful in the modern age, when communication technologies are dominant, offering a solid framework to understand the world (Dobson & Fisher, 2007). In his book '*Panopticon*', Bentham defines surveillance as an unprecedented and new method of gaining power over the minds of individuals (Mattelart, 2010). The panopticon contains a constant state of visibility, where prisoners can be seen but cannot see. Accordingly, the panopticon represents an asymmetrical surveillance (Brivot & Gendron, 2011). According to Foucault, surveillance is involved in the whole of social life, from prisons to businesses, from schools to hospitals, resulting in an order in which the ruling power can establish its own hegemony (Sartori, 2017).

In line with the developments in today's communication technologies, individuals can be easily surveilled, not only in their working lives, but also in their private lives, with all kinds of information being recorded at any time through data banks and checked and inspected in every section of individuals' lives. Thus, it satisfies the desire for surveillance for those in power. Surveillance, which can enter all areas of social life, has thus reached the digital dimension, using individuals as part of the power structure. Therefore, wherever there is surveillance and control, the inevitable existence of power is confronted. Monitoring and surveillance activities are inherent components of control, including power and authority, and the surveillance society that emerges in the process also reproduces power relations. However, it is impossible to understand today's societies, where the boundary between the private and the public sphere is gradually disappearing and which continues to exist in a way depending on all surveillance systems, only with the concept of panopticon (Zuboff, 2019). Information and communication technologies digitize and globalize the concept of the panopticon and enable this concept to transform and change in cyberspace, leading to regeneration. Social media devices, and especially the widespread use of the internet, facilitate and make digital surveillance inevitable all over the world. This is explained by such concepts as: *superpanopticon* according to Poster (1990), liquid surveillance according to Bauman and Lyon (2012), digital siege according to Andrejevic (2007), and *post-panopticon* according to Boyne (2000). In fact, all of these and similar concepts, which derive from the panopticon, are used to explain the phenomenon of surveillance which is becoming increasingly globalized and digital, based on electronic dominance and voluntariness, and not by pressure, as is the case in the panopticon. Digitalization and a post-panopticon era have been prevailing in the modern age (Bauman & Lyon, 2012). Today's world is now based on voluntary surveillance practices rather than censorship and strict surveillance, with the voluntary form of surveillance attracting and persuading individuals (De Saulles & Horner, 2011). Surveillance based on volunteerism and consent, together with the development in communication technologies, enables the dissemination of information on a global scale without the limit of time and space and enables the internet and social networks to become widespread around the world. Although there are innovations in globalization, the concept of panopticon is now insufficient and evolving. It is seen that the panopticon became a synopticon which has become an omnipticon, which is the concept for defining consensual surveillance today.

In his 2004 book *The Naked Crowd*, Jeffrey Rosen introduces the concept of omnipticon, which was first used in the sense that everyone surveils each other, anytime and anywhere (Sprague, 2007). Today, the internet is a communication tool that allows most of the individuals to follow each other, and with the internet, the transition from the synopticon to the omnipticon concept has taken place. According to Rosen (2004), the omnipticon as a concept allows a majority of people, who do not know who is watching or being watched, to surveil each other at any time in the internet age. With this feature, the concept of omnipticon expresses everyone's mutual following each other in the digital environment and refers to a new social culture built on "voluntary surveillance," again based on the changing nature of surveillance practices. After the minority monitoring (synopticon), which expresses the transition from panopticon surveillance, where the surveillance of power remains at the local level, to a more global control and surveillance culture, together with the developing technology, the omnipticon stage, where everyone can monitor everyone else, has become realized (Pimenta, 2010). Through information communication technologies and social networks, everyone can now monitor, see, follow, and scrutinize everyone as they see fit. For this reason, although there are different practices in different countries of the world, there are laws in most countries for people to protect their data which have been developed in parallel with technology.

The Panopticon Foundation is a Poland-based organization founded in April 2009 with a mission to protect fundamental rights and freedoms against increased surveillance in parallel with changing technology (Panoptykon Foundation, 2022). While the omnipticon dimension of surveillance expressed here and the asymmetrical surveillance between power and the individual continues, symmetrical surveillance takes place between individuals. Today, the last point of surveillance based on voluntariness, entertainment, and individual consent, which replaces surveillance with coercion, pressure, and threat, is realized through the concept of omnipticon, which is the phenomenon of surveillance in the postmodern period. This transformation, on the other hand, contributes to the continuous reproduction of surveillance and the power relations attached to it by adapting it to the era. Communication technologies change and transform individuals as well as surveillance and power relations (Beniger, 1986). Countless volumes data is shared every second on the Internet, social networks, smart device applications, online services, and other digital media platforms. Although most of this data is shared voluntarily by the users, how this shared data is controlled is mostly unknown to them. Social listening is an active process that involves participating in, observing, interpreting, and responding to various environments through computer, electronic, and social channels (Stewart & Arnold, 2018).

3. Freedom and health against data privacy

Since the 1980s, in the period when the phenomenon of globalization gained a new dimension with neo-liberal policies, new communication technologies radically transformed almost every field from daily practices to social structures, from economic relations to political systems. This development has brought the need to redesign life in a digital way (Değirmenci, 2020). In the rapidly digitalizing world, everything is not provided by online application services. Without computers, mobile phones, and the internet, almost all services are incomplete. When considered historically, it is possible to say that humanity is better positioned to face infectious diseases today. In particular, the advancement of high-speed information exchange has a significant role in dealing with health problems (Alanka et al, 2022). The purpose of e-government applications, which provide more than 5000 different services, is to bring the entire government service online, to record the data of individuals, and to get to know them better so that they can provide better service. Government or commercial enterprises, which aim to easily reach individuals by having information about their tastes, tendencies, habits, and locations, generally follow the data recorded in social media applications in order to access this data. Traces left everywhere in the digital world hide information about people. Societies share and allow this data collected in the digital environment to be shared based on consent or without realizing it (Becker, 2019).

As seen in Figure 2, applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Yahoo, and LinkedIn stand out among the sites that have had the world's largest data breaches. Applications offering online government services, such as digital banking, social media accounts, online shopping, and mobile phone data, record all relevant data about the individuals, such as their age, education, job, income, and family information, as well as with whom, when, and where they spend time, using this information when necessary. Everything about a user can be accessed, including all the searches they make, which applications they open in which language, who they are speaking to and what they are saying on calls, location histories, and so much more (Ramageri, 2010). Some data is even sold to some companies. The recent example of this is the Cambridge Analytica scandal in the 2016 American elections. The scandal involves a data breach in which the personal information of 50 million Facebook users was collected (Nytimes, 2022). After this scandal, it can be said that people have started to have doubts about their data being recorded. Cameras placed in social areas, equipped with facial recognition systems supported by artificial intelligence which continuously follow individuals, are able reach people

Figure 2. World's Biggest Data Breaches & HacksSource: Information is Beautiful, 2022

because of the tracking systems which have been implemented, allowing people's attitudes/perceptions to be altered in the desired direction (Nissenbaum, 1998). Orwell's sentiment in 1984 that "Big Brother is watching you!" is an adequate explanation of today's tracking systems (Literarydevices, 2022). After the Covid-19 outbreak, which affected the entire world, state authorities of every developed nation began taking measures to cope with this pandemic, so much so that everyone retreated to their homes for a period of time and started to comply with the social distancing rule. Those who did not comply with these measures were penalized (Moosa, 2020). Despite the growing fear of privacy, the pandemic revealed that people are willing to use these privacy-invading apps when it comes to health. It is expected that people's tolerance towards contact tracing applications is higher than their tolerance towards other applications. For this reason, many countries around the world developed contact tracing applications that were installed on smart phones to combat the novel coronavirus. The applications, which were first used in Asian countries such as China, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan, were soon used all over the world (Kretzschmar et al, 2020). In order to control the number of cases, these practices were used to identify and inform people with positive test results the incubation period of the disease, warning them that they should isolate themselves from other people. Many authorities, hoping to take advantage of technological facilities to prevent the faster spread of the virus, pursued the development of such digital contact tracing systems. Despite concerns about the protection of personal data, governments prioritized minimizing the effects of the pandemic and preventing the spread of the disease (Eismann et al., 2022). Thanks to these applications during and after the Covid-19 process, the answers to questions such as who was contacted, how many times they met, and where and when they met became immediately available. Although these applications were developed to control the pandemic, concerns about privacy and data security breaches were real because they facilitate access to people's private data.

These monitoring system applications can be divided into two: centralized and decentralized (Martin et al., 2020). Although centralized and decentralized contact tracing applications vary according to countries, their common features are generally expressed as using Bluetooth technology in the mobile phone (WHO, 2021). With the data transfer between the two devices, the data of the individuals is collected and matched, revealing a map of disease risk. As a result, individuals could be warned about the precautions to be taken in case of risk detection. In the central system, the data of a person who tested positive for Covid-19 was recorded by their phone and transmitted to the center (Raskar et al., 2020). In the decentralized system, the people with whom the individual is in contact can only be seen from the person's own device, without being transmitted to the center. Individuals who are sensitive about privacy and personal

data security prefer the use of decentralized systems because unlike the centralized system, the data is made accessible to government institutions. In the decentralized system, although the governments' access to the data is limited, the pairings are made within the individual's own device. Therefore, the individual has more control over their data (Lv et al., 2022). In this area, where the issue of health comes to the forefront, most societies tolerate the privacy concern experienced due to the fact that the practices are carried out by the government.
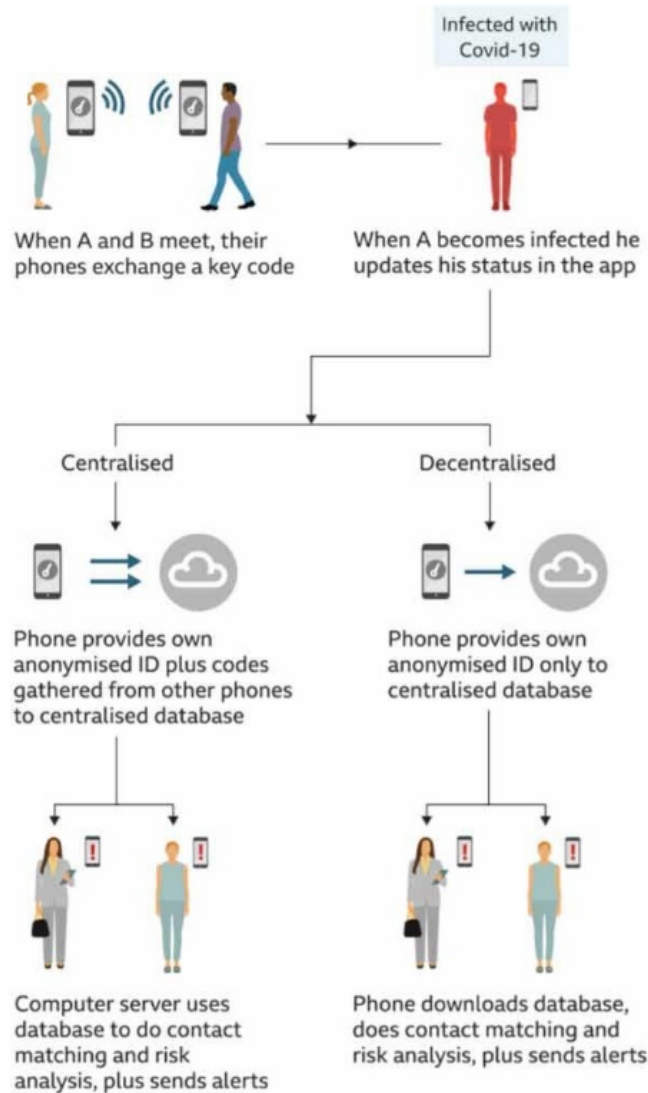
Figure 3. Centralized v. Decentralized systems Source: BBC, 2022

Contact tracing systems, which were designed as a precaution against the Covid-19 epidemic, also contain two opposite poles that touch on both privacy and public health (Rowe, 2018). In the centralized monitoring system application, recording the information of who is together with whom and for how long has caused the surveillance phenomenon to become popular again and even increase its impact on daily life (Sharon, 2020). The aim of these contact tracing practices is to warn people who interact with individuals who have tested positive. These applications use a centralized system that opens data to direct access and control by government agencies. In this way, it can impose restrictions on travel and public/social spaces. It was argued that, in order to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the distance between people is important, meaning that Bluetooth is the only sufficient way to measure this. However, applications using a centralized system provide access to various data from the phone, from the Global Positioning System (GPS) to the camera. When downloading applications, the user is asked for consent to access an incredible amount of personal data, including: a random anonymized user ID, address, age range, date of birth, device ID number, e-mail, gender, location, mobile number, name, nationality, passport ID, personal ID number, personal QR code, postcode, profile picture, pseudonymized, race, and ethnicity. The application is used not only to determine the social interaction of the

person with this data, but also to warn in case of contact with infected people and even direct the user to the relevant hospitals. Although it was argued that the more data that was recorded, the easier it would be to control the pandemic, valid criticisms stated such applications are a violation of privacy. Countries that adopted the decentralized method, such as Germany, Italy, Ireland, Austria, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Switzerland, stated that recording data would present a risk. Experts from these countries stated that the recording of a single location makes a person recognizable, while emphasizing that much of the recorded data would result in controversy about security (Parker, 2022). In the clarification text of the centralized contact tracing applications, the purposes of processing personal data are included in detail. Although the Covid-19 pandemic adversely affected the whole world and cost millions of people their lives, there is concern that such surveillance and monitoring practices lead to human rights and freedom of expression violations. In a fundamental sense, although it was affirmed that states struggled with the public health crisis, they still ignored the fundamental rights of their citizens, such as privacy and freedom of expression (Edri, 2022). The fact that individuals who felt that they were under constant surveillance during the pandemic remained more distant from others when they went outside emphasizes the authority of power that lies at the basis of the phenomenon of surveillance.

4. Methodology

The study was designed in a qualitative model, Netnography used as the data collection analysis method. Netnography is a fairly new methodology compared to traditional ethnography because it has only existed since the invention of the internet and is based on online observations, interviews, and content analysis of what is happening in digital environments. It can also be defined as a specific set of research practices related to data collection, analysis, research ethics, and representation based on researcher observation (Lee, 2020; Hookway, 2008). A case study was conducted about the research using the document analysis technique. It is stated that document review is a type of analysis that includes written sources containing information about the targeted facts and events and visual materials such as film, video, and photographs. The case study was conducted to describe one or more situations in depth and to draw attention to research questions and topics (Johnson and Christensen, 2014). Situations include critical events that take place in the lives of individuals, societies, institutions, and cultures (Hennink et al., 2020). In this context, the contact tracing systems used by governments to control the COVID-19 process have been examined in this study within the framework of the digital panopticon based on the democracy index published by the EIU in 2021. As a sample, 49 contact tracing applications collected from the Google Play Store, which were only used by the Ministries of Health of the selected countries, were examined based on the EIU's democracy index. In this context contact tracing applications used by governments designed to control the Covid-19 process have been categorized according to the desired information to be accessed from people who downloaded the applications to their mobile phones, ranking them according to the democracy index, highlighting the importance of personal data privacy for each country in question.

5. Democracy Index and Contact Tracing Applications

The UK-based Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has been preparing the Democracy Index every year since 2006. This democracy index aims to measure the democratic position of 167 countries (EIU, 2022). The EIU's democracy index is grouped into five categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, state functions, political participation, and political culture. These categories are based on the rating of a total of 60 indicators. Each category consists of a rating between 0 and 10 (Rahman, 2014).

According to this report, there are four different regime systems between countries. The first of these are *Full democracies*, which are countries that respect not only civil liberties and fundamental political freedoms but also the development of democratic principles, even supported by political culture. These countries face few problems, with balanced government systems, independent judicial systems, independent media, in short, adequately functioning governments (Populismstudies, 2022). In *flawed democracies*, although elections are held freely and fairly, they are still more likely to encounter problems than in fully democratic countries. They may face such problems as violations of media freedom and the possibility of suppression of opposition parties. They also have deficiencies in other democratic dimensions, including underdeveloped political culture, low levels of participation in politics, and issues in the functioning of governance (Populismstudies, 2022). *Hybrid regimes* consist of countries with unfair elections and a structure that restricts freedom. These countries often have more obvious faults than flawed democracies in areas such as weak political opposition, non-independent judiciary, rampant corruption, and harassment and repression of the media (Menocala et al, 2008). *Authoritarian regimes* are countries where political pluralism has disappeared or is extremely limited. While these countries often have absolute monarchies or dictatorships, violations and abuses of civil liberties are common, elections (if they happen) are not fair and free, the media is often controlled by the ruling

regime in power, the judiciary is not independent, and censorship and government criticism prevail everywhere (Linz et al., 2000).

The contact tracing applications used by the Ministries of Health of the 49 countries subject to the study have been categorized in terms of what personal data the applications require while using them and the four regime systems according to the democracy index. The results of this categorization are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Index score, ranking, and TurkStat values in the domain of civic participation for Turkey

TYPE OF REGIME	COUNTRY	Democracy Indexes	A RANDOM USER ID	ADDRESS	AGE RANGE	DATE OF BIRTH	DEVICE&PERSONEL& PASSPORT ID NUMBER	E-MAIL	GENDER	LOCATION	MOBILE NUMBER	PSEUDONYMİSED	NATIONALITY	PERSONAL QR CODE	POSTCODE	PROFILE PICTURE
Full Democracies	New Zealand NZ COVID Tracer	9,97					x				x					
	Norway Smittestopp	9,75														
	Finland Koronavilkku	9,27														
	Sweden COVID Symptom Study	9,26		x				x				x				
	Denmark Smitte|stop	9,09								x						
	Ireland COVID Tracker Ireland	9														
	Taiwan Taiwan Social Distancing	8,99														
	Australia COVIDSafe	8,9			x				x	x	x			x		
	Switzerland SwissCovid	8,9					x									
	Netherlands CoronaMelder	8,88														
	Canada Covid Alert	8,87					x			x		x				
	Luxembourg CovidCheck.lu	8,68														
	Germany Corona-Warn-App	8,67														
	South Korea Self-Diagnosis app	8,16			x				x	x						
	Japan COVID-19 Contact-Confirming	8,15														
	Austria StopCorona	8,07									x	x				
Flawed	France TousAntiCovid	7,99								x						
	Israel Hamagen	7,97								x						
	Spain Radar COVID	7,94	x													
	Portugal STAYAWAY COVID	7,82	x													
	Czech RepublicıeRouška	7,74		x			x									
	Italy SM-COVID-19	7,68								x						
	Malta COVID Alert Malta	7,57									x					
	Greece DOCANDU Covid Checker	7,56		x				x	x		x	x				

Table 1 . Continued

TYPE OF REGIME	COUNTRY	Democracy Indexes	ADDRESS	AGE RANGE	DATE OF BIRTH	DEVICE&PERSONEL &	E-MAIL	GENDER	LOCATION	MOBILE NUMBER	PSEUDONYMİSED	NATIONALITY	PERSONAL QR CODE	POSTCODE	PROFILE PICTURE	RACE&ETNICITY
	Slovenia #Ostanizdrav	7,54			x			x	x		x	x				
	Belgium Coronalert	7,51		x							x	x	x			
	Cyprus CovTracer	7,43										x				
	Malaysia MySejahtera	7,24		x		x	x	x	x		x	x				
	South Africa COVID Alert South Africa	7,05						x		x	x	x				
	India Aarogya Setu	6,91						x		x	x	x				
	Brazil Coronavírus - SUS	6,86						x		x	x	x				
	Poland ProteGO Safe	6,8														
	Indonesia PeduliLindungi	6,71		x				x	x			x				
	Bulgaria ViruSafe	6,64			x		x	x				x				
	Singapore TraceTogether	6,23	x									x				
Hybrid Regimes	Bangladesh Corona Tracer BD & Surokkh	5,99				x			x							
	Bhutan Druk Trace	5,71				x		x	x	x	x					
	Hong Kong LeaveHomeSafe	5,6							x	x						
	Turkey HES Code	4,35							x	x						
	Pakistan COVID-19 Gov PK	4,31							x	x						
Authoritarian Regimes	Kuwait Shlonik	3,91				x			x	x						
	Qatar EHTERAZ	3,65							x							
	Russia StopCoronaVirus My Contacts	3,24				x				x						
	Kazakhstan Ashyq	3,08				x				x						
	Vietnam PC-Covid	2,94											x			
	Bahrain BeAware Bahrain	2,52						x	x	x	x					
	China Health Code	2,21				x		x			x				x	
	Uzbekistan Self-Safety	2,12			x	x										
	Iran AC19	1,95		x					x	x	x					

Personal Identity spans the columns: ADDRESS, AGE RANGE, DATE OF BIRTH, DEVICE&PERSONEL &, E-MAIL, GENDER, LOCATION, MOBILE NUMBER, PSEUDONYMİSED, NATIONALITY, PERSONAL QR CODE, POSTCODE, PROFILE PICTURE, RACE&ETNICITY.

Discussion and Conclusion

Surveillance is a phenomenon that has been a necessity of gaining control and power throughout history. There are many studies on surveillance and surveilling, the most important of which is the concept of the panopticon. Surveillance studies have become diversified and enriched with the constant advancement of technology. Many factors constitute a source for studies on the panopticon, such as: globalization, the diversity of communication tools and communication forms, the changes occurring in the social and economic balances in the world, and power wars. Surveillance has not disappeared in the modern age, which can be described as the post-panoptic age. On the contrary, it has become more and more involved in the lives of today's people in various forms. Closed system cameras, biometrics, smart objects, cloud computing, blockchain, and, of course, social media have become post-panoptic surveillance tools. Many people use new technologies, either out of necessity or voluntarily. Especially after the developments in communication technologies, the general public use the new media quite comfortably and do not hesitate to disclose their private lives. People often gladly and voluntarily accept the products or services offered to them by the new media and do not hesitate to share their personal information with product and service providers. Surveillance has evolved to be virtual and data-oriented, while it was previously done physically, preferably in closed environments. Data obtained from digital applications is important for many companies and governments. Thanks to digital applications described as data banks, system administrators who can now easily access all personal data can intervene in incidents at any time and situation. The recent example of this is the Covid-19 pandemic. In today's world where data abundance is experienced, states developed contact tracing systems to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. In this context, they attempted to determine where, when, and with whom the population was at all time by accessing people's data.

As we move from full democracy to authoritarian regimes, the perception that respect for the privacy of personal data will decrease and that there will be more desire to access data is expected. As can be seen in Table 1, when full democracies and flawed democracies are compared, there is an increase in the type of data requested to be accessed in the direction of flawed democracies, except in the case of Australia. Likewise, when compared to full democracies, the access permissions requested by hybrid and authoritarian regimes for contact tracing applications are quite high.

The personal data requested for access to contact tracing practices in flawed democracy countries is similar to the data that hybrid and authoritarian regimes requested access to, with there being no significant difference between full democracies and flawed democracies that can be observed. One of the reasons for this is the belief that certain access requests are necessary in order to achieve the purposes that contact tracing applications serve.

Norway, Finland, Ireland, Taiwan, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, and Japan did request access to personal data for contact tracing applications. They can be seen as countries that pay maximum attention to personal privacy. Although Australia is a fully democratic country, it surprisingly requested access to far more personal data than similar countries in the democracy index.

Although Poland is among the flawed democracy countries, it did not request permission to access any personal data, keeping personal privacy at the maximum level. France, Israel, Spain, Portugal, Malta, and Cyprus, on the other hand, displayed high levels of respect for personal privacy according to their own classification and even better than a few of the full democracy countries.

The contact tracing applications requests for access to personal data for Qatar and Vietnam do not comply with the characteristics of the authoritarian regimes in which they are classified. Contrary to expectations, they requested minimal access to personal data.

This study aimed to make a classification of contact tracing applications in terms of personal privacy according to country characteristics. It can be said that there is a serious difference between the way societies normally look at the requests to access personal data in any social application and the perspective of the personal data requested by the applications related to this field when it comes to health. However, some countries with full democracies and flawed democracies acted sensitively despite the issue of health, paying great attention to personal data privacy. The study is unique as it compares contact tracing systems applied only by the Ministry of Health of the examined countries according to the democracy index, which is an acceptable classification. In this way, it has also made an important contribution to the literature. In our next study, high-level quantitative methods will be used in conjunction with data to be obtained from surveys conducted on application users by classifying the countries of these users according to their different characteristics. The comparative results of this study will be examined, and thus, more valuable outputs will be obtained.

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Varieties of Belonging Among Migrants: Turkish Migrants in Norway

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ABSTRACT

This article examines different ways of belonging among migrants of Turkish origin who were born in Türkiye and are currently living in Norway (in/around Oslo and Drammen). The discussion in the article is based on the findings of semi-structured interviews conducted between March 2019 and August 2020 with 71 Turkish migrants as part of a qualitative study. Different categories of responses to the questions about belonging and the meanings respondents attached to belonging/not belonging are discussed. The paper aims to demonstrate the heterogeneity and complexity of feelings of belonging among the members of an ethnic group that is assumed to feel belonging to their country of origin rather than the destination country in the context of Europe. Additionally, the paper also aims to elaborate on what migrants actually mean when they talk about their belonging (or not belonging) to territories such as the country of origin or destination country, and collectivities like nations. Here it is argued that questioning and criticizing migrants' feelings of belonging (especially to their countries of origin) as a part of civic integration agendas is an effort to intervene in and have control over their emotions. This claim to the right to intervene in migrants' emotional lives is approached critically.

Keywords: ways of belonging, transnational belonging, Turkish, Norway, civic integration

1. Introduction

According to Yuval- Davis (2006, p. 198), belonging has been among the major subjects out of which classical sociology and psychology emerged. Many psychological studies deal with the significant negative effects on babies when they cannot take belonging for granted (Over, 2016). Belonging is a major human need that almost all individuals aim to satisfy (Leary & Kelly, 2009). Also, sociological theory, from its very beginning, has largely focused on the question of, in what ways do people belong to different collectivities. In that sense, questions about belonging stand at the very center of our endeavors for understanding individuals' connections with the groups around them. The relationship between self and society is a major interest for sociology, and a sense of belonging plays a significant role in linking the person to the social (May, 2011). However, despite this central importance of the notion of belonging for social sciences, it is, most of the time, vaguely defined and insufficiently theorized. Scholars usually take it for granted, considering its meaning as self-explanatory. Antonsich (2010, p. 644) argues that "we, as geographers and social scientists actually know very little about what belonging stands for and how it is claimed", and that belonging is used as an alternative concept for national identity, ethnic identity, or citizenship without much elaboration on their conceptual differences. In fact, belonging is multidimensional and includes "citizenship, nationhood, gender, ethnicity, and emotional dimensions of status or achievement" (Bhimji, 2008, p. 414). There are also other scholars who think that the vagueness of belonging as a term is, in fact, what constitutes its usefulness (Crowley, 1999; Sicakkan & Lithman, 2005). As Sicakkan & Lithman (2005, p. 27) argue, the notion of belonging enables to include emotional, cultural, and symbolic dimensions while looking at "what ties a collectivity together".

The belonging of migrants has also gained a key place in the debates on civic integration in the context of Europe. Civic integration programs for non-European migrants, which allegedly aim to facilitate the entry of migrants into their new societies, are becoming more and more common in Europe. With the "civic integration turn", immigration and integration policies have been merged and integration requirements have been used to choose those who are considered more likely to integrate smoothly. As Bonjour & Duyvndak (2018, p. 895) argue in relation to the Dutch context, some groups have been identified as unlikely to "fit" in the host society and the widespread implicit assumption has been that the "migrant with poor prospects" is a Muslim. What is argued here is not a peculiarity of the Dutch context, but relevant for Europe in general. Muslim migrants are considered "unwilling to integrate" and "unable to integrate" (Schellenberg, 2013). Feeling belonging to the destination country is considered a crucial component of successful integration. In this context, Muslim migrants' senses of belonging to the destination country are also questioned. It is widely argued that migrants coming from countries like Türkiye do not develop feelings of attachment and belonging to their new countries in Europe but continue to feel belonging to their countries of origin. This is regarded as one indication of their inability to integrate to their new countries.

This paper looks at different types and understandings of belonging among Turkish migrants who were born in Türkiye and were living in Norway (in/around Oslo or Drammen) when this research was conducted. The two connected questions that the paper aims to answer are: 1) To which territorial units or collectivities do Turkish migrants living in Norway feel belonging? 2) What do they mean by belonging to these territorial units or collectivities? The paper argues that among Turkish migrants who claimed to feel belonging to their country of origin in the context of Europe, there is a heterogeneity and complexity of feelings of belonging in the context of Norway. The paper also argues that questioning and criticizing migrants' feelings of belonging (especially to their countries of origin) is, in one sense, trying to intervene in and have control over their emotions. It is problematic when states or social collectivities claim their right to intervene in other people's (in this case migrants') emotional lives. Additionally, the paper also aims to elaborate on what migrants mean when they talk about their belonging (or not belonging) to territories such as the country of origin or destination country, and collectivities like nations. In the following section, there will be a review of the literature on different types of belonging among migrants. It will be followed by another section that gives information about the empirical research for this paper. Different categories of responses to the questions about belonging and the kinds of meanings respondents attached to belonging/not belonging will be discussed under separate sections. Finally, there will be a conclusion where the main findings of the paper are discussed.

2. Varieties of Belonging

In migration studies, belonging is becoming an increasingly important field of inquiry. Migrants' identifications with and attachments to their countries of origin and destination countries have been crucial questions for both researchers and policymakers. During the last couple of decades, it has been recognized that as migrants' lives are shaped by complex relationships which are established across more than one country, their belonging cannot be understood only with reference to the countries of origin or destination. As a "symptom" of our increasingly globalized lives, there are

now transnational families, and belonging is one of the key dimensions of these transnational families (Skrbis, 2008). There is a transnational space that includes ties and relationships that span across sending and receiving societies (Schiller et al., 1992; Portes, 1997; Levitt, 2001; Vertovec, 2001), and many migrants belong to that transnational space; they develop transnational belonging (Somerville, 2008; Dahinden, 2012; Klok et al., 2017; Nititham, 2016).

With increasing numbers of transnational migrant communities whose members engage in transnational identities and practices, questions emerge regarding the integration of migrants to their new societies, and their rights and responsibilities of citizenship. In Western countries, the integration of migrants has become a crucial issue not only in the academic area of ethnic and migration studies, but also in politics and the media. Studying migrant integration has largely meant investigating to what extent migrant groups are participating in the economic and social institutions of the destination country, especially by considering structural issues like educational achievement, participation in the labor market, and discrimination, in addition to their individual characteristics. The integration policies of different countries focus on different aspects. Specifically, in the case of Norway, the aim of the integration policy is stated as ". . . to provide opportunities for refugees and other immigrants to participate in the Norwegian labor market and community life" (Norwegian Ministries, 2022, p. 8). Dahinden (2012) argues that especially with regard to the cultural aspects of integration and belonging, the existing explanations have three major limitations:

> First, these models largely neglect the intertwined nature of processes of incorporation and transnational forms of identification and belonging. Second, most theories are more or less blind to non-ethnic forms of identification because they use ethnicity as an unproblematic *explanans* for both describing and explaining processes of integration. Finally, they fail to take into account all types of mobility that go beyond migration-cum-settlement as a one-way process and have varied effects on migrants' sense of belonging and identity. (p.118)

In other words, Dahinden criticizes the neglect of i- transnational forms of belonging, ii- non-ethnic forms of belonging, and iii- the impact of diverse forms of mobility on migrants' belonging in the current discourses and theories on migrant integration. In the public discourses, there is a growing perception that transnationalism and transnational belonging make social cohesion in societies difficult to achieve. Moreover, those migrants who engage in transnational identities are considered as practicing a "thin" citizenship, having limited active citizenship in and belonging to their host countries (Wong, 2008). There are hierarchies of belonging, some groups being considered as belonging more, so they are assumed to deserve more than others (Skey, 2014). Van Bochove et al. (2010) emphasize that although politicians are the ones who are more likely to point out the risks of transnational ties, this type of discourse can also be observed in Dutch social science literature on migration and citizenship. "The dominant view in the literature is that homeland ties impair local and national feelings of belonging." (Van Bochove et al., 2010, p. 345) Belonging is assumed to be a zero-sum game and migrants' spatially multiple belonging is contested (Erdal, 2021). Ambivalence of migrant belonging (Palmberger, 2019; Boccagni & Kivisto, 2019; Erdal, 2021) is ignored. As Erdal (2013) argues, although studies of migrant transnationalism on the one hand and integration of migrants on the other hand potentially have much in common, in the existing studies, these two literatures have opposing points of departure. While studies on transnationalism recognize the existence of a social field that transcend national boundaries and follow an actor-centered approach, research on migrant integration mostly follows an approach that focuses on the challenges migration creates for migrant-receiving societies and looks at migration from a nation-state perspective. This paper is situated in the first group of studies, with its attempt to stay away from what Wimmer and Schiller (2002) call methodological nationalism, or "the assumption that the nation state society is the natural social and political form of the modern world" (p. 217). Nevertheless, this does not mean that ethnicity and nation states have lost all their importance for questions of belonging. Although nation states are going through transformations in terms of their ability to regulate socio-economic realities, when it comes to membership and identification, nation states and ethnic categories still play crucial roles. As Skey (2013) argues, nations still matter in terms of identification and belonging.

As people can belong in different ways and to different objects of attachment, it is crucial to make distinctions between different analytical levels on which belonging is established. The first analytical distinction that scholars make is between belonging and the politics of belonging : The former referring to a personal feeling of being 'at home' in a place, and the latter corresponding to "belonging as a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion" (Antonsich, 2010, p. 645; see also Yuval- Davis, 2006; Fenster, 2005; Bauböck, 2005; Kryzanowski & Wodak, 2008 for similar distinctions). Yuval-Davis (2006, p.199) also distinguishes between three analytical levels at which we can look at belonging: The first level is about social locations (belonging to a gender, race, class, ethnic group, etc.); the second concerns people's identifications and emotional attachments to different collectivities; the third is related to ethical and political value systems according to which people evaluate their own and others' belonging(s). Although these levels are connected to each other, they refer to different areas of concern and it will be mistaken to reduce them to each other.

Sicakkan & Lithman (2005) argue that a belonging perspective suggests the possibility of plural belongings; individuals can have various attachments:

> In operational terms, modes of belonging can be seen as constituted of a large spectrum of emotionally engaging attachments to territory (locality, neighborhood, region, motherland, continent, globe), to social groups (humanity, nation, culture, ancestry, ethnicity, religion, community, family, interest groups), to particular human features (e.g. generation, gender, sexuality, disability, talent) or to political ideologies (e.g. religious fundamentalism, socialism, nationalism, feminism, cosmopolitanism, etc.).

Rather than trying to cover all dimensions of belonging, the research for this paper has queried the territorial dimension by asking questions related to their notions of belonging to the country of origin and the destination country, as well as to other localities like neighborhood, city, or the globe. The paper elaborates on what they mean when they say that they belong to one of these territorial units. Nevertheless, attachments to territory are often expressed together with attachments to social groups/collectivities. While expressing belonging to the country of origin, for instance, individuals often talk about belonging to the nation at the same time. It is not easy to distinguish between these two dimensions of belonging in the expressions of individuals who talk about their attachments. Consequently, this paper mainly focuses on attachments to territory and social groups while looking at migrants' belonging.

3. Research

The research for this paper is based on semi-structured, in-depth interviews with 71[1] Turkish migrants who live in/around Oslo and Drammen in Norway. I got an ethics approval from the NSD (The Norwegian Center for Research Data)[2] to conduct this research and I conducted interviews between March 2019 and August 2020. I also became a member of several groups on Facebook, which have been established by Turkish migrants who are currently living in Norway. I have also attended a variety of social activities organized by these groups, like dinners, parties, seminars, etc. I have had participant observations during these events. When I started my research, I was a new arrival in Norway, with less than two years of living experience in the country. My research process went in parallel with my learning and socialization processes in the country. I have conducted this research on Turkish migrants in Norway as a Turkish migrant-researcher who lives in the same country. In one sense, I can be considered an "insider" of the group that I have studied. Insider research, where the researcher studies those like her, her own community, or society, has increased recently, although it is not a new phenomenon (Greene, 2014; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013; Naples, 2003). Insider researchers may face methodological and ethical issues that may be considered irrelevant for other researchers (Breen, 2007). They will have aspects of their self or identity that are associated or in common with their research participants (Chavez, 2008). However, many times, the borders between insider and outsider statuses can be unclear, and the insider or the outsider does not necessarily have "a monopoly on advantage or objectivity" (Chavez, 2008, p.476). Although sometimes there are debates about the objectivity of insider research, even early research (Lewis, 1973) had challenged the claim that only an informed outsider can reach the objective reality about other cultures. Additionally, feminist scholars have been criticizing the dominant notions of objectivity for decades now. In my case, although I had the common aspect of being a Turkish migrant in Norway in common with my participants, not all of them perceived me as a "total insider" because of factors like my short duration of stay in Norway, that I came to Norway from Istanbul, or their perception of me as a secular Sunni Muslim woman. During my interviews, I have noticed that most of my respondents had collected some information about me in advance. On the one hand, the fact that I am a Turkish migrant whose native language is Turkish was an important advantage while recruiting my respondents. On the other hand, I had difficulty reaching those Turkish migrants who did not consider me as "similar enough" to their group. For instance, fewer religious people volunteered to be interviewed. This is also one of the limitations of my study. As a qualitative study, my research aims to gain understanding about the different notions of belonging among Turkish migrants in Norway without claiming to be representative of all Turkish migrants in Norway.

I used several different channels to recruit respondents to my interviews. I shared my call on the Facebook groups of Turkish migrants in Norway. I also used my own networks to reach people who meet the criteria for my research, and I did snowball sampling: I asked my respondents to give names of people that I could interview. Before the pandemic, I conducted the interviews face-to-face at those places where my respondents chose and received their written informed consent. During the pandemic, I conducted the interviews online and my respondents gave oral consent, which was recorded. The interviews lasted 1.5 hours on average. I conducted the interviews in Turkish, but my respondents

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[1] I interviewed a total of 72 migrants. However, I excluded one respondent during my analysis, as I noticed during the interview that he is a second-generation person who was born in Norway. This study focuses only on first generation individuals who were born in Turkey and migrated to Norway.

[2] NSD ref: 757919

sometimes also used Norwegian and English during the interviews. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. I have anonymized the respondents. Each respondent has been identified with the letter M and a number.

For the analysis of semi-structured interview data, I have used McCracken's (1988) five-step method and the method's interpretation by Piercy (2004). According to this method, the first step includes reading and reviewing each transcript twice and making notations in the margins. These notations are short phrases that aim to capture what the respondent is discussing in that section. In the second stage, observations are transformed into initial categories based on what is presented in the transcripts, the literature review, and the theoretical frameworks (Piercy, 2004, p.4). At the third stage, there is a comprehensive examination of the initial codes to see connections and develop pattern codes (p.5). At the fourth stage, basic themes are determined by looking at groups of comments by respondents (p.6). Finally, at the last stage, the dominant themes in the data are discovered and explained (p.6).

Validity and reliability are important criteria for the positivist research paradigm. While positivism is relevant to much quantitative research, it has less relevance for qualitative research. "Positivists separate themselves from the world they study, while researchers within the other paradigms acknowledge that they have to participate in real-world life to some extent so as to better understand and express its emergent properties and features." (Healy & Perry, 2000, p.119). There are qualitative researchers who argue that validity and reliability are criteria for quantitative research, and they cannot be applicable to or misleading for qualitative studies. As Stenbacka (2001) argues, the basic question behind validity is whether "the intended object of measurement actually is measured" (p.551). According to this definition, the issue of validity becomes useless in the case of qualitative research, as qualitative research does not have the aim of measuring. Reliability, which is another important concept for quantitative research, refers to how consistently a method measures something. Hence, it also becomes irrelevant for guaranteeing the quality of qualitative research for the same reason. Qualitative studies have different criteria for research quality. Validity and reliability can only be relevant if interpreted in the broadest sense, "validity referring to the integrity and application of the methods undertaken and the precision in which the findings accurately reflect the data, while reliability describes consistency within the employed analytical procedures" (Noble & Smith, 2015, p.34). This research is valid as the findings accurately reflect the data which is guaranteed through the method of analysis and it is reliable due to the consistency within the employed analytical procedures.

Although currently, there is expanding literature on the Turkish diaspora in Europe (Akçapar & Aksel, 2017; Yaldız, 2019; Hoffman et al., 2020; Yabancı, 2021; Özbilgin & Yıldız, 2022; Kolbaşı-Muyan, 2023), different types of belonging among Turkish migrants have not been sufficiently investigated. This paper focuses on the respondents' statements about belonging/not-belonging to the country of origin (Türkiye), the country where they are currently living (Norway) or to other territorial units, and discusses in what ways and for what reasons they feel belonging, and what they understand from belonging. In addition to their responses to the direct questions about belonging, I have also analyzed their other statements where they talked about their notions of belonging. It is possible to talk about six categories of responses:1) I belong to neither Türkiye nor Norway; 2) I belong to both Türkiye and Norway; 3) I belong to Türkiye, but not to Norway; 4) I belong to Norway, but not to Türkiye; 5) I have local belongings (to neighborhoods, towns, cities) or partial belonging; 6) I belong to the globe/world; I am a world citizen.

Focusing on Turkish migrants is crucial for several reasons. First, as Kaya (2011) argues, especially in the context of Europe, Turkish migrants have largely been perceived as unwilling to integrate in their countries of settlement. "To put it bluntly, the European public, by and large, believe that Turkish migrants do not integrate." (Kaya, 2011, p.499) Moreover, in the literature on different forms of civic participation, there are studies which demonstrate that for Turkish migrants, participation in civic life especially takes place through ethnic communities (Ataman et al., 2017). Finally, there is research which demonstrates that, among many migrant groups, Turks make up a migrant group which has the strongest will to live transnational lives (Duru et al., 2019). According to the findings of the TRANSWEL (Transnational Lives in the Welfare State) Project, Turkish migrants in Norway represented the group where most wanted to live in both the country of origin and the destination country. Nearly half of Turkish people living in Norway wanted this[3]. Therefore, researching Turkish migrant communities in Europe means focusing on a group which is claimed to have high levels of transnational orientation and membership in ethnic communities, and low levels of integration to their host societies. It is usually assumed that they mostly feel belonging to their country of origin, not to the destination countries. In this paper, I aim to demonstrate that for Turkish migrants living in Norway, as well as other groups of migrants, belonging is a much more variegated issue that requires conceptualization beyond a simple framework of belonging-here-or-there. Moreover, it is crucial to understand what migrants refer to when they talk about belonging or not belonging.

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[3] https://www.prio.org/projects/1660 (Accessed May 30th, 2023)

4. "I feel belonging to Norway"

The first factor mentioned by those who think that they belong to Norway is that they feel belonging because they are making contributions to the Norwegian society through their economic, social, and political participation. The feeling that they are contributing to Norwegian society by working, paying taxes, being active in labor unions, voting and active political participation, and acting as role models for especially the minority youth, were mentioned as the major factors that increase their sense of belonging to Norway.

The second factor that has a positive role in their sense of belonging to Norway is their perception that their children have been well-integrated into Norwegian society. They stated that their children's jobs, friends, networks, and their future are in Norway. Even though as first-generation migrants, they do not feel attachment to Norway to the same extent as their children, seeing the strong and permanent links of their children with this society makes them feel that they belong to Norway. Additionally, some of my respondents made references to the social values that are emphasized in Norway and argued that the kinds of values that are underlined are in line with their own personal values.

For a couple of them, feeling belonging was about having routines. As a certain amount of time has already passed since they came to Norway, they now have new routines living in this new country. Additionally, some places have already become familiar. This increasing familiarity gives them a sense of belonging.

Finally, some of the respondents who are married to Norwegians said that they feel belonging as they have participated actively in social life thanks to their spouses/partners. The fact that their children are "half Norwegian" and they have Norwegian family members and relatives makes them feel that they also belong to the Norwegian society.

> I especially feel belonging through my husband... When it comes to following a Norwegian tradition, doing some of those things... I feel that I am actively involved in them. When I talk to some people, I can say "We have done it", "We have also cooked that", "We have celebrated as well." Then I feel that I belong. (M23)

If we summarize the responses of those who feel belonging to Norway, we can argue that belonging takes place when they feel that:

- they participate in Norwegian society and contribute to it;
- their children are well-integrated into the society;
- their personal values are in line with the values that are emphasized in Norway;
- they have established routines in daily life;
- they participate actively in social life due to their Norwegian partners/spouses.

Therefore, their own and families' active participation in society, as well as the similarity between their own values and the society's underlined values are key to their sense of belonging to Norway.

5. "I don't belong to Norway"

Those of them who think that they do not belong to Norway mentioned several reasons for that. In parallel with those who expressed that they belong to Norway because they work in Norway, participate in economic life, and pay taxes, the ones who could not find a job that is in line with their qualifications stated that they do not feel belonging to Norway.

> If I get a job, a regular, permanent job, I will feel belonging... I believe that without participating in the work life, it is not possible to feel belonging... I have always thought that if you cannot make an economic contribution to a society, you cannot take part in it. (M9)

Not having enough friends and social connections, not being able to speak the language or not being able to express oneself sufficiently in the language of the country, and the feeling that it is not their culture/it is too different from their own culture lead them to feel that they do not belong to Norway. Some of them also feel that they do not support or embrace some of the values that are emphasized in Norway, and this makes it difficult/impossible for them to develop a sense of belonging to Norway:

> I do not really feel much belonging to Norway. We were raised in a different way. We have very different expectations from life. We have different values, different priorities... For instance, for me, family is very important. I am the type of person who likes giving and sharing. The individualism in Norway, the fact that even in families, they try to calculate everyone's shares... These are problematic concepts for me. The fact that I am now a citizen, I work here, pay taxes, etc.... These do not necessarily bring a sense of belonging. (M63)

> I do not feel that I belong to Norwegian society. I am new here, but I do not think that this will change in the future. I know it for sure, because I was not feeling belonging in (another country) either while I was living there. I am myself only when I am in Türkiye. In other countries, I do not really feel like myself. I will not belong here. Considering all the strange things I see in Norway, I know that I cannot feel belonging. (M65)

In some cases, at what age they came to Norway also had an influence on their sense of belonging. Those of them who

came during later stages of their lives tended to think that it is not possible to develop belonging to a new country after that age. The projected duration of their stay in Norway also had an impact on belonging: Those who see themselves as temporary in Norway or who cannot foresee how long they will stay talked about not having developed a sense of belonging. Not being competent in the language of the country also had a negative impact on feelings of belonging:

> I feel that because of the language issue, I cannot feel belonging here. As I am not competent in the language, I feel that I cannot follow the social developments either. Additionally, I need to feel that I can express myself fully to be able to develop a sense of belonging. That is not how I currently feel. I feel temporary, like I am passing by... (M27)

There were also cases in which the person's lack of a sense of belonging to Norway was mainly connected to the perception that one is discriminated against, excluded, marginalized, and is not recognized by Norwegian society. In this group, there are those who think that Norwegians do not see them as Norwegian and constantly treat them as different.

> How should I say it... I would want to feel belonging, but I am not sure how they see me. If I am with my friends, we speak Norwegian and we get along quite well. We have a lot in common, we went to school together, etc. I know a lot of things, I know the cultural codes, where to go, what to eat... But I also always know that, in their eyes, I am not Norwegian. As they say, if you have not been Norwegian for several generations, you are not Norwegian. For that reason, I should say I belong 60%... (M14)

There is also the feeling that what is demanded of them is not integration but assimilation. Some of them believe that those components of their identities which make them different make it impossible for them to be considered Norwegian:

> The problem with Norway is that they want people to be assimilated, although they call it integration. For that reason, even if you get totally adapted to this society, learn everything, learn the language, have education, work, and pay taxes, they do not see you as Norwegian as long as you are not assimilated... If you do not celebrate Christmas, go to church, eat pork, celebrate May 17th with those traditional clothes, they do not see you as integrated. (M34)

Some of them also stated that although they contribute to Norwegian society in many ways, they do not have the right to make demands in Norway. They feel that having Norwegian citizenship and a Norwegian passport does not make them Norwegian in the eyes of the society. When they are not recognized, they do not see it as possible to develop a sense of belonging.

To sum up, those who think that they do not belong to Norway think that it is because:

- they cannot participate actively in social life (due to being unemployed/ underemployed or lack of social networks);
- they cannot express themselves sufficiently in the language of the country;
- Norwegian culture and values are "too different" from their own culture and values;
- it is "too late" for them to belong to a new country due to their age;
- the temporary nature of their stay makes it impossible to feel belonging;
- experiencing discrimination, non-recognition, and pressure for assimilation deters feelings of belonging.

6. "I Belong to My Country of Origin, Türkiye"

For those of them who came to Norway at later stages of their lives or who have not been living in the country for a long period, the answer to the question of their belonging to the country of origin was obvious: They feel that they belong to Türkiye. Even for some of those who have lived in Norway from early ages or who have stayed for extended periods of time, their sense of belonging to Türkiye is quite strong. The fact that they were born in Türkiye and still have many family members and friends in the country make them feel that they have a strong connection to Türkiye. Even some of those who had many negative experiences living in Türkiye and currently have strong criticisms about the country still think that Türkiye has shaped them and even if they do not like everything about its current state, they are a part of that society. About the negative aspects, one of the respondents also said "I had heard this from someone. The country for which you feel ashamed is where you belong. I really liked it when I heard it. I belong to Türkiye in that sense. I still feel ashamed for Türkiye when I hear about the negative incidents." (M42) Consequently, feeling belonging to the country of origin is linked to feeling a part of that culture and society as a result of being born and having early socialization, and having many family members, friends, and relatives there.

7. "I Don't Belong to My Country of Origin"

In response to the question about whether they feel belonging to their country of origin, Türkiye, several of them stated that they do not feel belonging. The first reason that was mentioned is that they do not accept or embrace some of the cultural values and social norms in Türkiye. There were also those who were very critical of the current state

of the country in the political and social sense, and who said that the country to which they belonged does not exist anymore; they do not feel belonging to "this new country".

> I am really sorry to say this but no, I do not belong to Turkish society anymore. How can I belong to a society that keeps silent despite all this unfairness, all these violations of democracy? I am not saying that I am not Turkish anymore. I am just saying that I do not belong to Turkish society. This was not how we were in the past. This is not what we learned about Turkishness in our history classes. (M49)

One of my respondents explained that the loss of his sense of belonging to Türkiye happened not after but before he left Türkiye, and this loss is a major reason why he decided to leave the country to live in Norway. He emphasized that losing one's sense of belonging to the country of origin is not peculiar to emigrants:

> It is not necessarily about leaving a country and settling in a new one. I know many people who are still living in Türkiye, who have lost their sense of belonging... My sister, many of my close friends, my closest friend who is gay... They do not feel belonging either. It is really strange. It feels like we were living on a land, but some other people have invaded it. On that land we really want to love, they now have their own reign. That is how I am feeling about Türkiye now. (M61)

The ones who are critical of the country's transformation also talked about not feeling comfortable in Türkiye when they visit. The ones who have been living in Norway for extended periods of time think that they are feeling less and less familiar with the dominant cultural codes in Türkiye. They also feel increasingly less competent in expressing themselves in Turkish. Therefore, their sense of not-belonging is mostly linked to their perception of their loss of cultural-linguistic competence. They also believe that they are not accepted as a part of the culture and society in Türkiye anymore. Additionally, their feeling that they are not making any contribution to Turkish society also adds to their sense of not belonging:

> I do not feel belonging to Turkish society. I rather see Türkiye as my vacation country now. We go to Türkiye for our vacations and we are always in a vacation mode when we are there. I do not feel like a part of that society because I do not have any contributions to its development, its improvement. (M43)

> I do not feel belonging anymore... I guess this is due to having lived here for a long time as of now. I am not a part of the Turkish society any longer. I follow the social changes in Türkiye from a distance. Even the language is changing. People now use different slang words. (M16)

Those who are members of minority groups in Türkiye (Alevis, Kurds, etc.)[4] talked about how they have always had problems in terms of having equal rights and recognition in the context of Türkiye. They have also stated that they have never felt belonging to mainstream society because of being different in the ethnic/religious sense.

Accordingly, those who do not feel belonging to Türkiye think that:

- they do not accept some of the social norms in the country;
- the country has changed in negative ways and the country that they felt belonging does not exist anymore;
- they have been living in Norway for a long time and they have lost their cultural-linguistic competence;
- they are not accepted as a part of Turkish society any longer;
- being a member of a minority group in Türkiye, they have never felt belonging to the mainstream society.

8. "I Belong to Both Societies" and "I Belong to Neither"

In the previous sections, the meanings of belonging to Norway and Türkiye have already been discussed. Additionally, in some cases, my respondents talked about their senses of belonging to both contexts and societies. Some of them expressed that what they have experienced and learned in both Türkiye and Norway have become crucial components of their identities and consequently, they feel belonging to both. Having double citizenship was also mentioned as contributing to their sense of belonging to both countries/societies.

> I can say that I am a Turkish Norwegian. All the values that make me who I am... I have received them from my family and my country. I came here when I was 25-26. I have spent the rest of my life here. I believe that I have also embraced many things here. I do not want to brag but I think I could successfully blend them all. Now I do not know which of my characteristics are Norwegian and which ones are Turkish. It is hard to distinguish between them anyway. The moral values that I was taught also exist here. I did not need to come to Norway to become a better person. I just learned the Norwegian names for those notions after coming here... And although I sometimes feel excluded in different environments while living here, I still feel that I belong to Norwegian society as well as to Turkish society. (M37)

> I have double citizenship. I feel comfortable in both contexts. I am comfortable in my country when I go there, and I am also comfortable here. (M47)

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[4] According to the dominant political-legal definition in Türkiye, "minorities" refer to those non-Muslim communities in Türkiye, whose presence were recognized by the Lausanne Treaty in 1923. However, in this study, I rely on a sociological definition of "minority" and use relative power or social status as a criterion for defining minority and majority group membership.

On the other side, most of those who feel belonging to neither society talked about feeling like a "foreigner" in both contexts and being "in limbo". After staying in Norway for extended periods of time, they have started feeling that they are not familiar with the Turkish context anymore. They also think that Turkish people living in Türkiye perceive them as different. On the other side, despite having lived in Norway for a long time, they do not feel fully recognized as Norwegian. Additionally, a lack of what they consider as full competence in the cultural codes makes them feel that it is not possible to feel belonging to Norway.

Some of those who stated that they feel belonging neither to Norway nor to Türkiye talked about their reluctance to feeling belonging to a national collectivity, as this type of belonging brings responsibilities that they do not want to accept. M13, for instance, explained that from very early ages, she never wanted to celebrate any national or religious days or festivities, as these celebrations made her uncomfortable. She feels concerned that when large numbers of people come together for common goals, their actions will be attributed to her if she is regarded as a member of that group. As will be discussed in the following sections, for these individuals, local belonging (to the city where they grew up, for instance) made more sense.

9. "I Feel Like a World Citizen"

In some cases, the statement that one feels a world citizen refers to having connections to both contexts. We can argue that especially those who talk about being world citizens live transnational lives and develop transnational belonging. For instance, when M24 says that he is a world citizen, he explains that for him and his family, it is not possible to think of a life in a single country anymore. His children completed their education and have established themselves professionally in Norway. He doesn't see it likely that his children will go "back" to Türkiye in the future. He doesn't want it either. For him, this also means that he has a permanent connection with Norway. However, his link with Norway is not only because of his children. His health insurance in Norway is another thing that he emphasized while talking about his connection. In terms of his own plans for future, he sees himself spending more time in Türkiye when he gets older. He says that he misses the Mediterranean climate and the "warmth of Mediterranean people", and he wants to live those things that he missed living away from Türkiye. However, not having health insurance in Türkiye, he realistically assesses that he may not be able to realize his plans of spending more time in Türkiye in his old age if he has serious health concerns. His statement about being a world citizen does not necessarily refer to feeling at home everywhere, but rather to the impossibility of living a life in only one country and having links to both Norway and Türkiye, even though he has more emotional attachment to Türkiye.

There are also other cases where the statement that one feels like a world citizen means that the person does not identify with or feel belonging to any national collectivity, in a similar way with the previous category that I discussed above. Therefore, identifying as a world citizen becomes a way of non-identification with any national community. These individuals also criticized the restrictions that are imposed by borders and boundaries and emphasized that "they are humans above all".

In fact, I do not feel belonging to any national society, including Türkiye. I have never felt that kind of belonging. I have always felt like a world citizen. (M11)

Even when I was in Turkey, I was always feeling like a world citizen. I always found the borders meaningless. I always used to say, why do we need to define ourselves with our nationalities. . . I still feel the same. I feel like a world citizen. (M26)

10. Local and Partial Belongings

In response to the questions about belonging, some of the respondents said that the notion of national belonging does not really make much sense to them. They rather emphasized their sense of belonging to their city, town, or village in Türkiye and/or city, town, or neighborhood in Norway. M13, for instance, mentioned that rather than feeling belonging to Türkiye or Norway, she feels belonging to Izmir where she lived during her childhood. There were also those who talked about their sense of belonging to smaller social groups like their families or groups of friends, rather than feeling national belonging.

The only feeling of belonging I have to Turkish society is my sense of belonging to my family and friends. During the last four-five years, I have felt disgusted by all the things people who call themselves Turkish have done. So, I am now questioning my Turkish identity and my feelings of belonging. (M68)

As exemplified by some of the quotations in the earlier sections, while answering the questions about belonging, in some cases, the respondents expressed their belonging, especially to Norway, in terms of percentages. This implies that they feel belonging in certain spheres and in terms of some issues, but not in others.

It is hard to say that I feel 100% belonging. I feel belonging regarding issues like benefiting from its nature, voting in the elections, and paying taxes. But on May 17th, on the national days here. . . I cannot celebrate them with genuine enthusiasm. Or sometimes I feel really sad. I graduated from a teacher training school. When I was at the school, for four years, we sang a teachers' anthem. "My homeland, I swear that I will glorify you." But here, I do not feel like saying "My homeland Norway, I will glorify you." I know that I should also do my best to contribute to the development of children here, the children of Norway. . . I am trying to create new notions and ideas about developing the children of the world, not the children of my country. . . I want to say, "The world, I swear that I will glorify you." But unfortunately, I am not there yet. (M39)

Looking at this example, if one thinks of belonging in terms of formal practices of participation like voting or paying taxes, we can argue that migrants find it easier to belong to a new country/ a national collectivity in this sense. However, when we focus on the emotional components and attachment to symbols, they find it hard to talk about belonging with respect to them. Moreover, it seems to create tensions and internal conflicts for them when they feel pressured to feel belonging to national symbols and celebrations, or to replace their notion of homeland with a new one. Rather than replacing their homeland with a new one, they find it more viable to totally abandon the ideal of working for the improvement of a country/a national collectivity and to replace it with the ideal of working for the entire world/humanity. Nevertheless, as we see in this example, although this ideal looks convincing intellectually, it is quite abstract and hard to embrace at the practical level. Hence, this person replaces the abstract ideal of "working for the children of the world" with a more concrete one: working for migrant children in Norway regardless of their ethnic backgrounds:

Children of migrants, from Syria, Thailand, Somalia, or Türkiye. . . They have similarities. They are children who are trying to adapt to a new place. Many of them are quite angry with Norwegians. Especially those who are originally from Muslim countries. When I say, "I am also Muslim, but being Muslim does not necessarily mean doing that.", I see that those children soften a little bit. Then maybe I can be a role model in such issues. It is an ideal that I can embrace here. (M39)

11. Their Children's Senses of Belonging

Many of my respondents said that their children were born and raised in Norway, and they mostly feel belonging to Norway and Norwegian society. They explained it with reference to factors like their large networks, active participation in social life, membership in organizations, and fluency in Norwegian. Comparing their sense of belonging with their children's, most of them stated that their children feel belonging to Norway more than they themselves do. Those who have more than one child mentioned differences between their children in terms of their levels of attachment to Türkiye, even though they have grown up in the same family. Therefore, there seem to be individual differences between their children regarding senses of belonging to Türkiye. Nevertheless, many of them also emphasized that for their children, Turkishness and components related to Turkish culture are also part of their identities and they feel belonging to Türkiye, although at a lesser level than their attachment to Norway and the Norwegian society.

Belonging to Norway, it is 100%... Because she knows a lot of people here. It is not only that she was born here; she is very active in a lot of groups. She is a student representative, for instance. . . I don't know if she thinks about Türkiye in terms of belonging. As she speaks Turkish, she enjoys having conversations in Turkish with the people at the Turkish shop. . . . She has a group of friends here. Last year, the seven of them travelled to Cuba. This year, she is going to take them to Istanbul. But I do not think that she feels 100% belonging to Türkiye. There are many things that she does not understand about Türkiye. . . (M5)

As my son also has Turkish citizenship, he has this military obligation in Türkiye. Some people suggested that he should give up his Turkish citizenship not to have this obligation. He got really furious about that suggestion. Why would I do that, he said, that is part of my identity. I did not ask him this question (about his identity) but most probably, he thinks of himself as a Norwegian person who has roots in Türkiye. But the Turkish roots are not insignificant. (M15)

My children are well-integrated into Norwegian society. They have good jobs, good positions. . . But my daughter has a tattoo on her ankle, which says "Made in Türkiye". But that was something that she had in her early youth. I believe my children feel belonging to both countries. But compared to me, their attachment to Norway is more dominant. (M24)

A few of my respondents talked about their children's belonging to Norway as *belonging as a minority*, as a person with a foreign descent. This means that having been born and raised in Norway, they consider Norway as their country. However, they consider themselves different from "Norwegians" and similar to the other people whose families are of foreign descent: "When my son talks to others, he talks about "Norwegians", which means that he does not consider himself as one. I think he feels belonging here, but he belongs as a person of foreign descent." (M33) As discussed in the section on partial belongings, this suggests that belonging to Norway may not necessarily indicate belonging to mainstream society, but may suggest belonging to alternative spheres, in this case to the group of people whose parents are of foreign origin.

Finally, when it comes to their own expectations regarding their children's attachment to their country of origin, most

of them expect or hope that their children will continue having some attachment to Türkiye. Those whose children were born in Norway or came to Norway at an early age generally know and accept that their children mostly identify as Norwegian and have their main attachment to Norway. However, they consider it important that they maintain and transfer their Turkish heritage to the next generation, and they feel proud when they perceive themselves successful in that respect:

> I am happy that they also feel belonging to Türkiye. I would feel really sorry if they did not feel that way. I have done my best to prevent them from getting totally disconnected from Türkiye. During the 1980s, there was simply nothing here. No books, no games… I used to bring them cassettes from Türkiye and watch with them. I had a major role in keeping them connected to Türkiye. Not all families are like this… (M24)

12. Conclusion

With the civic integration turn in European countries, migrants' sense of belonging is increasingly being questioned and migrants coming from Muslim-majority countries like Türkiye are portrayed as not developing belonging to their new countries in Europe, as well as not willing and able to integrate. This paper has demonstrated the variety in the ways of belonging for Turkish migrants who are currently living in Norway. It has revealed the heterogeneity and complexity of feelings of belonging among the members of an ethnic group that is assumed to feel belonging to their country of origin while they are living in European countries. It has also elaborated on the variety of meanings these migrants attach to the notion of belonging (or not belonging) to territories such as the country of origin or destination country, and collectivities like nations. Belonging to the destination country, Norway, has been tied to a variety of issues such as participating actively in social life, contributing to the society, their perception that they/their children have been well-integrated, the alignment between their personal values and the values that are emphasized in society, and having established routines. On the other side, not belonging to the destination country was explained with reference to not being able to participate actively in social life, not being able to express themselves sufficiently in the language of the country, the distance between their own culture/values and the Norwegian culture/values, migrating at a later age, the temporary nature of their stay, and the perception of being discriminated against. Belonging to the country of origin has been mainly linked to feeling a part of that culture and society because of being born and having early socialization, and having many family members, friends, and relatives there. Not feeling belonging to the country of origin has been associated with not accepting some of the social norms in the country, the perception that the country has changed in negative ways, having lived in Norway for a long time, having lost cultural-linguistic competence, the feeling that they are not accepted as a part of Turkish society any longer, and being a member of a minority group in Türkiye.

The findings of this research show that in addition to those who feel belonging to only their country of origin or only destination country, there are also those who feel belonging to both. What they have experienced and learned in both Türkiye and Norway have become crucial components of their identities and subsequently, they feel belonging to both countries. Having double citizenship was also mentioned as contributing to their sense of belonging to both countries/societies. Additionally, there are also those who feel belonging to neither one of the two countries. Some of them have lost familiarity with the Turkish context while not being able to fully participate in Norwegian society, whereas others question the notion of national belonging and have global, local, or partial belongings. Overall, this paper aims to contribute to the debates on migrants' attachments as a warning against simplifying migrants' realities for nationalist political purposes. It demonstrates that it is mistaken to approach migrants' belongings in the form of "belonging either to here or there", which is a general tendency in the literature on migrant integration.

Belonging is a central concept for reflecting on individuals' connections with the groups around them. It is multidimensional, referring simultaneously to categories like citizenship, nationhood, ethnicity, as well as emotional dimensions. It includes emotional, cultural, and symbolic dimensions while looking at the question of what brings together a collectivity. Hence, it is problematic when such a concept that also includes strong emotional elements becomes the subject of collective and state scrutiny and intervention when migrants are in question. Migrants' right to privacy is violated when their emotional attachments are questioned as a part of political debates. Currently, there is a lot of research on migrant integration which mostly follows an approach that focuses on the challenges migration creates for migrant-receiving societies and looks at migration from a nation-state perspective. This paper has rather followed the approach of the studies on transnationalism which recognize the existence of a social field that transcends national boundaries and follows an actor-centered approach. It has attempted to stay away from methodological nationalism and has not considered the nation state society as the natural social and political form of the modern world. However, as the findings of this research demonstrates, this does not mean that ethnicity and nation states have lost all their importance for questions of belonging. When we talk about membership and identification, nation states and ethnic categories still play important roles.

	Gender	Age	Civil Stat	Arrival Norway	Citizenship	Education	Occupation
M1	M	45	Married	2013	N	2-year college	Technician
M3	F	43	Married	2000	N, T	MS (UiO)	Sales Man.
M4	M	49	Divorced	2000	N	Left secondary	Auto Mech.
M5	M	63	Married	1985	N, T	MS (UiO)	Engineer
M6	F	52	Married	1988	N, T	Vocat. high-school	
M7	M	68	Married	1969	N, T	Vocat. high-school	Entrepreneur
M8	F	39	Married	2014	T (res.perm)	MS (USA)	Legal degree
M9	F	39	Married	2015	T (res.perm)	MS (UiO)	Educ. Consult.
M10	F	46	Divorced	1999	N, T	High school	Sales
M11	F	55	Single	2018	T (res.perm)	MS (USA)	Head of NGO
M12	F	34	Single	2015	T (res.perm)	MS (Turkey)	Comp.engineer
M13	F	51	Married	1990	N	PhD (UiO)	Academic
M14	F	46	Single	2016	T (res.perm)	MS (USA)	Engineer
M15	M	67	Married	1976	N, T	PhD (UiO)	Engineer
M16	F	58	Married	1988	N	MS (Norway)	Economist
M17	F	36	Single	2017	T (res.perm)	PhD (Turkey)	Academic
M18	M	46	Married	1981	N, T	MS (UiO)	Senior engin
M19	F		Married		N, T		Child educ
M20	F	47	Married	2003	T (res.perm)	University (Turkey)	Chemist
M21	F	79	Widow	2002	N,T(blue c)	University+pediat	Doctor
M22	M	44	Partner	1987	N, T	Grunnskole	small enter.
M23	F	44	Married	2016	T (perm.res)	University (Turkey)	Architect
M24	F	56	Married	1985	N, T	University(Turkey)	Teacher
M25	F	25	Married	2018	T, res.perm	Vocat. high-school	Dj,Organizator
M26	F	29	Married	2018	T (res.perm)	University (Turkey)	Merc.allocator
M27	F		Married	2018	T (res.perm)	PhD	Engineer
M28	M	27	Single	2019	T (res.perm)	2-year college (T)	Cook
M29	F	27	Married		N, T	University (N)	Teacher
M30	F	54	Divorced	1991	N, T	University (T&N)	Barne.teach
M31	F	34	Married	2006	N	Highschool(Turkey)	Health person.
M32	F	27	Single	2011	T (perm.res)	MS (UiO)	
M33	M	56	Married	1974	N, T	University (UiO)	Degree in soc.
M34	M	50	Married	1976	N, T	MS (Norway)	Engineer
M35	M	32	Single	2020	T, Bulgaria	2-year college (T)	Media tech.
M36	F	50	Married	2004	N, blue card	University (Turkey)	Health person.
M37	F	55	Married	1991	N, T	Univ+pedag in N	Pedagog
M38	M	43	Married	2004	T, perm.res.	Vocat. high-school	Technician
M39	F	28	Married	2016	T, perm.res.	University (Turkey)	Degree in law
M40	M	34	Single	2019	T, res.perm	PhD (Turkey)	Academic
M41	F	49	Married	2011	T, perm.res.	MS (Turkey)	Hum.res.man
M42	F	41	Married	2018	T, res.perm	MS (Turkey)	Consult NGOs
M43	F	40	Single	1983	N,T	MS (Norway)	Teacher
M44	F	19	Single	2020	N,T	high school grad	
M45	F	52	Married	1972	N,T	Vocat. high-school	Insurance
M46	M	28	Married	2018	T, res.perm	University (Turkey)	Engineer
M47	M	47	Married	1999	N,T	Second.school	
M48	M	41	Divorced	1988	N,T	Second.school	
M49	M	29	Single	2018	T, refugee	MS (Turkey)	Academic
M50	F	38	Married	2007	N	MS(Turkey+Nor)	Engineer
M51	F	47	Married	2005	N, blue card	University(Turkey)	Engineer
M52	M	43	Married	2018	T, res.perm	MS	Consultant
M53	F	33	Divorced	2012	T, perm.res.	Univer(Norway)	Accountant
M54	M	46	Divorced	1999	T,N	Highschool(Turkey	at restraurant
M55	F	34	Married	2016	T,N	University(Turkey)	Teacher
M56	F	52	Divorced	1995	T,N	Vocat. high-school	Custom.Rep.
M57	F	50	Married	2017	T, res.perm	MS (US)	Artist
M58	F	52	Married	1974 (when 7)	N, blue card	PhD (Norway)	Academic
M59	F	45	Married	1983 (when 6)	N,T	Second.school (N)	Worked in sales
M60	F	44	Married	2001	N	Vocat. high-school	
M61	F	30	Married	2019	T, res.perm	University(Turkey)	Engineer
M62	M	25	Single	2019	T	University(Turkey)	
M63	F	37	Married	2015	N,T	MS (Turkey)	Degree in psyc
M64	F	43	Divorced	2003	N, blue card	2-year college(T)	Tourism
M65	F	36	Married	2019	T, res.perm	University(Turkey)	Artist
M66	M	62	Divorced	1980	N	High school(T)	Driver
M67	M	41	Married	2016	T, res.perm	High school(T)	Acounting-fin
M68	M	37	Married	2018	T,refugee	University(Turkey)	Police
M69	M	30	Single	2005	N	University(Norway	Degree econ.
M70	F	55	Married	1985	N,T	Highschool(Turkey)	
M71	M	62	Partner	1988	N,T	High school	Writer
M72	M	57	Married	1987	N,T	High school	

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P R E S S

Competitive Revenue Management (Rm.) Strategies of Five Star Hotels: A Case From Istanbul

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive world, the primary goal of hotels is to generate sustainable profitability. In order to achieve this goal, businesses are required to develop well-designed strategies and policies. Every vacant hotel room leads to a direct loss for the company. Therefore, because of the fixed capacity, capacity utilization and pricing is extremely important for hotels. This study explains the competitive revenue management (RM) practices of 5-star hotels in Istanbul. It investigates how hotels track their competitors, their strategies to gain a competitive advantage, and what factors they consider when determining their prices. The research employed a questionnaire containing pre-prepared RM-related inquiries administered to hotel RM department managers. Additionally, a situation assessment was conducted, drawing insights from the information provided by these managers. This study discovered that every revenue manager involved takes the competition seriously. Revenue managers consider competition to be obtaining the largest share of the available market share. This research anticipates that revenue management will extend its influence beyond room revenue and evolve into a more strategic department. The study underscores the importance of enhancing education and raising awareness about RM to address this gap effectively.

Keywords: Competition, Strategy, Revenue Management, Hotels, Istanbul

1. Introduction

Hotels operate in a challenging, competitive environment today. As of 2023, there are at least 187,000 hotels with an estimated 17.5 million guest rooms available worldwide (McCain, 2023). The increasing number of hotels, the rise of domestic and international chains, and offering similar products and services have intensified competition (Sánchez-Pérez et al., 2020). For instance, prominent hotel enterprises have recently introduced fresh brand offerings as a strategic response in order to enhance competitiveness. For example, Hilton introduced the Spark brand in 2023 (Savoy, 2023). This heightened rivalry is not only confined to the hotel conglomerates themselves, but also encompasses alternative lodging platforms, such as Airbnb (Demir & Emekli, 2021) and online travel intermediaries like Booking.com, which have presented formidable competitive obstacles for the traditional hotel sector (Demirciftci et al., 2010).

In hotel operations, every vacant room causes a loss for the business (Guillet & Chu, 2021). Hotels with fixed capacity face variable demand. Hotels aim to maximize revenue by applying price and capacity utilization most rationally according to the anticipated demand. The systematic evaluation of demand and capacity by hotels and their behavior in determining the most reasonable prices gives rise to revenue management (RM) (Demirciftci & Belarmino, 2022).

RM is a concept that emerged in the late 1970s in the United States, influenced by the deregulation of the airline industry. With deregulation, many airline companies entered the domestic market, which led to an increased competition in national and international air transportation (Yeoman McMahon-Beattie, 2017). Airline companies applied seat capacities and prices accurately within the RM system, resulting in a five to seven percent increase in revenues. Although RM was initially used in the airline industry, it was later implemented in service businesses that sell perishable products, including hotels (Alrawadieh et al., 2021). The primary purpose of this system is to manage the demand for companies operating with fixed capacity in a way that maximizes profit. In today's competitive environment, hotels apply RM with great sensitivity to maximize profitability. In addition to managing their operations, hotel businesses closely monitor their competitors (Demirciftci et al., 2017). They track their competitors' prices, occupancy rates, and strategies and adjusted their approach accordingly. The primary goal for a hotel is to fill its capacity to the highest possible level and achieve maximum revenue (Kimes, 2017).

When analyzing competitors, revenue managers utilize various programs and reports. Firstly, they evaluate historical data from previous years. They consider criteria such as the occupancy rates, prices at which rooms were booked, the demand for the current period, and the fees applied by competitors during that period to determine the most accurate pricing (Mohammed et al., 2014). Therefore, a competitive strategy for hotels is critical to survive.

While RM is significant in terms of enhancing profitability within the hospitality industry which has compelled hotels to embrace RM strategies, opposing factors exist that impede the widespread adoption of these practices by hotels. This study aims to address these inhibiting factors. Previous research predominantly centered around algorithms and systems, often overlooking competitive strategies.

The present study investigates how RM activities are implemented in five-star hotels in Istanbul and identifies the methods adopted under different conditions in the competitive environment. By investigating revenue management strategies tailored specifically to this upscale segment (five-star hotels), the study aimed to contribute valuable insights that can directly impact these establishments' financial performance and overall competitiveness. To achieve this, pre-prepared questions related to RM were asked to the RM department managers in hotels, with a situation assessment being conducted based on the found information. The study's primary purpose is to strategically analyze the perspectives of hotels operating in the industry regarding competition and RM approaches using the gathered information.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Competition among hotels*

The tourism industry, which has shown rapid development in the last 30 years, ranks first in terms of establishing employment opportunities. This significant development of tourism has led to increased competition, caused by reduced barriers of entry, an increasing number of businesses producing the same goods or services, and the similarity of characteristics across the sector (Akadiri et al., 2020).

Competition between businesses was relatively simple in previous periods. Until the 1980s, every hotel was able to find customers easily due to existing demand. In the following years, the opportunity for companies in the tourism sector to achieve high profit margins led to an increase in hotels, which produced a competitive environment. This increase in hotels has also disrupted the balance between supply and demand. Customer loyalty has become more critical for businesses, with those that engage in strategic planning and quick adaptations to changes in the external environment

becoming more successful (Uzar & Eyuboglu, 2019). The intensity of competition has compelled business managers to implement different marketing practices and engage in strategic planning tactics, such as RM (Kimes, 2011).

2.2. *Types of Competition in Hotels*

In today's world, increasing competition has a significant impact, especially on hotel businesses. When evaluating their position in the market, hotels often consider rival hotels. However, hotels not only compete among themselves but also compete with other industries. Consumers often face numerous and diverse alternatives when purchasing products or services. Therefore, hotels also compete with other businesses and companies, such as theaters, cinemas, restaurants, and more. In such a highly competitive environment, hotels must convince consumers on an emotional and psychological level and develop different stagies and methods to attract their spending away from other products. This can be achieved through superior service levels (Lam & Law, 2019).

It is obvious that the markets where hotels operate have experienced rapid changes. These changes directly affect the market and increase the level of competition. Additionally, unexpected events that occur in the country of operation can also be counted as factors that directly impact competition. Environmental factors, such as earthquakes, storms, hurricanes, outbreaks of diseases, terrorist attacks, wars, sudden changes in the global financial markets and exchange rates, political boycotts, and embargoes, all influence the travel decisions and choices of tourists (Chan et al., 2020). Crisis management that can handle these hotel changes and make accurate decisions and strategies is crucial to maintaining competitive strength (Cetin et al., 2016).

2.3. *Factors That Determine the Competitive Power of Hotel Businesses*

As the importance of the service sector continues to grow in the globalized world economy, the tourism sector is directly affected. Hotels represent one of the most visible examples of industries within the tourism sector that are affected by global developments. In today's competitive landscape, the success of hotels depends on their attention to competition and their effective use of competitive power factors. The most fundamental characteristic of the increasingly important tourism sector is its service-oriented nature, which results in an intangible product. The ability of hotels to survive in this competitive environment and, more importantly, to achieve sustainable competitive power depends on certain conditions. Various academics have examined these conditions differently (Dimitrić et al., 2019; Hossain et al., 2022; Michael et al., 2019).

Xia et al. (2020) examined the conditions that affect hotels related to such environmental factors as state, economy, social, and demographics. They focused the following factors: type of establishment, size of the establishment, service quality, location, and ownership. In addition, factors such as market share and sales, costs, R&D, financial situation and flexibility, and competitor analysis were used as determinants of competition to determine the competitive power of hotels.

Similar factors were examined by Aksu & Tarcan (2002) in their study of factors which affect the success of hotels. In this study, the elements were divided into external and internal factors. Accordingly, the studied external factors included: globalization, technological change, the information age, changes in potential markets, differentiation in the competition perception among businesses, integrations, and legal regulations. The examined internal factors included: organizational culture and climate, human resource practices, and intellectual capital.

Okumus et al. (2019) differentiated the factors that affect hotel competitiveness into qualitative and quantitative. Accordingly, the examined quantitative factors that affect competitive power included: human capital and the role of education, technology, tourism supply conditions, demand conditions, cost, investment, incentives, and financial regulations. The examined qualitative factors included: sustainable tourism and the environment, service quality and customer satisfaction, productivity and efficient use of resources, product diversification, image and innovation, tourism marketing strategy and market share, state and bureaucracy, and tourism competition strategy.

Another study on this subject was conducted by Michael et al. (2019), which examined the factors that affect the competitive power of tourism businesses in the domestic and international markets regarding crucial resources and capabilities. According to this study, factors such as costs, investment capacity, order delivery time, capacity flexibility, compliance with quality and standards, reliability, technology and R&D, qualified workforce, company image, market share, after-sales services, inventory management practices, and production time influence the competitive power of businesses in the domestic and international markets.

Based on the above literature, the factors determining competitive power can be divided into internal (cost, qualified employees, market share, research and development, capacity flexibility, and support industries) and external (globalization, government, economy, demographics, support industries, and technology) (Kotler et al., 2006).

In recent years, developments in communication and transportation technologies have played a determining role in the success of businesses. Especially in the case of hotel businesses, it can be observed that technology has been extensively utilized since the 1990s, with many subsequent technological advances believed to be an inevitable consequence of competition (Xiang et al., 2015). Advances in transportation systems enable products to be transported quickly and at lower costs. At the same time, developments in information technology have led to business sectors such as e-commerce, e-marketing, banking, and financing (Rosário & Raimundo, 2021). In particular, the Internet has become one of the most critical competitive tools of businesses in the modern world. In the tourism field, which is essentially about transportation, even if the products and services offered by firms are of high quality, the accessibility of tourist services will disappear if the transportation network is insufficient or of low quality (Jin et al., 2019).

Additionally, the inadequacy of complementary transportation systems will hurt the competitiveness of hotels. For example, suppose there is a lack of sufficient road infrastructure or eligible vehicles during the transfer of a traveler carried by air to a hotel via land transportation. In that case, the possibility of achieving consumer satisfaction may be eliminated (Li et al., 2020). Therefore, the opportunities obtained after technological advancements in transportation are vital for tourist businesses.

In addition to advancements in transportation technology, developments in communication tools effectively increase people's knowledge about their world, which increase the desire to travel. Consumers can access the websites of hotels directly through the Internet, giving them access to all kinds of information that will enable them to make more intelligent purchases. Consumers have the opportunity, through Internet usage, to obtain detailed information, reduce dependence on intermediaries, compare alternatives, and make individual reservations. In this way, they become more sensitive to products, services, and prices that provide added value and move away from brand loyalty (Demirciftci et al., 2010).

2.4. *Profit Management Activities for Hotels in A Competitive Environment*

In today's competitive environment, hotels operate within a tight and challenging competitive landscape (O'Neill & Mattila, 2010). In highly competitive hotels, yield management practices are essential for achieving business goals (Demirciftci et al., 2010). Hotels must establish a competitive edge to surpass their competitors and sustain their superiority. The factors related to maintaining a competitive advantage for hotels include service quality, physical resources, the attractiveness of their destinations, price, quality, and brand image (Xie & Kwok, 2017). Businesses that possess a competitive advantage outperform other companies. That said, it is not easy to sustain a competitive advantage in the rapidly developing tourism markets. Hotels are negatively impacted by changes in the market, the inability to increase their assets, the failure to enhance their capabilities, or weaknesses compared to competitors (Koseoglu et al., 2021). As a result, even if a hotel business has achieved a competitive advantage, they may fail to sustain it over time and eventually fall behind other competing hotel businesses. To maintain a competitive edge, it is necessary to closely monitor changes in the market, examine changes in consumer expectations and the strategies of rival hotels, and carry out essential activities accordingly (Pascual-Fernández et al., 2021).

3. Methodology

This research revealed how RM activities in five-star hotels in Istanbul are implemented in the competitive environment as well as which methods their revenue managers adopt. Five-star hotels were selected as the basis of this study because they operate in a highly competitive and dynamic market, where optimizing revenue streams is paramount for sustained success. As a data collection method, one-on-one interviews were conducted with RM department managers at five-star hotels in Istanbul. The hospitality sector in Istanbul provides a suitable context for this research due to its dense concentration of over 754 hotels in a relatively small geographical area (Istanbul Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2022) which cater to more than 16 million international tourists annually, as of the 2022 figures (Dorsi, 2023)

The face-to-face interviews of the RM managers were conducted between June 2018 and October 2018. Open-ended questions were used within the framework of semi-structured interviews to elicit participants' thoughts on the subject. During the interviews, managers were asked about how they defined competition and their views on competition, how they tracked rival hotels, the strategies they developed based on this information, the factors they considered in pricing decisions, the strategies they adopted, the influence of competitors' pricing decisions, and the tools and resources they utilized in the RM process. All interviews were recorded in electronic format and transcribed for analysis.

The number of participants was determined upon reaching the saturation point, which means that no new information could be obtained and the data was starting to become redundant (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Accordingly, after 16

interviews, it was observed that no further information was being gathered, and the interview part of the research was concluded.

The research data was analyzed using the content analysis method. Content analysis is a research method used by various disciplines, which therefore leads to multiple definitions of the concept (Creswell, 2009). However, content analysis remains a fundamental component of in-depth subject matter analysis research. The critical aspect to consider when applying content analysis is its systematic and unbiased implementation (Creswell, 2012). It is necessary to first systematically categorize the collected data, present it as it is, and then subject it to interpretation (Creswell, 2015). At the same time, the obtained results should be generalizable. Therefore, it does not seem appropriate for this research to only analyze the measurable and quantitative aspects of the unit subjected to content analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

The analysis was shaped around three main categories identified based on the research subject: competition, pricing, and RM practices. The participant's understanding, interpretation, and application of these three main concepts form the basis of this research. Subsequently, statements, categories, and codes related to these three areas were integrated before the final findings were reported.

4. Findings

In the scope of the research, interviews were conducted with 16 participants, consisting of 10 women and six men. The age range of the participants varied between 26 and 45. All participants are university graduates (14 have bachelor's degrees and two have master's degrees) and actively worked in hotels during the interview process. Furthermore, all the hotels where the interviews were conducted have an RM department. That said, RM is not always an independent department. It is often integrated within the marketing, sales, or front office departments or operates under their umbrella. Therefore, determining to whom the RM department reports in each of the hotels reveals the significance of RM to the hotel.

Table 1. Department to which it is affiliated

	Number	Percentage
General Manager	14	87.5 %
Sales and Marketing	2	12.5 %
Total	16	100 %

Table 1 shows that in almost 90% of the 5-star hotels in Istanbul, the RM departments operate directly under the general manager, which emphasizes this department's importance. The RM department, which requires expertise, is valued by the hotel management if it exists as a standalone department.

One of the crucial concepts identified in the scope of the research is competition. Competition is significant in how hotels define themselves and determines the diversity and quality of their services. The competition encompasses all activities undertaken by businesses or institutions operating in the same field to enhance their business qualities and strive to be in a better position than their counterparts. Although specific definitions of competition can be made within this framework, the understanding of competition by the interviewees who work in hotels also impacts the shaping of those strategies.

Each interviewer has a specific definition of the concept of competition. In these definitions, the following expressions are directly related to the concept of competition: "differentiation," "achieving superiority," "competition," "being better," and "struggle." The way the interviewees perceive the concept of competition based on the perspective of their organization provides clues about how they implement measures to tackle competition. For example, one interviewee defines competition as follows: "*Competition is the collective effort made to obtain a larger share from a pie that is shared in the same industry*" (R2). Although none of the specific words mentioned above are used in the definition, the content of this definition implies competing with other stakeholders and striving to excel by competing with others. Therefore, competition inherently involves being in a relationship with other businesses in the same field. Another participant's definition of competition highlights this relationship more clearly: "*Competition is the effort made by businesses to differentiate themselves to be better than their competitors. We can say that competition encompasses all actions taken to be preferred in similar business fields*" (R3). The competitive relationship between businesses prompts them to act within specific criteria to compete. These criteria are determined based on the qualities and capacities of

the hotels. Based on the interviews, the most important factors that stand out and determine the competition among hotels can be listed as follows: location, capacity, service standards, brand value, price, and product variety.

According to the participants, the top priority for competition is that their competitors are near their own location. For example, the consensus among all participants is that a hotel in Beşiktaş should have another hotel in the same area as its primary competitor.

Another factor that influences competition is considered to be service standards. Almost all participants believe that their competitors' service standards are similar. Brand value also emerges as one of the main factors influencing competition. We can best explain this with the words of participant R12: "*While my hotel is a 5-star luxury hotel with 300 rooms, considering an ordinary 5-star hotel as my competitor would not be accurate*."

Another common emphasis made by the participants is the aspect of price. It is believed that the prices of competitor hotels are both determining and highly influential in competition. Although the prices do not have to be identical, it was determined that they should be close to each other.

A further factor that makes hotels consider each other as competitors is the similarity in the variety of products and services they offer. From this perspective, many participants argued that the similarity in hotel features, types of products, and services affect competition.

Each participant has a different definition and perspective on competition. When examining the factors determining competition according to the participants, it can be observed that these factors are all internal factors determining competitive power. Based on this, we can state that all participants interpret competition directly through their self-defined "competitive set" (composite). One of the research findings is that all of the examined hotels identify five hotels as their competitors and monitor their own situation and market position compared to these five hotels. Another finding of the research is that some hotels are no longer satisfied with a single competitive set. It has been emphasized that RM is about pricing hotel rooms and maximizing profit and the competition of the hotel's other revenue-generating outlets (banquets, meeting rooms, restaurants, bars, spa centers, etc.) with other hotels. In this regard, some interviewees have identified a second and third competitive set consisting of different hotels for other outlets and a competitive set comprising five hotels related to the rooms department (R1, R7, R11).

It is understood that many hotels consider other hotels as their competitors based on segmentation. For example, even if a particular hotel does not have a specific hotel in its competitive set, it may consider another hotel as a competitor in its own competitive set, mainly if it attracts many business or leisure guests, specifically Arab guests for the interviewees in question.

Determining the competitive set directly affects the hotel's perception of its market position. In this regard, one of the most critical factors is identifying the correct competitive set. One of the interviewees said: "*For a luxury hotel with 100 rooms to include a 5-star hotel with 500 rooms in its competitive set and determine its prices and service quality accordingly would be a big mistake, and at the end of the day, it would not have evaluated itself correctly*" (K12). As can be understood from this comment, positioning hotels correctly in the market and determining their competitive set accordingly is one of the essential rules for effective RM.

Competition with hotels that have similar characteristics, such as similar locations, similar brand value, and service standards, is possible. Globalization, government, and legal regulations are not primarily seen as the most prominent competition factors. Only four interviewees emphasized the direct relationship between the economy and the competitive environment among external factors. It was said: "*For a competitive environment to exist, the economy must be good and demand for that city or service. Otherwise, if there is no demand in an environment, there is not much you can do to increase revenue*" (R5). In this case, we can state that most participants interpret competition based on normal conditions, indicating that they do not face any issues related to external factors other than the economy when describing the competitive environment.i

Based on the data obtained from the participating managers in the research, it was observed that all managers know they are in a competitive environment and apply strategies accordingly. As mentioned above, it was determined that the participating managers generally consider five major hotels with similar characteristics and sizes as direct competitors, and they mainly follow these selected hotels to continue their competitive strategies. It is an additional finding that it is not feasible for businesses to closely monitor all five-star hotels that could be their competitors in terms of time, cost, and workforce in a highly competitive environment. However, it was also found that the managers we interviewed indirectly monitor other five-star hotels, especially those in Istanbul.

It has been stated that competition has intensified in the modern world, along with the increasing prevalence of the Internet, and that the boundaries of competition have disappeared. According to many managers, a five-star hotel in Istanbul is expected to compete with a hotel in Izmir or Ankara, occasionally with a resort hotel in Antalya, or even

with a city or holiday hotel in a distant country (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5). In light of this data, it can be understood that all hotels can be seen as potential competitors.

It is argued that every business has factors that provide a competitive advantage from its perspective. From a common view, factors such as the location, capacity, and size of the establishment, as well as the service quality and brand image can be said to have an impact on competitive advantage. In addition, it is believed that the certificates and awards obtained by independent institutions and organizations contribute to businesses' competitive advantage in differentiating from their competitors. Furthermore, some managers have believed that being new or recently renovated can provide a competitive advantage (R1, R8, R9).

According to another interviewee, it is as important to maintain a competitive advantage as it is to establish it. One interviewee said that businesses need to be innovative in their competitive environment (R6). It is believed that only through this approach, they can achieve long-term success.

Obtaining a competitive advantage against competitors is also one of the main goals of businesses. Almost all managers have stated that they implement differentiation strategies that align with their unique characteristics to gain a competitive advantage, thereby fostering customer loyalty. It is a common consensus among many interviewees that conducting a thorough SWOT analysis, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and developing a competition strategy that best suits their structure directly influences competition.

In addition, advertising and public relations activities are believed to contribute positively to the image of businesses. It is thought that without giving them the necessary attention, it would not be possible to build a competitive advantage.

Table 2. Implementation of general competitive strategies in hotels.

Total Cost Leadership	2
Focus	2
Differentiation	12
Total	16

All of the hotels have adopted general competitive strategies. However, as seen in the table above, out of the 16 participating hotels, 12 consider differentiation the most important among these strategies. At the same time, only 2 have stated that they prioritize focus and overall cost leadership implementation (See Table 2). Regarding the focus strategy, hotels primarily focus on marketing through travel agencies and corporate guests. Additionally, as another focus strategy, hotels in Istanbul prefer to target and concentrate on a different market. In this context, the chosen markets are Asia, the Far East, and the Middle East.

This study shows that differentiation is considered the most effective competitive strategy among the general competitive strategies. It is substantial for five-star hotels, which hold an essential position in the industry, to focus on product and service differentiation without compromising quality, service, and brand value. For instance, the differentiation strategies might be listed as presenting the coffee served to guests in a visually appealing manner, providing cold towels in summer and hot towels in winter, or offering complimentary treats like apple tea or rosehip tea during check-in to make guests feel special. These differentiation initiatives aim to enhance the guests' sense of value and produce a unique experience.

A key finding from the research is that businesses need to prioritize their revenues and expenses to achieve their goals. It has been determined that minimizing costs and fees without compromising service quality produces a competitive advantage. Another conclusion drawn from the research is that businesses are not targeting only one market segment; they are expanding into different markets and are not restricted to a single location. R2 stated, "*After the decrease in European guests by half following the explosions in Istanbul, we are already making sales calls to the Asian and Far East markets to be a leader in terms of competition.*" This statement indicates that they are not limited to a single market but rather target all markets and are proactive in expanding into new markets. However, it is stated that hotels primarily adopt differentiation as a general competitive strategy, successfully maintaining their prices as a result. Managers commonly agree that reducing costs would harm the hotels' brand image, and rebuilding the image to its previous level would be much more challenging.

Many managers stated that while being in the center of a city like Istanbul is their greatest advantage, it also brings disadvantages, such as traffic, intense competition, and noise pollution. Additionally, the fact that the hotel managers interviewed are affiliated with international hotel chains is a significant advantage for businesses, as it ensures a

high brand image and recognition. It is also mentioned that some chains receive exceptionally high demand from the countries they are affiliated with, and customers from those countries directly choose the hotel based on the affiliation. For example, American visitors prefer an American hotel chain, while visitors from the Far East prefer a Far East hotel chain.

Table 3. Pricing View of Revenue Managers

R1	We determine the prices based on the position we want to be in within our competitive set or sets.
R2	First, we consider the prices of competing hotels.
R3	We take into account our current occupancy rates and demand.
R4	We are not a hotel that compromises on prices. Generally, we don't make significant price reductions in line with the hotel owner's and management's decisions.
R5	When determining prices in the business, we consider weekly, monthly, quarterly, six-month, and yearly forecasts. Of course, the hotel's forecast (estimated occupancy) is crucial.
R6	I determine our prices by looking at the costs of competing hotels based on the information we gather from the market and the level we want to achieve.
R7	We consider the hotel's occupancy and our competitors' prices.
R8	We determine prices primarily based on demand. We consider market conditions and our position within the competitive set. We also utilize past data.
R9	For us, it is vital to align pricing with budget constraints. Local and international events play a significant role in achieving this.
R10	Prices are influenced by special days, holidays, and peak demand periods.
R11	The expected occupancy and competitors' prices in 10 days are crucial for us.
R12	Competitors' prices certainly have an impact on our prices.
R13	We consider special days throughout the year.
R14	We definitely take into account school holidays, holidays, Ramadan, in short, periods that will affect demand.
R15	We generally monitor the city's occupancy. For example, if a conference or a major event is happening around us, we consider its impact on our occupancy.
R16	We determine prices by considering the hotel's history and the current situation of competitors.

According to the research findings, pricing is another concept that needs to be carefully considered. Pricing is determined by factors such as the location of the business, brand value, service quality, number of rooms, prices of competing hotels, and demand generated by upcoming special occasions. It was observed that all the hotels participating in the research were five-star hotels, and they followed a sharp perspective when it came to pricing. It was evident that the way they approached pricing was intentional in order to maintain brand value by being market leaders. Within this framework, it was observed that they preferred not to decrease prices during periods of low demand in the market. Instead, they followed a pricing policy that focused on preserving brand value and maintaining service quality without compromising it. Here is a summary of the responses provided by the managers regarding pricing, as shown in table 3 below:

According to the research findings, various programs are used in the implementation process of RM in hotels. Still, it can be said that IDEAS is primarily used as the fundamental program with STR. One of the respondents (R2) summarized that "*Hotels have started using various programs. But primarily, we use IDEAS as software. Similarly, other hotels use RM systems. STR is used for benchmarking. Travel Click is used, and it is one of the most commonly used RM tools in Travel Click. We use Rate360 and Rate shoppers to see the prices of other hotels for the next 90 days. We use Agency360 to see the GDS performance of hotels and where their customers come from. With Demand 360, we can see hotels' on-the-books and future segments and how they compare to the competition. In addition to these, for example, when you log into the extranet of Booking.com or Expedia today, there is a lot of RM-related data. It shows the prices and demands of competitors, and many analytical sections have been created to understand the market. So now there are many RM-related programs, and the job has become much easier. But the basic logic remains the same, and it presents your data to you from different perspectives. It shows you how many days in advance your customers made a reservation, how many of them canceled, how many days in advance they booked in your competitor's set, how*

many nights they stayed on average, what percentage canceled, and what percentage resulted in a no-show. It also shows how your pricing compares to your competitors' pricing and how your situation compares to theirs. Essentially, the logic of this business is to look at yourself, understand it, and thoroughly absorb and analyze all your historical data and your competitors in the market. It is not important what the names of these programs are; what matters is how the content is (R14)."

5. Discussion and Conclusion

One of the most prominent consequences of the globalized world for hotels is the need to develop and implement new strategies to survive in an unlimited market environment. This situation leads to increased hotel businesses, similarity in goods and services, and intensified competition. Hotel businesses prioritize demand and capacity management to gain a competitive advantage, which will allow them to increase market share and profit. In this context, RM is considered a systematic activity to achieve the optimum revenue goal for hotel businesses in a competitive environment.

This study focuses on an environment of intense competition and implementing RM activities in five-star hotels in Istanbul. The interaction between competition and RM has been examined through interviews with revenue managers. The study reveals that competition places hotel businesses in a fierce race. The essential determining factors for competition include location, capacity, service standards, brand image, product diversity, and price.. The hotel managers interviewed in this study prefer differentiation in their competitive strategies (See Figure 1).

| Location |
| Capacity |
| Service Standards |
| Brand Image |
| Product Diversity |
| Price |
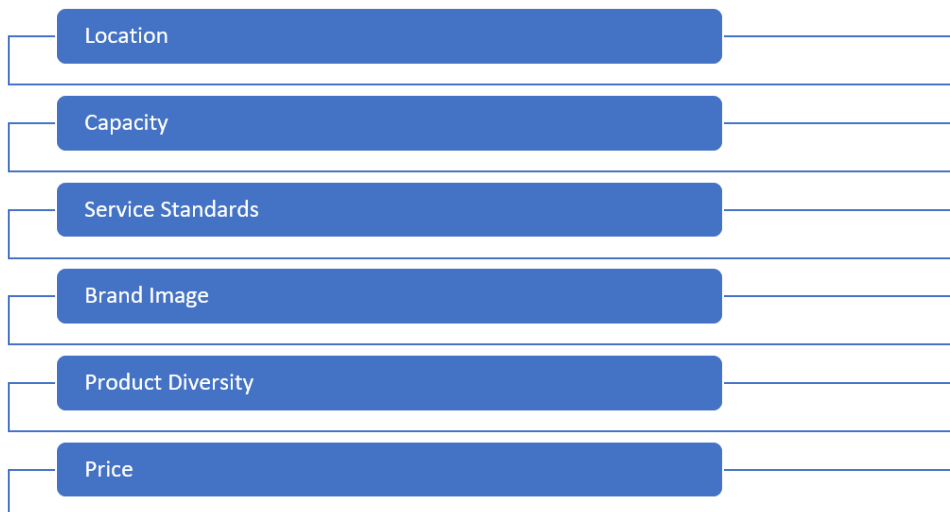
Figure 1. Factors for Determining Competition

Furthermore, it has been emphasized that hotel businesses should have a dynamic structure and be open to change and innovation. The importance of guest satisfaction is also highlighted, stating that besides being revenue-focused, attention should be given to guest satisfaction. The significance of interdepartmental communication and collaboration is emphasized for successfully implementing RM activities. It is mentioned that advertising and public relations activities are given importance, and hotels affiliated with international chains exhibit a more professional approach to RM.

This study predicts that RM will be associated with revenue items other than room revenue and will be seen as a more strategic department in the future. However, it is noted that there is currently insufficient teaching and research on RM in schools and universities. It emphasizes the need to increase education and awareness of RM. Collaborative efforts between hotels and educational institutions are essential to bolster education and raise awareness regarding revenue management techniques. This collaboration could involve the establishment of workshops, seminars, and academic programs aimed at equipping upcoming hospitality professionals with the essential competencies for proficient revenue management.

One drawback of the research is the chosen location for the study. Although Istanbul, being a well-known tourist destination, is ideal for RM, due to its high fixed costs, competitive environment, and unpredictable demand, it may possess distinct market attributes related to booking timing and the level of local demand. In future research, it would be valuable to examine other regions worldwide. Additionally, it is worth considering that the current study only involved

revenue managers working at international chain hotels in Turkey. Including respondents from independent hotels in future studies would provide a broader perspective. Moreover, expanding the sample size could enhance the ability to draw more generalized conclusions. Last but not least, qualitative software, such as Nvivo, might be used for frequency analysis.

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Research Article

Explanation of Behavioral Intentions to Mitigate Climate Change with Protection Motivation Theory

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ABSTRACT

Climate change, which refers to the radical climatic changes that occur as a result of factors such as the release of various gases into the atmosphere, fossil fuel consumption, and industrial activities, is serious global concern. Food and water shortages, increased flooding, extreme temperatures, new epidemics, and economic losses are all threats posed by climate change. To mitigate the adverse effects of this phenomenon, some measures can be taken by all individuals. The study aims to investigate people's attitudes toward climate change by determining their behavioral intentions with a model based on Protection Motivation Theory (PMT). The behavioral intentions of individuals to prevent climate change were analyzed with the Structural Equation Model (SEM). The source of data is a questionnaire conducted in Türkiye with 526 people over the age of 18. The results reveal that people's threat and coping appraisals are effective in the formation of behavioral intentions to combat climate change and thus contribute significantly to protection motivation. Higher response efficiency and self-efficacy lead to higher levels of protection motivation. Threat and coping appraisal account for 65.3% of the total change in behavioral intentions.

Keywords: Climate Change, Protection Motivation Theory, Behavioral Intention, Environment, Structural Equation Model

1. Introduction

Climate change is one of the most important factors that influence the future of humanity, with effects that are already being felt. Climate change, according to the World Health Organization, is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century (World Health Organization, 2015). Food and water shortages, increased flooding, extreme temperatures, new epidemics, and economic losses are all threats posed by climate change. It has the potential to cause mass migrations and lead to wars over resources (Cattaneo et al., 2019).

Although there have been previous periods that caused climate change, the current developments are progressing faster and are not due to natural causes (Masson-Delmotte et al., 2019). To mitigate the adverse effects of this danger, some measures can be taken by all individuals. With the Paris Agreement in 2015, members of the United Nations have agreed to keep the average global warming below 2 °C as much as possible, and ultimately reach the target of 1.5 °C. Maintaining the average global warming that causes climate change at 1.5 °C depends on reducing carbon emissions by 2030 and achieving the zero-carbon condition by 2050 (Hilaire et al., 2019; Rogelj et al., 2015).

Studies would contribute to the efforts to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change by drawing attention to the issue. Regardless of the complexity of problems, in many cases, public awareness is the key to solving a problem. By guiding individuals to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors, great progress can be made to solve the problem.

The ability to measure adaptations of environmentally friendly behaviors of society and understand the dynamics that affect these adaptations would be a great advantage. Many different theories have been used to explain this phenomenon. One of them is Protection Motivation Theory (PMT). This theory proposes a mechanism to explain how fear and coping appraisals affect attitudes to health-related behaviors (Rogers, 1975). The perceived threat will trigger people's threat and coping appraisal processes (Maddux & Rogers, 1983). According to the theory, threat appraisal, which consists of perceived threat, perceived severity, and perceived vulnerability, along with coping appraisal, which consists of the response efficacy and self-efficacy variables, develop the protection motivation against the threat. The protection motivation, in turn, leads to the formation of behavioral intention.

Over time, the theory began to be used in many other fields besides the field of health. Related topics range from computer use safety to disaster preparedness (Chenoweth et al., 2009; Tang & Feng, 2018). PMT has also been used in studies explaining environmental behaviors (Rainear & Christensen 2017) and climate change mitigation behaviors (Bamberg & Möser, 2007; Bockarjova & Steg, 2014; Chen, 2020; Cismaru et al., 2011; Rainear & Christensen, 2017). The meta-analyses suggested that the increases in perceived severity, perceived vulnerability, response efficacy, and self-efficacy of PMT explain both the behavioral attitude and actual behavior (Floyd et al., 2000).

2. Protection Motivation Theory

The first version of the theory claimed that people's healthy behaviors and restraining themselves from bad habits depend on their appraisals related to the danger, and their perceived ability to cope develops the protection motivation, and thus, protection motivation initiates the behavior to protect themselves from dangerous habits (Rogers, 1975). Fear, according to this theory, does not cause behavior directly, but rather serves as a motivator to protect (Hagger et al., 2020). If the danger is not seen as severe, if the probability of being affected by the danger is low, or if the individual assumes that nothing can be done against this danger, the motivation to protect will not be felt; there will then be no change in behavioral intention (Rogers, 1975).

Fear assessment-based techniques have been employed in various situations, such as the utilization of nuclear attack shelters, tuberculosis prevention, dental health behaviors, and smoking cessation, to name a few (Higbee, 1969; Leventhal, 1970).

The theory has specific processes that explain the behavioral intention and the variables that create these processes. These processes are divided into two, as: Threat appraisal and coping appraisal. The coping appraisal is a mental representation of the "recommended" behavior towards the threat (Hagger et al., 2020). The combination of these two processes produces the protection motivation. Protection motivation here leads to behavioral intention. Intention is the most likely determinant of behavior (Hagger et al., 2020).

Structure of Protection Motivation Theory: Within the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) scope, six different constructs, namely perceived severity, perceived vulnerability, rewards, response efficacy, self-efficacy, and response cost, are described below.

Perceived Severity: Perceived severity of danger is one of the factors that positively influence protection motivation. It refers to the severity that an individual assigns to the issue. If the subjective opinion is strong enough, it would lead to

the protection motivation. The opposite would contribute less to the protection motivation, reducing the individual's chance to develop the behavior.

Perceived Vulnerability: An individual may be aware of the consequences of the danger; however, they may assume that these consequences do not affect them severely. More perceived vulnerability leads to more protection motivation.

Perceived Rewards: In general, there are behaviors that are recommended to individuals. However, the number of individuals who do not practice these behaviors is quite high in many cases. Individuals may perceive that doing "recommended" behaviors are costly, time-consuming, or out of their reach. This leads to the "perceived reward" for not adopting these behaviors. In PMT, this variable negatively affects protection motivation.

Response Efficacy: According to the PMT, an individual's willingness to engage in recommended behaviors is also influenced by his or her belief that the recommended behaviors are useful in resolving the problem. This belief has an impact on protection motivation. The higher the response efficacy, the greater the individual's protection motivation.

Self-Efficacy: Acquiring recommended behaviors also depend on the individual's potential to adapt these behaviors. This variable relates to people's self-belief in their capacity to adapt these behaviors (Bandura, 1977). Higher self-efficacy leads to higher protection motivation.

Response Cost: An individual's performance of the suggested protective behavior also depends on the cost of the behavior. Lower response cost leads to more protection motivation.
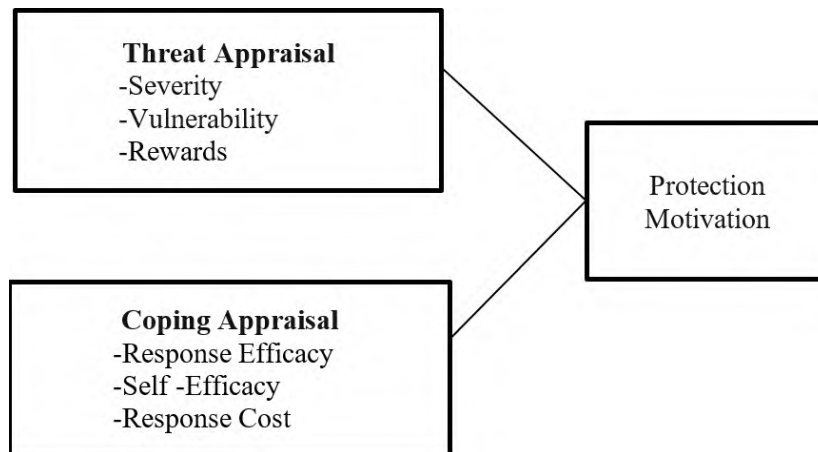
Figure 1. PMT Model

An individual generates protection motivation based on the above-mentioned variables. Protection motivation guides a person's intention to adopt the recommended behavior. Higher protection motivation leads to a higher likelihood of engaging in recommended behaviors. Protection motivation consists of a combination of threat appraisal and coping appraisal. It can direct a person toward healthy behavior, protection from disease, or protect an individual from a many potential threats (Hagger et al., 2020). Many PMT applications are based only on the main effects of perceived severity, perceived vulnerability, response efficacy, and self-efficacy (Chen, 2020; Kim et al., 2013; Plotnikoff & Higginbotham, 1995, 2002; Plotnikoff & Trinh, 2010).

In this study, behavioral intentions to prevent climate change have been explained based on the theory of protection motivation. The perceived severity of climate change and individuals' perceived vulnerability to this threat produce the threat appraisal process in individuals. Individuals' evaluations of the recommended behaviors' capacity to mitigate this threat and their ability to adapt to these behaviors develop response efficacy and self-efficacy, respectively. The coping appraisal process of an individual consists of response efficacy and self-efficacy. Coping and threat appraisal together lead to protection motivation, which in turn leads to behavioral intention. This mechanism was analyzed with a structural equation model. The study is the first of its kind in Türkiye to establish a structural equation model that considers environmental behavior within the framework of PMT. The conceptual structural equation model is shown in Figure 2.

The following two hypotheses were tested using the conceptual model.

H1: Threat appraisal positively affects behavioral intentions.

H2: Coping appraisal positively affects behavioral intentions.
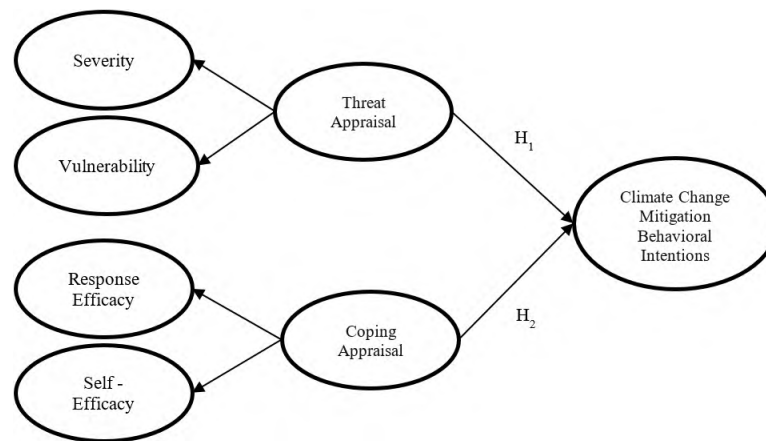
Figure 2. Conceptual Model

3. Literature Review

Many theories have been utilized to measure environmental behavior. The literature on PMT-based studies related to environmental behavior can be explored through various scopes, including different approaches to using PMT, integrating PMT with other behavior theories, and examining environmental behavior from a generalized or specific perspective. These approaches aim to address environmental sensitivity and can consider society as a whole or focus on different social groups. In this section, the review is organized based on the approach methods employed in these studies.

Some studies measured environmental behaviors with modified PMT. The study of Chen (2020) can be given as an example for such studies. In the study, two structural equation models based on PMT were established. The extended PMT model used the "Moral Obligation" variable. Adaptation of environmental behaviors was analyzed with these models (Chen, 2020).

There are PMT-based studies that approach environmental behaviors in general terms. Shafiei & Maleksaeidi (2020) developed a model based on PMT to measure the environmental behavior of the population. They concluded that the protection motivation variable explained a significant part of the variance of the environmental attitude and the environmental behavior. They also emphasize that the "self-efficacy" variable is very significant for the protection motivation. In a study, in which the environmental behaviors of people living in the cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh were explained with a model based on PMT, it was concluded that the variables of self-efficacy and behavioral attitude were the variables that were significant for environmental behavior (Chi, 2021). Rainear & Christensen (2017) developed a model based on PMT and that the variables of perceived vulnerability, perceived severity, response efficacy, and self-efficacy positively affect the protection motivation. In another study, waste management behaviors in Thailand were analyzed with a model. It was concluded that the protection motivation is good at explaining low-cost and low-effort waste management behaviors, which could be explained with protection motivation variable (Janmaimool, 2017).

There are PMT-based studies that measure the environmental behaviors of individuals by comparing PMT with different behavioral theories that can measure environmental behaviors. PMT and Reasoned Action Theory were used to predict the environmental behavior of American and Korean students. As a result, the variables of self-efficacy, response-efficacy, and perceived severity have been shown as important in the prediction of environmental behavior (Kim et al., 2013).

Some PMT-based studies do not approach environmental behaviors in a generalized way, and instead focus on specific behaviors as representative of general environmental attitudes. Hunter & Röös (2016) conducted a study in Sweden on people's meat consumption in the scope of climate change mitigation behaviors. It was emphasized that people's meat consumption could be reduced by interventions that aimed to affect attitudes measured by the self-efficacy variable. In a study conducted in the Netherlands, a model based on PMT was used to analyze people's electric car demands in the scope of environmental behavior. Although the cost of using an electric car plays a decisive role, it has been concluded that the perceived severity and energy security risks play an important role in the demand of individuals for electric cars (Bockarjova & Steg, 2014).

Some studies have aimed to investigate environmental behaviors within a socio-economic context. The study conducted by Zhao et al. (2016) serves as an example, where they used a model based on the PMT to understand

the environmental purchasing behavior of consumers classified as "at the bottom of the pyramid" economically. As a result, it was concluded that individuals who have a high level of protection motivation, are willing to engage in low-cost environmental behaviors, and their willingness to engage in expensive environmental behaviors is related to the perceived threat. Adaptation of environmental behaviors can vary among social groups within a society. Some studies aim to investigate environmental behaviors using a social group-based approach. For example, Luu et al. (2019) and Bahahnan et al. (2019) conducted studies focused on measuring the adaptation of environmental behaviors among farmers. It was concluded that farmers would have a higher behavioral intention when they asses a high threat to their health, economy, production, social relationships, and psychology (Luu et al., 2019). In a study conducted in Gambia, it was emphasized that PMT variables were correlated with protection motivation, concluding that the response cost and perceived vulnerability variables were significant to understand the climate change mitigation behaviors of farmers in the region (Bagagnan et al., 2019).

The relationship between environmental pollution and the economy is a controversial issue. The tourism sector is particularly affected by environmental pollution. As a result, several studies have aimed to investigate the relationship between tourism and environmental behavior, a topic which has been receiving increased attention. In a study related to the relationship between tourist behaviors and environmental pollution, it was concluded that the perceived severity variable for the threat plays the largest role in the environmental behavior of tourists and their protection motivation (Ruan et al., 2020). In another study, the effects of climate change on the tourism sector were analyzed, with it being concluded that attitudes toward energy efficiency and carbon emissions could be explained by a model based on PMT (Horng et al., 2014).

4. Method

4.1. *Participants*

Participants consist of adults over the age of 18 living in Türkiye. The data used in the study were collected through online surveys conducted over the internet-based self-report survey, using the convenience sampling method, between April and May 2022. The study was approved by the Bursa Uludağ University Ethics Committee (4/25/2022). As is known, there is a direct correlation between the sample size and the reliability of the estimation. Considering the 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error for a population of one million or more, the sample size should be at least 384 (Bayram, 2018). This study was carried out with a total of 526 participants.

4.2. *Measures*

In the study, a questionnaire form containing questions related to socio-demographic information and scales related to PMT variables was used to collect the data. In the survey, four different constructs, namely perceived severity, perceived vulnerability, response efficacy, and self-efficacy, were discussed within the scope of the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT). These constructs were measured with the help of relevant scales. In addition to these four theoretical constructs, the questionnaire form included a scale of protection motivation and behavioral intentions to mitigate climate change. All of the scale items used in the study have a 5-point Likert-type rating, as "1-strongly disagree" and "5-strongly agree".

Climate Change Mitigation Behavioral Intentions: This variable aimed to measure individuals' behavioral intentions to mitigate the negative consequences of climate change. The nine-item scale was adapted from previous studies Brody et al. (2012), Kim et al. (2013), and Chen (2020). Some of the items used in the scale are as follows: "In order to reduce the negative consequences of climate change, I would like to replace old electrical appliances with energy-efficient ones" and "I would like to plant saplings in order to reduce the negative consequences of climate change." High scores on the scale indicate positive behavioral intentions to mitigate climate change.

Perceived Severity: In order to measure the perceived severity, a seven-item scale was used which has been adapted from previous studies (Champion, 1999; Rainear & Christensen, 2017, Shafiei & Maleksaeidi, 2020). The scale aimed to measure the individuals' perceived severity of environmental damage caused by climate change. Some of the items used in the scale are as follows: "Climate change is a serious problem for humanity," "Climate change is a serious problem for nature," and "The devastating impact of climate change for future generations is high." High scores on the scale indicate high perceived severity.

Perceived Vulnerability: This scale was used to measure perceived vulnerability. With the scale, the perceived vulnerability of individuals to the negative effects of climate change on the environment was measured with a total of eight items. The scale was adapted from previous studies (Rainear & Christensen, 2017, Shafiei & Maleksaeidi, 2020). Some of the items related to the scale used are as follows: "Climate change may affect me negatively," "I will

be exposed to the negative effects of climate change at some point in my life," and "I am vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change." High scores on the scale indicate a high perception of vulnerability.

Response Efficacy: This scale consists of five items in total. The scale was adapted from previous studies (Kim et al., 2013; Shafiei & Maleksaeidi, 2020, Rainear & Christensen, 2017). Some of the items used in the scale are as follows: "I can be protected from the devastating effects of climate change with the recommended measures," "Having environmental ethical values contributes to preventing environmental problems," and "Contributing to environmental activities increases the interest and contribution of other people." High scores on the scale indicate high response efficiency.

Self-Efficacy: The self-efficacy scale consists of a total of five items and was adapted from previous studies (Rainear & Christensen, 2017, Shafiei & Maleksaeidi, 2020). This scale was used to measure individuals' perceptions of their ability to successfully adapt recommended behaviors. Some of the items used in the scale are as follows: "There are simple things I can do to reduce the negative consequences of climate change" and "I can change my daily routines to combat climate change." High scores on the scale indicate high self-efficacy.

4.3. *Analysis*

In addition to descriptive statistics, Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Reliability Analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were used to analyze the data. EFA and CFA were performed first, as all the scales were adapted by us. Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) coefficients were calculated to examine the reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were calculated for the convergent validity of the scales. The evaluation of the results considered criteria such as CR and CA values above 0.70, AVE values above 0.50, and CR values greater than AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; J. Hair et al., 2010).

The behavioral intentions of individuals to mitigate climate change were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) within the context of PMT. SEM analysis was used to analyze latent variables consisting of more than one item. SEM analysis is preferred because it considers the measurement errors for the variables. The goodness of fit of the CFA and SEM models in the study was evaluated using the following criteria: χ^2/df < 5, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) > .90, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) > .90, Bollen's Incremental Fit Index (IFI) > .90, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) > .90, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) < .08, and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) < .10 (Kline, 2005; Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006).

IBM SPSS Statistics, AMOS version 26, and R Studio (RStudio Team, 2016) were used for analysis.

5. Findings

The study consisted of 526 people volunteers. The data were collected between April and May 2022 via an internet-based questionnaire in Turkish using the convenience sampling method. Participants were between the ages of 18-73 (Mean= 36.44 years, SD= 12.05).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Demographic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	296	56
Male	230	44
Education level		
High school and below	83	16
University	320	61
Master's and doctorate	123	23
Marital Status		
Single	246	47
Married	280	53
Place of residence		
Urban	369	70
Rural	157	30
Economic status		
Low	104	20
Middle	396	75
High	26	5
Membership in environmental protection organization		
Yes	47	9
No	479	91
Talking about environmental issues in your family		
Yes	456	87
No	70	13

Among the participants, 56% were women, and 84% held a bachelor's degree or higher. Additionally, 47% of the participants were single, 70% resided in urban areas, and 75% belonged to the middle class. Although 91% of the participants were not members of an environmental organization, 87% stated that they discussed environmental problems with their family members. It is noteworthy to mention that the sample predominantly consisted of individuals with higher education.

The most severe environmental problems for participants are shown in Table 2. Unplanned urbanization was the most important environmental problem for participants. Air pollution is also one of the significant environmental problems.

Table 2. Environmental problems

Environmental Problems	N
Air Pollution	314
Water Pollution	247
Noise Pollution	115
Decline of Plant and Animal Species	181
Erosion	32
Unplanned Urbanization	387
Forest Fires	196
Environmental Pollution	33
Other	28

Validity and reliability tests were conducted. In order to accomplish this goal, EFA and CFA were applied. The EFA, CFA, goodness of fit indices, and reliability results are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis results of all scales

Scales	Items	EFA	CFA		Scales	Items	EFA	CFA
Vulnerability	Vul1	.851	.820		Severity	Sev1	.942	.904
	Vul2	.904	.874			Sev2	.943	.901
	Vul3	.927	.908			Sev3	.951	.916
	Vul4	.764	.727			Sev4	.809	.777
	Vul5	.920	.920			Sev5	.941	.946
	Vul6	.896	.894			Sev6	.949	.955
	Vul7	.830	.784			Sev7	.916	.907
	Vul8	.916	.893		Response Efficacy	Ref1	.756	.664
Behavioral Intentions	BInt1	.824	.763			Ref2	.854	.805
	BInt2	.892	.878			Ref3	.875	.856
	BInt3	.883	.900			Ref4	.894	.887
	BInt4	.934	.936			Ref5	.851	.803
	BInt5	.926	.941		Self - Efficacy	Sef1	.890	.882
	BInt6	.902	.922			Sef2	.912	.895
	BInt7	.716	.627			Sef3	.894	.882
	BInt8	.829	.761			Sef4	.790	.658
	BInt9	.750	.655			Sef5	.906	.855

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Vulnerability scale: KMO=.936; Chi-Square: 4466.285; df:28; p<.000
Severity scale: KMO=.934; Chi-Square: 5283.555; df:21; p<.000
Response Efficacy scale: KMO=.880; Chi-Square: 1614.430; df:10; p<.000
Self-Efficacy scale: KMO=.881; Chi-Square: 2089.406; df:10; p<.000
Behavioral Intentions scale: KMO=.934; Chi-Square: 4837.535; df:36; p<.000

The perceived vulnerability scale ranged from 0.58 to 0.86, with a variance of 77%. The perceived severity scale ranged from 0.66 to 0.90, with a variance value of 85.14%. The response efficacy scale ranged from 0.57 to 0.79, with a variance value of 71.82%. The self-efficacy scale ranged from 0.62 to 0.83, with a variance value of 77.32%. The behavioral intentions scale ranged from 0.51 to 0.87, with a variance of 72.89%. The reported variance values are presented for one dimension. The goodness-of-fit indices for the scales are shown in Table 4. All scales were shown to have a perfect fit.

Table 4. The goodness of fit indices for scales for confirmatory factor analysis

Scales	X²/df	df	p	GFI	TLI	IFI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Severity	3.912	11	.00	.98	.99	.99	.99	.07	.00
Vulnerability	3.843	17	.00	.97	.98	.99	.99	.07	.01
Response Efficacy	3.753	5	00	.99	.98	.99	.99	.07	.01
Self-Efficacy	2.825	3	.04	.99	.99	.99	.99	.05	.00
Behavioral Intentions	4.183	22	.00	.96	.98	.99	.99	.07	.02
Acceptable level	≤ 5			≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	≤0.08	≤0.10

Source: (Bayram, 2016; Byrne, 2010; J. F. Hair et al., 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999)

Table 5. Values of reliability, convergent and discriminant validity

	Scales	Items	Mean	SD	CA	CR	AVE
Protection Motivation	Severity	7	30.48	6.16	.97	.97	.81
	Vulnerability	8	33.45	6.80	.96	.96	.73
	Response Efficacy	5	19.31	3.99	.90	.90	.65
	Self-Efficacy	5	19.59	4.25	.93	.92	.70
	Behavioral Intentions	9	37.03	7.57	.95	.95	.69

The results in Table 5 above indicate that all scales have good internal consistency. In addition, all the calculated AVE values were found to be above 0.50 and the CR>AVE condition was met. This result indicates that the scales provide convergent validity.

Table 6. Factor Loadings for SEM

Latent	Indicator	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval		Standardized Estimate
						Lower	Upper	
S	Sev1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000	0.935
	Sev2	0.960	0.024	40.273	< .001	0.913	1.007	0.925
	Sev3	0.979	0.023	42.716	< .001	0.934	1.024	0.940
	Sev4	0.949	0.038	24.707	< .001	0.874	1.024	0.769
	Sev5	1.011	0.024	41.556	< .001	0.963	1.058	0.933
	Sev6	1.036	0.024	43.742	< .001	0.990	1.082	0.945
	Sev7	0.994	0.027	36.813	< .001	0.941	1.047	0.901
V	Vul1	1.000	0.000		< .001	1.000	1.000	0.839
	Vul2	0.991	0.037	26.716		0.918	1.064	0.886
	Vul3	1.030	0.037	28.043	< .001	0.958	1.102	0.909
	Vul4	0.881	0.045	19.375	< .001	0.792	0.970	0.722
	Vul5	1.039	0.037	28.359	< .001	0.967	1.111	0.914
	Vul6	1.039	0.039	26.956	< .001	0.964	1.115	0.889
	Vul7	0.946	0.044	21.551	< .001	0.860	1.032	0.777
	Vul8	1.022	0.038	27.072	< .001	0.948	1.096	0.891
RE	Ref1	1.000	0.000		< .001	1.000	1.000	0.665
	Ref2	1.170	0.071	16.559		1.032	1.309	0.820
	Ref3	1.210	0.071	17.026	< .001	1.071	1.350	0.849
	Ref4	1.280	0.073	17.474	< .001	1.136	1.423	0.877
	Ref5	1.238	0.076	16.379	< .001	1.090	1.386	0.809
SE	Sef1	1.000	0.000		< .001	1.000	1.000	0.872
	Sef2	0.963	0.033	29.142		0.899	1.028	0.896
	Sef3	0.990	0.036	27.618	< .001	0.919	1.060	0.873
	Sef4	0.800	0.041	19.668	< .001	0.721	0.880	0.716
	Sef5	0.944	0.034	27.597	< .001	0.877	1.011	0.872
TA	S	1.000	0.000		< .001	1.000	1.000	0.907
	V	0.942	0.047	19.954		0.849	1.034	0.896
CA	RE	1.000	0.000		< .001	1.000	1.000	0.883
	SE	1.381	0.097	14.246		1.191	1.571	0.900
BI	BInt1	1.000	0.000		< .001	1.000	1.000	0.765
	BInt2	1.057	0.038	27.735		0.982	1.132	0.879
	BInt3	1.114	0.048	23.168	< .001	1.020	1.209	0.900
	BInt4	1.137	0.047	24.450	< .001	1.046	1.229	0.935
	BInt5	1.137	0.046	24.731	< .001	1.047	1.227	0.943
	BInt6	1.146	0.048	23.822	< .001	1.052	1.240	0.919
	BInt7	0.927	0.061	15.298	< .001	0.808	1.046	0.635
	BInt8	1.061	0.056	19.004	< .001	0.951	1.170	0.766
	BInt9	0.946	0.059	16.117	< .001	0.831	1.061	0.665

Table 7. Regression coefficients for SEM

Predictor	Outcome	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	P	95% Confidence Interval Lower	Upper	Standardized Estimate
TA	BI	0.416	0.071	5.872	< .001	0.277	0.554	0.431
CA	BI	0.557	0.103	5.414	< .001	0.356	0.759	0.415

Table 8. The goodness of fit indices for SEM

Index	Value
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.947
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.950
Bollen's Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.954
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.954
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.059
RMSEA 90% CI lower bound	0.056
RMSEA 90% CI upper bound	0.063
RMSEA p-value	0.000
Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)	0.033

The factor loads of the whole model are provided in Table 6 above. The estimates for the regression coefficients as a result of the estimated structural equation model are also presented in Table 7. The Chi-square test statistic of the model was obtained as 1454.649 (df: 513; p<.001 and x^2/df=2.835). In terms of structural equation model, a value of R^2=0.653 for climate change mitigation behavioral intentions was obtained. On the other hand, 65.3% of the total change in behavioral intentions was explained by threat appraisal and coping appraisal. Behavioral intentions were significantly, directly, and positively associated with threat appraisal and coping appraisal (β=0.416; p<0.001 and β=0.557; p<0.001, respectively). The goodness of fit indices obtained for the structural equation model are summarized in Table 8. According to the results in this table, the model is a good fit.

6. Discussion

The PMT was used in this study to explain people's behavioral intentions to mitigate climate change. The theory has been shown to greatly explain behavioral intentions to mitigate climate change. The results were found to be statistically significant, with both of our hypotheses (H1 and H2) being confirmed. The results indicate that individuals' coping appraisal was most effective in explaining behavioral intentions to mitigate climate change. One single theory may not be sufficient to fully explain people's behaviors. However, the PMT model has been proven an effective tool for understanding people's environmental behaviors.

The SEM analysis results indicate that both the threat appraisal and coping appraisal contribute to the protection motivation, which initiates behavioral intentions. The potential of the theoretical framework of PMT as a tool to be used in environmental research has been demonstrated in studies approaching the subject from different perspectives. The statistical findings in this study reveal that PMT has the potential to be used as a theoretical foundation in environmental research. This finding is similar to findings found in the literature (Bockarjova & Steg, 2014; Chen, 2020; Regasa & Akirso, 2019; Zhao et al., 2016). The results of our study are also consistent with the results of various environmental studies (Bamberg et al., 2020; Chen, 2020; Rainear & Christensen, 2017). In the meta-analysis of Floyd et al. (2000), the explanatory power of the coping appraisal was found to be higher than the threat appraisal. This is consistent with this study. In several other studies on environmental behaviors, it has been found that the self-efficacy variable has high explanatory power (Almarshad, 2017; Chi, 2021; Hunter & Röös, 2016; Shafiei & Maleksaeidi, 2020; Thøgersen & Grønhøj, 2010). The findings of this study do not conflict with the findings of the related studies. If individuals have higher response efficacy and self-efficacy to perform recommended behaviors, a higher level of coping appraisal would enhance their protection motivation.

7. Conclusion

The PMT model provides a useful theoretical framework for explaining people's behavioral intentions to mitigate climate change. Recommended behaviors initiated by the protection motivation would occur with the threat appraisal and the coping appraisal. According to the research findings, individuals' coping appraisal was most effective in explaining behavioral intentions to mitigate climate change. Therefore, government and environmental organizations should provide people with relevant information to initiate threat assessments and explain the seriousness of the consequences of climate change and their vulnerability to this threat. They should also provide education on coping with climate change and convince individuals of the effectiveness of recommended behaviors. In this way, individuals' performance in coping with climate change will improve. PMT-based tools can be used to measure the effectiveness of processes aimed at promoting environmental behaviors. In conclusion, this paper has contributed to the existing literature. Therefore, it can be used to guide future research on understanding social factors that affect climate change mitigation efforts. It can also help academics to expand their research by including more potential elements. In future studies, measuring the effectiveness of PMT in explaining environmental behaviors in comparison with other theories will provide valuable contributions to the existing literature.

Availability of data and materials

The datasets generated and/or analyzed during the current study are not publicly available but are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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Reasons Behind the Migration of Highly Qualified Employees from Turkiye: The Case of Software Developers and Engineers

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ABSTRACT

The emigration of highly skilled software developers and engineers from Turkey has gained momentum, leading to a shortage of technical staff in technology companies, particularly startups. In order to understand their motivations for migrating, interviews were conducted with software developers and engineers. The findings reveal that highly skilled individuals perceive their labor as undervalued in Turkey, both economically and in terms of social status. The international nature of the software industry makes it relatively easy for them to migrate to other countries or work for foreign companies remotely. They express that companies in their destination countries respect their work, private lives, and individuality. To address this issue, Turkish companies can consider measures such as assisting key employees in purchasing houses and cars, as well as supporting their families' education and healthcare expenses, to ensure long-term loyalty. Furthermore, it is suggested that salaries for software developers should be adjusted to be more comparable to those abroad in terms of purchasing power. Failure to provide sufficient incentives may result in software exports falling short of expectations amidst this wave of migration.

Keywords: Brain Drain, Highly Skilled, Software Developers, Income, Respect

Introduction

The wealth of nations is determined by the importance they assign to education rather than the resources they possess. A trained workforce, particularly in strategic sectors, has emerged as the driving force behind economic growth. In the current era, information processing and software technology are particularly crucial areas of focus. However, employees in fields like engineering, particularly software, who feel neglected, often seek migration as a solution. Qualified individuals in Turkey, whose economic prospects, social lives, and aspirations have reached a dead end, embark on migration journeys, leaving behind their settled lives, close relatives, and friends (Akın, 2022: 1022). Making the decision to migrate and subsequently following through with it is an arduous task that can significantly alter the lives of individuals and those around them. Through interviews, the study ascertained the reasons and expectations of software developers and engineers who have migrated have. Based on the findings, we put forward suggestions for public and corporate policies aimed at strengthening their loyalty. It is imperative to address the concerns of these professionals and create an environment that acknowledges their worth, supports their economic well-being, and fosters a sense of belonging. By implementing targeted policies, both at the organizational and national levels, efforts can be made to retain highly skilled individuals, mitigate the brain drain, and maximize the potential contributions of software developers and engineers to the country's development.

The global software market is projected to reach a size of USD 593.40 billion in 2022, with the largest segment being enterprise software valued at USD 237.10 billion. It is anticipated that the revenue will continue to grow at a rate of 6.50% annually, reaching a market volume of USD 812.90 billion by 2027 (Statista, 2022). Moreover, the impact of the sector on the digital market is substantial, estimated at 2 trillion dollars. However, not all countries can equally benefit from this transformative industry, as highlighted in a report by Deloitte and Tüsiad in 2021. Developed countries, on average, witness a 2% contribution of the software industry to their exports, while in developing countries like Turkey, this figure stands at 0.5%. To illustrate, Turkey's software exports amount to 800 million dollars, whereas Germany's exports reach an impressive 36 billion dollars. Among developing nations, Ukraine achieved software exports of 5 billion dollars in 2019, while Poland exported 15.5 billion dollars with the support of 300 thousand software developers (Deloitte & Tüsiad, 2021).

In the same report by Deloitte and Tusiad (2021), various projections were made for Turkey's software industry. The report suggests that the industry has the potential to grow three to four times by 2025. It is anticipated that this growth could lead to 10 billion dollars in software exports, the creation of 100,000 new jobs, and the emergence of 10 unicorns (startups valued at over $1 billion).

The report was compiled with the involvement of a large team and took into account insights from 70 industry experts, as well as statistical information. The projected growth potential is based on four key assumptions regarding Turkey's progress in the software industry:

- a) Competitive Cost of Living: Turkey has a lower cost of living compared to both developed and developing countries, with the cost of living estimated at USD 772. This competitive advantage enhances the attractiveness of Turkey as a location for software development.
- b) Geographical and Cultural Proximity: Turkey's strategic location provides it with close proximity to 64 countries and approximately 1 billion people. This geographical advantage, coupled with cultural similarities, creates potential business opportunities and facilitates collaboration with neighboring markets.
- c) Medium-Developed Information Technology Market: The report indicates that there is an increasing focus on investment in software companies within the broader technology sector in Turkey. This emphasis on software development presents growth opportunities for the industry.
- d) Medium-Developed Startup Ecosystem: Turkey boasts an active and expanding entrepreneurial ecosystem, supported by technopolises, incubators, and venture programs. This ecosystem fosters innovation, collaboration, and the emergence of startups, creating a favorable environment for the growth of the software industry.

This report heavily relies on statistical data and expert opinions, lacking a human-centered research methodology. It fails to address the perspective of the software developers, who are central to the field. It is important to recognize that the software industry thrives on human capital rather than physical capital. According to the Software Industrialists Association (YASAD), approximately 30,000 software developers emigrated from Turkey in 2021 (Meridyen Haber, 2022). Given the significant outflow of software developers, it raises questions about how the country can approach the projected 10 billion dollars in software exports. Another example that highlights the importance of considering user experience is the report on Erzincan Ergan Mountain, commissioned by Ernst & Young, a reputable consulting firm (Northeast Development Agency, 2012). Akın and Demir (2021) argue that the report failed to accurately assess the potential of Erzincan Ergan Mountain as a significant ski resort from the perspective of customers. Despite

highlighting the geographical characteristics, the report overlooked the past experiences and needs of customers in mountain tourism and skiing. Both the infrastructure and the facilities at the Ergan mountain center fell short of meeting customer expectations. Reports prepared by large business management companies often prioritize numerical data while neglecting valuable insights from stakeholders on the ground. It is essential to consider the perspectives of those directly involved to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation, rather than relying solely on statistical analysis or expert opinions. Taking a more holistic approach that incorporates the experiences and feedback of stakeholders can provide a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the subject matter.

The impact of migration from source countries to developed nations has been extensively debated (Davenport, 2004, 618). Economic expectations have been recognized as a significant driver of migration (UN, 2017). However, there has been limited discussion in the literature regarding the migration of qualified professionals, particularly software developers. Furthermore, the unique ability of software developers to work for foreign companies without leaving their home country has not been adequately emphasized. Migration has played a crucial role in Turkey's recent history since the 1960s, primarily driven by domestic migration from rural areas to urban centers in response to industrialization. Internationally, migration began with Germany's demand for workers and subsequently expanded to Western Europe and North America. Bilateral agreements between states facilitated foreign migration movements, starting with agreements signed with Germany in 1961, followed by the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, France, Sweden, and Australia (Deniz, 2014: 186). However, these migration movements were primarily focused on unskilled or less qualified workers and were governed by legal frameworks. With advancements in the communication sector, the process of connecting individuals and companies has become faster and more efficient. Software developers and engineers have greatly benefited from this development due to their technological expertise. However, the migration of these skilled professionals poses a threat to the progress of crucial sectors such as software, information technologies, and defense industries. To ensure the continued development of these sectors, it is essential for both the country and companies in Turkey to adopt economic policies that promote voluntary retention of these highly skilled employees.

By joining the European Customs Union, Turkey made progress from lower and lower-middle technology to upper-middle technology, but it failed to advance to high technology. In fact, the share of high-technology exports as a proportion of total exports has slightly decreased (Sak, 2007: 34). The only way to reverse this trend is by creating opportunities for software developers and engineers, who are at the forefront of technological innovation, to engage in high value-added activities.

This paper contributes to the existing policies on brain drain in several significant ways. Firstly, it focuses specifically on the migration of highly skilled individuals, with a particular emphasis on software developers and engineers who play a crucial role in the economy. Previous studies have generally examined skilled migration in a broader sense, but this research narrows its scope to highlight the importance of these professionals as productivity drivers, particularly within startup companies. Secondly, the paper utilizes qualitative research methods, employing high-quality interviews conducted by professional journalists on social media platforms. This approach provides a valuable and rich source of data for analysis. Thirdly, the study sheds light on the differences in opportunities between Turkey as a developing country and developed Western countries from an organizational studies perspective. It proposes macro-level policies that the public sector can implement, as well as micro-level policies that businesses can adopt to address the challenges related to skilled migration. Lastly, to ensure the accuracy of the interviews conducted on social media, the draft article was shared with industry experts who were asked to provide their interpretations based on their extensive experience. This validation process not only confirmed the accuracy of the findings but also generated additional insights. In summary, this research highlights the need to create favorable conditions for software developers and engineers to participate in high value-added activities. It provides valuable insights into the migration of highly skilled individuals and proposes policy recommendations at both the macro and micro levels. By addressing the challenges of brain drain and retaining these skilled professionals, Turkey can make significant strides in its technological advancement and economic growth.

Literature

Migration can be driven by various factors, including economic, family, political, and professional reasons. Economic motivations, such as the desire to improve one's well-being through higher earnings, are a primary driver of migration (Aksoy, 2012:294). Education, occupation, demographic characteristics, and income opportunities all play a role in shaping migration decisions, as they can increase the potential benefits of migration (Mazzolari, 2009; Pivnenko & DeVoretz, 2004). Individuals who are better educated or continue their education in the destination country often have access to higher income opportunities. Political, social, and cultural inequalities in the region where individuals reside,

stemming from differences in ideas and ethnicity, can also contribute to migration (Aksoy, 2012:294). People may migrate to new regions seeking economic gains, educational opportunities, personal security, religious freedom, political freedom, and social freedom (Alkın, 2019). According to Weng and Hu (2009), career development encompasses four key factors: advancement of career goals, development of professional skills, rapid promotion, and wage increases. These factors influence individuals' decisions regarding career and professional growth, which can in turn influence migration decisions. Furthermore, the organizational structures of institutions in the source country can play a role in migration decision-making. Factors such as limited career opportunities, imbalanced workloads, and weak incentives within the organizational setup can contribute to individuals seeking better opportunities elsewhere (Rosenblatt & Sheaffer, 2001; Wanniarachchi et al., 2022: 1491).

Push and pull factors are influential in the decision-making process of migration, and their significance can vary depending on the country and industry involved. For software developers migrating from underdeveloped or developing countries to developed nations, a combination of push and pull factors comes into play. Push factors represent the reasons that compel individuals to leave their home country. In the case of underdeveloped countries like Turkey, these push factors include limited career prospects, low income levels, unfavorable working conditions, a lack of recognition for their labor, and political and social instability. These factors generate discontent and motivate individuals to seek better opportunities abroad. Pull factors, however, are the attractions and opportunities presented by the destination country. In this case, developed countries offer enticing pull factors such as higher career prospects, better income potential, improved working conditions, greater respect for labor, and more stable political and social environments. These factors create a sense of hope and opportunity, encouraging software developers to consider migrating to these countries. The combination of push and pull factors leads software developers to consider migration as a means to enhance their professional and personal circumstances. By understanding these factors and addressing the underlying issues, policies can be developed to mitigate brain drain, retain highly skilled individuals, and promote the development of the software industry within their home country.

Highly qualified manpower tends to be less productive in a stressful work environment. Workload, which refers to the disparity between an individual's available resources and the demands of a task, plays a crucial role in determining the level of stress experienced by employees (Bowers and Jentsch, 2005). Hart and Staveland (1988) outline six dimensions of workload, including mental and physical demands, temporary pressures, frustration, effort, and performance. Insufficient or excessive workload can both contribute to job stress (Katz and Khan, 1978). High work intensity can lead to mental stress among employees (Shah et al., 2011), while insufficient workload can result in job alienation, characterized by feelings of isolation, powerlessness, and a lack of meaning in one's work (Blauner, 1964). This contrasts with the positive state of work engagement (Tonks & Nelson, 2008). Underutilization of skills or the inability of employees to reach their full potential can also lead to occupational stress.

Regarding migration factors, expectations in the destination country have been identified as triggers for migration (Hoppe and Fujishiro, 2015). Pull factors represent the attractions and opportunities offered by the destination country. In developed countries, such as Germany or Canada mentioned in the findings, pull factors include improved job prospects, higher salaries, better working conditions, greater respect for labor, and a more stable political and social environment. These factors entice software developers to migrate in pursuit of enhanced career prospects and a higher quality of life.

However, it should be noted that qualified migrants often encounter challenges in finding stable employment in the country where they settle, as highlighted by Qureshi et al. (2013) and Crowley-Henry et al. (2018). In Sri Lanka, for instance, skilled migrants tend to migrate due to limited career opportunities in their home country (Wickramasinghe and Jayaweera, 2010). The interplay of push and pull factors can vary across countries and sectors. When an underdeveloped or developing country intersects with a developed country, both push factors (e.g., limited opportunities in the home country) and pull factors (e.g., abundant resources in the destination country) coexist. In the case of software developers migrating from Turkey, the combination of push factors stemming from limited opportunities and pull factors offered by countries with more favorable conditions contributes to their decision to seek better prospects abroad.

Migration can be categorized into internal and external migration. Internal migration refers to the movement of people within a region or country, while external migration involves crossing national borders. Regular migration occurs within the legal framework, whereas irregular migration is considered illegal. Chain migration, where migrants follow relatives who have already migrated, is a common form of migration that carries fewer risks for the migrant, as they receive support in settling and finding employment from their relatives (Çağlar, 2018: 37).

Migration partially addresses the challenges faced by both the migrants and the host societies. For instance, in terms of the economy, migration helps to alleviate the shortage of qualified employees in the host society, reducing production costs and even preventing production disruptions. While the migrant may have been unemployed in the source country,

they can improve their social status in the destination country (Tekin, 2011). However, the negative effects of migration on balanced development are exacerbated. It leads to the concentration of qualified individuals in certain regions, resulting in the decline of the regions they migrate from. It is argued that a more balanced distribution of investments throughout the country can help slow down migration movements (Genç et al., 2019: 494).

Developed countries, by accepting qualified migrants, benefit from the cost savings in education, as they do not bear the expenses of educating these migrants (Bekirtaş and Kandemir, 2010; Lowell and Findlay, 2001; Erdoğan, 2003; De Haas, 2006: 15-16). It has been argued that the funds saved from education costs can be redirected towards research and development (Erkal, 2011). However, Wong and Yip (1999) argue that immigration should be limited due to the potential loss for the sending country. They particularly emphasize that a decrease in the number of qualified individuals may lead to higher wages for the remaining qualified individuals and contribute to imbalanced development (Wong & Yip, 1999: 701-725). Additionally, source countries may lag behind technologically (Di Maria & Stryszowski, 2009: 307). However, Grubel and Scott (1966: 271-274) argue that losses are mitigated as migrating skilled workers are replaced by new ones. Tezcan (1996) emphasizes that highly qualified labor, such as scientists and engineers, should not be subject to national restrictions.

A critical question arises regarding whether these migrant individuals bring back the experiences and knowledge they have gained to their home countries. Migration entails both external benefits for the receiving country and potential knowledge gains for the sending country. Brain drain, however, refers to the receiving country benefiting without incurring any costs. The failure of highly qualified employees to transfer their knowledge to the source country creates a one-sided win-lose situation between the countries (Bakırtaş & Kandemir, 2010). Nevertheless, if outgoing migrants contribute to improved international trade and services between the two countries, the source country can also benefit from their migration (Easterly & Nyarko, 2008).

While developed countries used to accept employees from various backgrounds in the past, they have gradually shifted towards attracting qualified and skilled individuals, particularly in selected fields. İlhan (2020) argues that developed countries target younger students who aspire to improve their economic and social status. He further highlights that the results of international exams in mathematics and science, such as PISA and TIMMS, influence the selection of target countries (İlhan, 2020). Specifically, scientists who have achieved international success are often prioritized as targets for immigration (Halıcı, 2005: 259).

The decision of individuals to settle permanently in the destination country instead of a temporary stay gives rise to tensions and the search for solutions. The tension stems from the nation-state structure, where those seeking permanent inclusion aim to become part of the nation and obtain citizenship rights. However, there are opposing forces that resist assimilation within the nation-state and hinder this integration. To address this, concepts such as transnational citizenship and the democratization of borders are advocated (Tekin, 2011). Overcoming the crises within the nation-state understanding can be pursued through three approaches: national integration based on equal citizenship, assimilation within the dominant society, and the development of multiculturalism to recognize the rights of cultural diversity (Brown, 2000; Aksoy, 2012).

Qualified migration from Turkey is not a new phenomenon. Concerns about this issue have been raised in early academic articles (Atılgan, 1986). The third five-year development plan of the State Planning Organization (SPO) from 1973 to 1978 highlighted that an average of 375 thousand Turkish scientists and highly qualified personnel emigrate to developed countries annually. More than half of these migrants are in the medical field, 40% in engineering, 5% in natural sciences, and a small number in social sciences. It has been estimated that approximately 10% of Turkey's qualified workforce resides abroad (Erkal, 1992). According to a study by Oğuzkan (1971), 81.3% of Turks working in the USA graduated from a foreign educational institution, with 46.7% obtaining their latest degree from the USA. These data demonstrate that the brain drain problem in Turkey, similar to many other countries, is experienced primarily by individuals who study abroad. It has also been predicted that migration mobility will increase with the advancement of communication channels (Erdoğan, 2003: 98). Consequently, the mismatch between education planning and the employability of the qualified workforce in certain sectors has been identified as a significant issue (Erdoğan, 2003: 98).

As an intriguing historical fact, the measures suggested in the 1970s in the SPO report included employment policies, wage policies, research environments, and working conditions (SPO, 1973-1978). Furthermore, Erdoğan (2003: 95) argues that in order to prevent migration due to political and religious reasons, freedoms should be granted to the qualified labor force. Specifically, it was proposed that countries like the USA and Canada should adopt incentives and facilitation policies to attract educated and trained human resources (Erdoğan, 2003: 95).

Method

Design

In the literature, qualitative content analysis is widely recognized as a systematic approach for analyzing qualitative data. The approach involves identifying patterns, themes, and concepts within the data to generate meaningful insights and understanding (Lindgren et al., 2020). Content analysis is utilized to condense and abstract a sizable amount of textual data and directly extract participant messages (Gupta et al., 2018), without imposing a researcher's viewpoint, in order to gain fresh insights into the study phenomena.

The study's central question is: "What are the primary motivations and factors that drive software developers in Turkey to migrate abroad, and what are the implications for their working conditions, career prospects, and perceptions of their home country?"

Through interviews, people's thoughts, feelings and behaviors are documented (Agafonoff, 2006). Qualitative research was planned from interviews conducted on social media to gather insights into the decision-making processes of software developers and engineers in migration abroad. Socio-economic and demographic characteristics are not prioritized in the interviews (Kumar, 2012). The most important criterion for participant selection is that qualified employees have some experience with migration.

The aim of the interviews is to uncover concepts (trends, patterns). Although usually, 10-15 participants elicit concepts (Faulkner, 2003), the abundance of migration story videos available on social media was utilized to reinforce understanding of decision-making processes. In a qualitative study, Hennink and Kaiser (2022) statistically proved that the saturation point is reached when between nine and sixteen participants have the same (homogeneous) topic. In this study, 24 software developers and engineers (same status) from Turkey (same country) were interviewed about their experiences of migration abroad (same topic). According to Hennink and Kaiser (2022), the number of participants should be increased as heterogeneous elements emerge (for example, in a study comparing Indian and Turkish engineers).

Setting and Participants

Twenty-four videos telling the migration stories of engineers and software developers who migrated abroad were watched. Those with Y code were identified as software developers and those with M code as engineers. Thanks to the opportunities provided by social media, the experiences of real people were listened to first-hand in terms of decision-making processes (Salda, 2020; Güler & Başer, 2020; Önder, 2017). All migrants migrated to either North America or Western Europe due to job opportunities and future expectations. There are also those who work for companies in these geographies without physically migrating. The most important advantage of videotaping is that it makes it easy to watch the same person's words and behaviors repeatedly, to take notes and to understand them in depth.

The speakers were coded as SD1, SD2,..(referring software developer) and E1, E2 (engineers) (table 1).

Table 1. Participants

#	Age	Marital status	Gender
SD1	21	Single	Female
SD2	29	Married	Male
SD3	32	Single	Male
SD4	25	Married	Female
SD5	35	Married	Male
SD6	41	Divorced	Male
SD7	48	Married	Female
SD8	23	Married	Male
SD9	34	Single	Male
SD10	45	Married	Male
SD11	52	Divorced	Male
SD12	27	Single	Female
SD13	19	Married	Male
SD14	25	Single	Male
SD15	27	Single	Female
SD16	25	Married	Male
SD17	28	Single	Male
SD18	29	Single	Male
E1	34	Married	Male
E2	23	Single	Male
E3	37	Married	Male
E4	36	Single	Male
E5	43	Married	Male
E6	22	Single	Male
E7	23	Married	Male
E8	21	Single	Male

Findings

Table 2 presents the main categories of motivation for migration, classified into push factors and pull factors: Working conditions, perception of Turkey's future as push factors and expectations in foreign countries, and opportunities and experiences abroad as pull factors.

Table 2. Push and Pull Conditions

Push factor-Working Conditions	Working conditions in Turkey are described as exhausting both physically and emotionally. Software developers feel that their efforts are not adequately rewarded in terms of salary and reputation. Long working hours and a lack of work-life balance are common issues.
Push factor- Perception of Turkey's Future	They have a pessimistic outlook on Turkey's political, economic, legal, educational, and social progress. The perception of a lack of trust, justice, and protection of social rights in Turkey reinforces their decision to seek better opportunities abroad. They hope for a country that values diversity of opinions and voices.
Pull factor- Expectations in Foreign Countries	When software developers go abroad, they expect companies to respect their labor, value their private life, and acknowledge their personalities. They want to move away from hierarchical structures and foster courtesy, respect, and empathy between managers and developers.
Pull factor- Opportunities and Experiences Abroad	Software developers see migrating as an opportunity to gain work experience, learn new technologies, and work on innovative projects. They value the chance to collaborate with high-quality teams and professionals in their field.

Push Factors

Working Conditions in Turkey

Software developers claim that their labor is not respected, expressing dissatisfaction with working conditions and income. Economic motivation is considered the primary reason for migration (Aksoy, 2012:294; Mazzolari, 2009; Pivnenko and DeVoretz, 2004). However, in Turkey, economic factors and working conditions are intertwined. Software developers feel that they do not reap the benefits of their labor, not only in terms of monetary compensation but also in terms of broader aspects such as reputation and working conditions. They describe their experiences as being characterized by fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and a lack of empathy in subordinate-superior relationships.

Working conditions in Turkey were exhausting for me. E2
Working conditions in Turkey wear people down both physically and emotionally. E2
In Turkey, I do not see a return for my contribution in terms of salary and reputation. SE4
Some software developers leave due to financial difficulties. SE12
Promotions with success are very difficult to achieve in Turkey. E1
There is too much Nepotism in Turkey. SE1
Many of my friends resigned due to the fact that people who did not know the job were managers in the companies they worked for. E3
I know that working hard or doing your job well does not bring success in Turkey. SD15

Other professional fields face similar challenges. However, software development, being an international language, offers relatively easy opportunities to migrate to another country or work for a foreign company without physically relocating. Those who have prior experience living abroad have an advantage, as their experiences are valued. The availability of communication tools facilitates intense information sharing among software developers.

When I was living in Turkey, I was thinking about going abroad. When my friends went, I did too. SE10
Those who are planning to go abroad compare their lives with the people around them who have been abroad and decide accordingly. SE15
The engineers who went abroad before us became targets for us. E5

The family situation represents the main impediment for software developers in Turkey who wish to migrate abroad.

This obstacle arises when a software developer's spouse or partner has a stable job or established career in Turkey, making it challenging for them to relocate as a family. Factors such as the spouse or partner's career prospects, existing commitments, or personal ties to their home country can pose significant barriers to migration. Families with school-age children may also be hesitant to disrupt their education and social stability by moving to a foreign country. Therefore, the family situation plays a crucial role in determining the feasibility of migration for software developers in Turkey.

Very few of my friends working in the same sector stayed in Turkey, and they stayed for family reasons. SE16

Perception of Turkey's Future

They have a vision for their future and that of their family. They believe that moving to a more developed and civilized country would provide their children with a better education and opportunities. They see migration as a way to break free from the cycle of challenges in Turkey, including political, economic, legal, educational, and social issues. They lack trust in the country and hold a pessimistic view of its future. The rankings provided by international organizations further support their concerns. In the World Justice Project's rule of law ranking, Turkey was placed 116th out of 140 countries in 2022. In the democracy ranking by the University of Würzburg in 2020, Turkey ranked 137th out of 176 countries and was categorized as a moderate autocracy. While these rankings indicate a decline in terms of law and democracy, it is important to note that the perception of the individual plays a crucial role in qualitative research. The highly qualified labor force that Turkey requires is dissatisfied with the country's current trajectory.

The political turmoil in Turkey makes one pessimistic about the future. SD13
I am hopeless about the future in areas such as economy, justice, and education in Turkey. SD13
The situation in the country was influential in my reason for going abroad. SD14
I don't think Turkey will be in a better situation than this in the medium term. SD16
People in Turkey should pay more attention to education and ask the question why more. SD17
I do not think there is an environment of trust in Turkey. SD14
I do not think that our social rights are protected in Turkey. SD14
I don't think there is justice in the country. SD14
I think that with the development of the economy in Turkey, issues such as education, culture, and respect for oneself and one's environment will improve. SD18
I want a place where there are many opinions and different voices rather than a place where everyone thinks the same and has the same ideas. SD15

Pull Factors

Expectations in Foreign Countries

When they work in other countries, they expect companies to value and respect their work, personal life, and individuality. They desire to distance themselves from organizational structures that neglect the importance of personal life and work-life balance. Particularly in Turkey, there is a need to restructure the hierarchical relationship between superiors and subordinates. It is evident that these highly qualified individuals should be regarded as owners of their own work (like company owners) and move away from the traditional division between managers and employees. Concepts such as courtesy, respect, and empathy should be fostered between company managers and software developers.

I think I am taken for granted. I am not disturbed by incompetent managers at odd hours. SD2
I both work less and earn well from my work abroad. SD3
In foreign countries, managers do not call easily after working hours. SD10
I know that in Turkey I work from 8 a.m. to 3 a.m. E2
I could not spare time for my family because of the working hours in Turkey. E2
In abroad, you have peace of mind outside of working hours. E3
My manager told me to be unreachable when I was going on leave at my job abroad. SD11
They do not call and disturb me in my social life abroad. E4

They are able to live on their salary and have also been able to buy a house and a car. In particular, a car (high model) and a house (in the form of a villa) are perceived as status indicators. Being able to live comfortably on their salary indicates that they have sufficient income to meet their needs and potentially enjoy a higher standard of living compared to their experiences in Turkey. In many societies, owning a house and a car, especially one that is considered prestigious or upscale, is often associated with financial success and social status.

My friend bought a good quality second-hand car with his salary in Germany. I have to work for many years. Even another friend of mine bought his house in Canada. I think I am wasting my time in Turkey. E11

Opportunities and Experiences Abroad

They perceive working abroad as part of their work experience and see it as an opportunity to learn new technologies. They value the chance to work on interesting projects and collaborate with quality teams and software developers. Travelling abroad not only enhances their technical skills but also broadens their horizons and allows them to gain valuable insights and experiences. It provides them with the opportunity to challenge themselves, adapt to different work cultures, and further develop their professional capabilities.

I want to gain experience by working with new technologies abroad. SD14
The positive side of living abroad is that you have the opportunity to work on projects that have never been done before. E7
You work with the best people in your field abroad. E7
When students abroad graduate, they graduate as an employee with practical experience. E8
Your colleagues are very important; you have the opportunity to work with a very good working group abroad. E10

Expert Opinion

To validate the reliability of the article's findings, the draft of the article was shared with a software company owner, a startup company partner, and a corporate venture capital firm manager for their input. Their opinions were sought without conducting formal interviews. Additionally, an insurance company manager was requested to illustrate the provision of home support in their company. These steps were taken to gather insights and perspectives from industry professionals and to ensure the robustness of the article's content.

Software company owner:

As an entrepreneur managing a software team, I concur with the findings of the article. In order to manage costs effectively, I adopt a strategy of hiring junior programmers at lower salaries and invest in teaching them the necessary skills. This approach creates a win-win situation where I provide support to the individual until they become proficient in software development, and in return, they contribute to the company's productivity. However, after a certain period of time, typically around 1.5 years, some of these employees choose to leave the company seeking higher earning opportunities. Many of them either migrate or work remotely as support staff for foreign software companies. This trend highlights the impact of migration and remote work options in the software industry.

Startup company owner:

I agree with the findings of the article. Finding highly skilled software developers can be challenging, and economic factors play a significant role in their migration decisions. Additionally, the lack of political freedom in Turkey has a greater impact on these individuals. However, the most crucial factor is the economic disparity. While a salary of \$4,000 may be considered high in Turkey, it may be relatively affordable for software developers in Europe and America. The significant wage gap makes it difficult to retain these qualified employees within the country. Even those who initially stayed during economic crises eventually leave, as mentioned in the article, or they opt to work abroad.

Venture capital investor:

Finding software developers in startups in Turkey has indeed become a significant challenge. However, it is not only software developers but all employees who need to be respected and valued in order to foster a positive work environment. Regarding the housing and car aspect, it can be seen as a matter of providing suitable accommodations and transportation for employees. Owning a house and a car can be considered status indicators and can contribute to employee satisfaction and loyalty.

Supporting employees in purchasing a house and a car may have implications for the company's balance sheet in terms of costs. It would depend on the specific arrangements made by the company, such as whether the support is provided as a loan, subsidy, or other financial arrangement. Companies would need to carefully consider the financial impact and potential benefits of such support.

Another effective way to retain technical staff is by offering stock options. This aligns the interests of the employees with the success of the company. If the company performs well, employees with stock options can share in the financial gains, providing them with a sense of ownership and motivation to contribute to the company's growth and success.

Insurance company executive:

The owner of the insurance company I work for has implemented a unique approach to support its managers in buying a house. Although it is not a formal corporate benefit, the process is as follows: the company owner takes a 10-year

mortgage loan and deducts the monthly mortgage installments from the manager's salary during this period. At the end of the 10-year period, the title deed of the house is transferred to the manager.

This arrangement not only provides assistance to key personnel in buying a house but also creates a strong bond between them and the company during the repayment period. It serves as an incentive for managers to remain committed to the company and ensures their long-term loyalty.

Conclusion

While this article discusses the migration of software developers, one of Turkey's most important sources of qualified labor, the underlying aim is to show that the effects of this critical migration are not only increased prosperity for individuals, but that migration also poses a serious risk to Turkey's transformation into a high-tech country. The migration process has gained momentum, and now when a Turkish software developer migrates, they often invite their teammates or inform them about opportunities.

In the 1960s, migration from Turkey to Western Europe mainly involved unskilled and low-skilled labor through intergovernmental agreements. However, starting from the 1970s, migration patterns shifted as students going abroad to study and employees working in international firms constituted a qualified labor migration. This trend is not unique to Turkey but has been observed in other developing countries as well.

As software developers, they have expressed that their labor is not adequately respected, both in material and moral terms, in Turkey. Despite their contributions to their company in terms of salary and reputation, they feel that their efforts are not reciprocated. Economically, they aspire to be able to afford a house and a car without financial worries. It is worth noting that professionals in other fields face similar challenges. However, due to the universal nature of software as an international language, it is comparatively easier for software developers to migrate to another country or work for foreign companies remotely without physically relocating. They are motivated to advance in their careers and seek out opportunities to work on interesting projects.

When migrating to another country, software developers value companies that respect their labor, private life, and individuality. They emphasize the need to redefine the subordinate-superior relationship, particularly highlighting their desire not to be micromanaged by their managers. Software developers value recognition and appreciation for their work and contributions. They seek a company that acknowledges their skills, expertise, and efforts, providing fair compensation, recognition of achievements, and opportunities for growth based on merit. Respecting work-life balance is crucial to software developers, as they aim for a work environment that acknowledges their personal boundaries and allows them to lead fulfilling lives outside of work. They emphasize that their energy is being consumed by the vicious circle of political and economic debates in Turkey. They demand to live in a country with established democracy, human rights and institutions. They also include their children in their concerns for the future. They aim to provide a quality education in a civilized country. They seek a more collaborative and egalitarian work environment where hierarchical structures are minimized. Instead of a hierarchical relationship, they prefer a relationship based on mutual respect, open communication, and the recognition of each individual's expertise and autonomy.

In terms of macro policies, it is crucial to prevent nepotism and establish institutions that uphold democracy, the rule of law, and transparency in the country. Nepotism, which involves favoritism based on personal connections rather than merit, can hinder the growth and fairness of the software development sector. Therefore, efforts should be made to create a level playing field where individuals are recognized and rewarded based on their skills and qualifications.

Furthermore, in addition to these general regulations, governments can provide support to software companies through tax incentives. Designing specific tax incentives targeted at the software industry can encourage investment, innovation, and job creation in the sector. These incentives can include tax breaks, deductions, or credits that reduce the tax burden on software companies, making it more financially viable for them to expand their operations, hire skilled employees, and invest in research and development.

By implementing such policies and incentives, governments can create an environment that fosters the growth and competitiveness of the software industry. This, in turn, can attract and retain talented software developers, promote technological advancement, and contribute to the overall economic development of the country.

The main asset of software companies is their software developers. Examining the incentive policies for foreign software developers in Ukraine, which has emerged as a leading software hub among developing countries, can provide insights (Ivanenko, 2022). In Ukraine, the corporate tax rate is 18%, which is similar to the corporate tax rate in Turkey (23%). However, if the profits generated by software companies are reinvested, they are exempt from corporate tax. This incentivizes companies to reinvest their earnings for further growth and development, rather than accumulating taxable profits.

In terms of individual taxation, Ukraine has implemented a progressive tax system. For salary payments up to USD 250,000, the individual tax rate is only 5%, with an additional 1.5% income tax. A social security tax of 22% applies only to the minimum wage. As shown in Table 3, for a monthly salary of $5000 paid to a company owner or employee as a software developer, the effective tax rate is only 7.5

These tax incentives in Ukraine create an attractive environment for software companies and developers. They encourage reinvestment, provide lower tax burdens for individuals, and contribute to the growth and competitiveness of the software industry. By considering similar incentive policies, Turkey can potentially enhance its attractiveness to foreign software developers and promote the growth of its software sector.

Table 3. Income Tax Rates of Software Companies in Ukraine (5000 USD)

Gross Salary	5000 US dollars
Income and additional income tax (%6,5)	325 dollars
Social security tax (22% of the minimum wage -250 dollars)	55 dollars
Employee/business owner (5000-325)	4675
Effective Tax rate	%7,5

Source: İvanenko (2022)

In Turkey, the government provides financial support through initiatives such as cheap credit, social housing projects, infrastructure development, and social aid programs. These policies aim to strengthen the industrial sector, reduce income inequality, and promote home ownership. However, these measures alone are not sufficient to lift Turkey out of the middle-income trap and transform it into a high-tech producer. The emigration of 30,000 software developers in 2021 without significant concern being raised reflects the broader societal challenges and priorities. With a substantial portion of the working population earning minimum wage, the focus of the debate and concerns differ (SSI, 2022). The distribution of resources is influenced by the fact that a majority of the electorate consists of less qualified or semi-qualified individuals. As a result, the allocation of resources is not adequately directed towards technology, research, software companies, and software developers, limiting the growth of high-tech industries.

In the context of economic development, it is natural for certain groups to advance while others may face economic inequality. The coexistence of winners and losers raises the question of how the disadvantaged perceive and respond to the situation. Hirschman's "tunnel effect" model suggests that in the short run, those who are at a disadvantage must tolerate economic inequality in order to achieve overall economic growth (Hirschman, 1973; Durongkaveroj, 2018). However, in the long run, all segments of society can benefit from the high value generated by the growing sectors. Increased spending in other sectors by those who benefit from these sectors, coupled with a higher return on education, can contribute to the development of a more qualified workforce.

At the micro level, both the public sector and private firms can design incentive programs to foster employee loyalty. For software developers, who view owning a house and a car as a symbol of success, the public sector can target these sectors and provide long-term loans with no upfront payments. Similarly, firms can establish systems where they provide housing and cars to employees, transferring ownership after a certain number of years of employment. This policy can help prevent employee turnover and offer substantial bonuses at the end of their tenure. As the years of employment increase, the cost of leaving the company and the country becomes higher for the employee as they approach the time of acquiring ownership of the house.

Despite the provision of various fringe benefits, it is crucial to approximate salaries abroad in terms of purchasing power. For instance, in 2021, the per capita income in Turkey is $9,000 (in current US dollars), whereas in Germany, it is $51,000. However, in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), Turkey's per capita income is $40,000, while Germany's is $58,000 (World Bank, 2022). Equalizing salaries based on the purchasing power parity of qualified professionals can be a viable approach.

Offering stock options can be one of the best solutions to address the shortage of technical staff in startups. Stock options grant employees the right to purchase company shares at a predetermined price in the future. This incentive aligns the interests of employees with the success of the company, fostering a sense of ownership and motivating them to contribute to the growth and success of the startup.

Software developers highly value providing their families with good education and healthcare. Companies can

consider covering educational expenses, including certifications, particularly for senior positions, as part of the employee benefits package. This investment in employees' children's education creates a strong bond between the parents and the company. Demonstrating support for employees' families, including access to quality healthcare, further enhances employee satisfaction and loyalty. Software developers have the advantage of being able to work regardless of location. Providing employees with the opportunity to work remotely or become digital migrants can significantly improve their work-life balance. This flexibility allows them to choose their preferred location and set their own schedule, leading to increased job satisfaction and overall well-being. Additionally, the opportunity to experience different parts of the world while working can be an appealing side benefit, enhancing personal growth and experiences.

Establishing clear guidelines for communication channels and working hours can contribute to a positive work environment. Company executives and customers should have designated hours and channels during which they can reach the company. Introducing a dual phone system and requesting employees to switch on their work phones only during work hours can help maintain a healthy work-life balance. Furthermore, creating an environment that encourages employees to take vacations, join clubs, or invest in their hobbies can enhance overall job satisfaction. Happy working conditions encompass more than just financial income, and companies can foster a culture that supports employees' personal well-being.

While the current study focused on the migration of software developers and engineers, there is potential for future research to explore the broader issue of technical staff shortages, particularly within companies and startups. This research could investigate factors such as the demand-supply gap, skill mismatches, recruitment challenges, and the impact on company growth and competitiveness. Evidence-based insights and recommendations from such research can inform policymakers and industry stakeholders, leading to the development of targeted policies and initiatives to address the shortage of technical talent. These may include educational reforms, upskilling programs, talent attraction strategies, and support for startups in acquiring the necessary technical workforce.

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A Political-Theological Issue: Is Kemalism a Civil Religion or a Political Religion?

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ABSTRACT

This article examines early Kemalism from a political-theological perspective. In the context of the religion-politics relationship of the modern nation-state model, the approach of Kemalism toward religion and the concept of "national religion" are discussed. In addition, "secular sacredness" produced through citizenship, the instrumentalization of religion, and legitimacy are also discussed. These secular sacraments, which emerge as a political-theological issue, are defined as a civil or political religion. This article discusses the transitivity between these two approaches and Kemalism. The main question of the article is whether Kemalism has a subjective approach to the oscillation between civil religion and political religion. It also attempts to reveal whether the emerging "national religion" is a reflection of the established religion or offers a different understanding. The answer is sought as to whether the national religion, which was intended to be fostered by liquidating the established religion, has an instrumental function. In the ideology of Kemalism, there has been a process in which religion has not been completely eliminated but defined through the concept of a secular or national religion. In this context, it is questioned whether there is no clear distinction between a political religion and a civil religion, peculiar to the totalitarian regimes, and whether there a new "theology" has been established which is contrary to the established religion.

Keywords: Civil religion, political religion, sacred, secular sanctity, Kemalism, legitimacy

Introduction

The nation-state, as a modern form of governance, has also revealed its own type of "religion" while transforming the religion-politics relationship. In this process, when religion ceased to be the determining factor of a society's identity, the nation state "reproduced" religion as the source of legitimacy, providing the spiritual foundations the people needed.

Jean J. Rousseau considered the situation of the "civil religion" a necessity, as a way to ensure social unity (Rousseau, 2017, p. 124 –125). Afterwards, Carl Schmitt, who discussed the theological foundations of the modern understanding of politics under the political-theological framework (Schmitt, 2022, p. 41), stated that secularization theories emerged as "the metamorphosis of the sacred" (Critchley, 2013, p. 34). The concept of "civil religion," which can be discussed under the title of political-theology, is based on Rousseau's definition of "citizenship religion," while also pointing to religious structures that Émile Durkheim states as providing social solidarity, unity, and continuity. The civil religion, as conceptualized by Robert Bellah for the specific understanding of the US context, has become a field that examines the transforming and intertwined structure of the religion-politics relationship (Karakuş, 2021).

Apart from the concept of civil religion, the concept of political religion, also referred to as "political theology," refers to the sanctification of politics. However, Emilio Gentile, who argues that there are differences between political religion and civil religion, states that political religion is a sanctification of politics by totalitarian, exclusionary regimes (Gentile, 2015, p. 416–419).

Gentile, while revealing the differences between Rousseau's understanding of civic religion and the notion of political religion, says that civic/civil religion is "the sanctification of a politics that are connected with a secular entity but can sometimes be associated with transcendental beings such as God" (Gentile, 2015, p. 423). He argues that political religion, although often confused with civil religion, consists of "a holistic political movement that defies a secular existence or the sanctification of ideology" (2005, p. 20). Gentile, who compares the US's understanding of civil religion with that Nazi Germany and fascist Italy to underline the differences between the two approaches, concludes that civil religion can also turn into a political religion over time, and that there are no clear boundaries between the two approaches.

Despite the lack of clear boundaries, Gentile declares that political religion differs from civil religion in its extreme and privileged nature. This exclusionism manifests itself as the inability to tolerate different political ideologies, an attitude which brings a society closer to eliminating or using established religions for political means (Gentile, 2005, p. 52).

If we approach the topic from the point of view that highlights the politics-religion relationship, both civil religion and political religion reveal the theologization of politics as much as they instrumentalize theology by basing their legitimacy on secular entities and sometimes being inspired by institutional religions.

In this context, we can say that there is no fundamental difference between the civil religion and the political religion, which both terms often refering to the same political and secular structures. In this article, different approaches to this distinction will be examined through the elaboration of the secular sanctity grounded in the founding ideology of the Republic of Turkey, with reference to the civil/political religion discussion. In this context, institutions and discourses related to the topic will be evaluated.

In this regard, this article seeks the answer to the following questions: Did the Turkish Republic achieve its goal of secularization or did the political entity it established display the characteristics of a civil or political religion?

In *The Social Contract*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, states that "intolerance" arises because societies believe in different Gods, and every political war is also a religious war (Rouesseau, 2017, p. 124–125). Therefore, in nation-states, political affiliations and partnerships, independent of religious convictions, were deemed indispensable since they would enable people to unite upon a common ground (Asad, 2007, p. 12). The necessity of a political perspective which concealed the differences of the population brought about the desire for a secular society. However, it is important to determine how separated the result could be from religion. Marcel Gauchet answers this question, albeit indirectly, as follows: "The dimension of authority that piety carries from heaven to earth has not got lost all of a sudden with a magic hand when the period in which power is explained by religion is over." Thus, the absolutist expresses that there is no metaphysical gap between the structure of the state and the modern understanding of the state based on representation, as is thought. Accordingly, the same items are at work in the "representation through delegates" belonging to the age of the Gods as in "representation through embodied" which belongs to the age of Equals. However, these elements are presented differently, and their proportions are also different (Gauchet, 2000, p. 14–15). Therefore, the theories of "apostasy" and "secularism"" have become controversial with the emergence of the religious as another form found within the secular.

"Religionization" in the political life reveals that the institutions and the concepts of modern politics differ only in appearance from the traditional political understanding in the context of "sacredness" and "divinity." The modern

political understanding not only produced its own institutions and values, but also fictionalized and dictated its own concept of the "sacred." One of the most important features of the sacred is the concept of the "halo," which is a unification element for everything and everyone around it. This unity is also provided by the instrumentalization of the sacred, which has become one of the images of worldliness. Religion is an instrumentalized concept of the ideal, or a fiction that represents the past and the future.

As a matter of fact, worldly/secular concepts such as sovereignty, rituals and symbols, and a leader, which are the elements of the nation-state, can be seen as another face of the sacred. While the transformation in the sacred-power relationship revealed the religious form of the nation-state model, it also resulted in the "sanctification of politics" in the transformation of society.

Emilio Gentile states that the "sanctification of politics," which he defines as giving politics a religious dimension, is a structure that imitates religion, occasionally based on the elements of traditional religion, despite its difference from traditional religions. In the case of "political religion" that has a secular basis, society is prioritized over the individual and ideology is sanctified (Gentile, 2015, p. 423). Secularization, which Gauchet considers as "the possibility of making politics" (Kardes 2015, p. 38), has formed the basis of political-theology, as well as the possibility of producings its own politically sacred ideas. In this regard, Carl Schmitt pointed to the theological foundations at the origins of modern political understanding and the state model (Schmitt, 2020).

Unlike the absolutist state form, the nation-state model, while transforming the relationship between politics and religion in the context of the secularism-secularism debate, excluded religion/metaphysics. The state's reliance on the principle of "secularism" did not, as claimed, manifest itself as a complete purification of the state or power from religion. The state's acting with the principle of secularism while maintaining society's connection with religion, which is put forward in secularization theories, could not be reflected in practice. Religion, which was instrumentalized especially in the construction of nation and identity, continued to be the legitimizing power of the state. In Charles Taylor's words, the fact that "feelings of belonging to a group or sect" (Taylor, 2014, p. 539) usually arise in the religious category has also been seen in belonging to a nation, which gives people an identity. This belonging has at times reinforced the instrumentalization of religion through the invention of history and tradition (Hobsbawm, 2006). Thus, on the one hand, religion continued to be active in the sense of belonging of the nation, and on the other hand, it maintained its importance in the secularization process.

In this transformation towards secularization, religion has ceased to be an absolute determinant of politics, but has continued its relationship with politics on a different level as a source of legitimacy. In the nation-state, the difference of which is revealed from the traditional state form through the concept of "sovereignty," the "religious" nature of sovereignty and the source of its legitimacy have been subjected to a new assessment from a political-theological point of view. This assessment can be considered in the context of the politicization of religion or the religionization of politics. Both approaches, which find their place in the political-theological conceptualization, determine the dimensions and nature of the political-religious relationship. Therefore, the emphasis on the theological foundations of politics and the instrumentalization of religion cannot be subjected to a very clear distinction from a political-theological point of view.

In this article, both the basis of the politics on theological foundations and the instrumentalization of theology/religion have been elaborated with a political-theological perspective. Proceeding from the idea that the sacred and the profane cannot be subjected to an absolute distinction, the sanctification of politics on a political-theological basis in a secular nation-state or the instrumentalization of theology, the shaping of the nation-state's own "religious" form will be discussed with reference to the concept of the civil religion. Similar to Rousseau's religion of citizenship, constituting solidarity and respect for the other beliefs of others, civil religion is based on the perception of a common religion in society within a certain political structure that has its own boundaries and scope. The perception in question also strengthens itself by drawing the boundaries of "we" and "the other" with what they leave out. In this sense, civil religion, as a religion of citizenship, provides social solidarity and loyalty, while simultaneously serving as a cover for problems related to history and the time experienced with the same sense of loyalty. It directs individuals to participate in social life with a citizenship identity, develop a sense of religious loyalty, and conduct a behaviour that prioritizes society over themselves. Stating that civil religion is different from the sanctification of politics/political religion in the way mentioned above, E. Gentile emphasizes that civil religion will be understood as the blessing of collective life, regardless of a political movement (Gentile, 2015, p. 419). However, the distinction between civil religion and political religion is not so decisively manifested. In both cases, the worldly/political is legitimized with the religious one and the politic/national concepts and elements are religionized and sanctified with secular content.

As Gentile mentioned, political-religion comes to the fore by attributing holiness to the people, the state, the regime, the leader, through a glorious past and independence (Gentile, 2006, p. 129). As of the civil religion, the same elements constitute the collectivity.

As a continuation of a great empire, but also a nation-state, the Republic of Turkey existed by establishing its own values and institutions. Republican/Kemalist ideology ensured the continuation of the political and religious transformation that started with the Second Constitutional Monarchy, and at the same time, aimed to form an "absolute break" from religion and religious values. However, this rupture could not be realized, resulting in the transformation or instrumentalization of religious perception, ultimately producing its own religious form. Thus, the desire for a society equipped with secular values and a state ripped of religion shaped the "nation" and changed the understanding of sacred-power. Starting from Rousseau's thought that there cannot be a state without religion at its basis, in the context of the political-theology issue, which is a different dimension of the religion-politics relationship, this study examines the sacred power relationship of the founding ideology of the Turkish Republic.

If one considers the politics-religion relationship, both civil rand political religion constitute the theological foundations of politics as much as they instrumentalize theology by grounding their legitimacy on secular entities and sometimes being inspired by institutional religions. In this respect, civil religion and political religion do not differ much in terms of structure and often refer to the same political and secular structures. In this article, while the differences of opinion about the said distinction will be handled through the secular sanctities in the founding ideology of the Republic of Turkey, institutions and opinions related to civil/political religion will be evaluated. There will be an attempt to reveal to what extent the ideology of the Republic,[1] which has pursued the aim of secularization since its establishment, has achieved this goal and whether the structure that has been established has the characteristics of civil religion.

Transforming Political Understanding and Secular Sanctities

When holistically looking at the Republican period, we can say that Islam was perceived by Kemalism not as a theology, but as an opposing political ideology. However, this opposition did not prevent political ideology from instrumentalizing institutional religion for legitimacy or basing its theological foundations in a Schmitttian sense (Karakuş 2018, p. 216–218). While the Republic of Turkey was transforming the religion-politics relationship as a nation-state, it produced its own religious form and transformed within that form. The transformation in question started in the context of sovereignty, legitimacy, and national sovereignty since the last period of the Ottoman Empire, gaining a different dimension by institutionalizing it with the Republic. First of all, the reason for the legitimacy of the Ottoman period was based on the idea of God, the "loyalty" shown to the sultan was directed to the "nation" in the context of sovereignty. The "homeland," which is seen as the "piece of land" or the place where religion is experienced (S. Halim 1333, p. 1), has acquired a sacred meaning and has become an ideal to die for (N. Kemal, 1307, p. 57–58). While the homeland, which expresses the area where the religion is dominant, appears as a secular concept, the attributes of "holiness" attributed to the homeland have roots religion. Of course, the Balkan Wars and rapidly lost lands were one of the important factors in this transformation.

Perception of Homeland and Citizenship

While wars are one of the important motives in producing a national identity and providing unity (Smith, 1981, p. 357-397), fighting for the "homeland" instead of "religion" came to the fore for the nation state. Although an "imaginary" sense of homeland was developed in this period, as we will see later, the nation, which is one of the most important elements on which civil religion is based, and with it, loyalty to the "sovereign," gained secular sanctity. Satı Bey, who gave conferences on loyalty to the homeland, states that the idea of the rulers being appointed as a proxy by God is ineffective, and instead argued that the understanding that "the real sovereignty is in the nation" has arose to replace it. While the concept of a nation with a religious content takes on a secular meaning, it also becomes the source of sovereignty to which loyalty and loftiness should be directed (Satı Bey, 1329, p. 7).

When the homeland ceases to be the property of the monarch and becomes the property of the nation, the sovereignty discussions that started with the Constitutional Monarchy also end with the sovereignty being taken from God first and then from the monarch and transferred to the nation/people. Therefore, the religious sanctity attributed to the sovereignty has turned to the nation and has emerged as a supreme element as the source of legitimacy (Tuğrul, 2014, p. 26-27). The understanding of national sovereignty and legitimacy, which has a secular meaning, has been one of the most important foundations on which the Republic was built. Since the beginning of the National Struggle, national sovereignty has emerged as a goal and the sacredness of the struggle has been frequently mentioned (Atatürk, 1927, p.

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[1] Since the official ideology of the Republic of Turkey is Kemalism, when it is called "Republic" or when the term "Republican period" is used, it is used to express the understanding of Kemalism between the years 1920 and 1938.

265). While the source of sovereignty and legitimacy was declared only as the nation after the Republic was declared, with the manifestation of the will of the nation in the Parliament, all the sacred properties attributed to the nation are now directed to the Parliament. While the parliament became the Kaaba of the nation (Atatürk, 1927, p. 403), politics gained sanctity through the Parliament.

This sanctity in question enabled the formation of the structure that Rousseau called the civic religion. With the reconstructed past and future imaginations, nation building, and civic education, the ideology of the Republic has formed its own civil/political religion. If we recall the above discussion, there are different opinions about whether this transformation is a civil religion or a political religion in terms of the religious policy pursued by the Republican ideology and the formation of its own understanding of religion. While Onur Atalay deals with the Republican period (Kemalist ideology) in terms of political religion (Atalay, 2018),Gentile's civil religion is based on the political religion distinction, although he confines political religions to totalitarian regimes. He distinguishes between the civil religion definitions of Rousseau and Durkheim and identifies Rousseau's understanding of civil religion as describing the regimes that are imposed from above but not totalitarian in character (Atalay, 2018, p. 28–30). Durkheim's understanding, on the other hand, is understood as a civil religion based on culture. Atalay, emphasizing the similarities of political ideologies that gained secular sanctity through doctrine, rituals, symbols, and cults in totalitarian regimes (such as Russia, Germany, and Italy) that emerged after the First World War, compares Kemalism with these regimes. In comparing Kemalism with the aforementioned regimes, it is possible to say that there was a similar transformation in France, Italy, and other Western states, especially regarding the pursuit of nation building. In the context of the transformation of citizenship and loyalty, there has been a similar change in the nation's view of religion as was seen in Turkey.

In this period, we see that the emergence of totalitarian regimes and the instrumentalization of wars for social caution were also factors in the sanctification of politics. Especially in regimes where the cult of personality is very dominant and a new concept of humanity was defined (Alp, 1936, p. 75), absolute loyalty to the leader, the ideology, and the nation are constructed as the characteristics of this new person. Atalay expresses that the state is sacred in the mentioned regimes. If we recall Rousseau's civic religion, the sovereign, as a party to the contract, has the right to determine the obligations fulfilled by the individual as the law and to define the articles of faith "related to society." Thus, the sanctity of the state/sovereign is also revealed by the sanctity that is related to the "national will," which ensures the existence and legitimacy of an absolute sovereign. In this way, the Republican period substituted its own sanctity for national sovereignty, while at the same time, resorting the means to arbitrate this sanctity.

Instrumentalization of Religion and Legitimacy

While education has been an important factor in nation building, religion has also been resorted in decisions and practices aimed at the liquidation of traditional religion. As Atalay mentioned, the sanctification of the regime, the ideology, the leader, and the prominence as elements of political religion required a basic education. While civic education starting from the family and the old curriculum was completely changed, the idea of an "unprecedented" nation and country was established (Karakuş, 2018, p. 315–316). It is clear that the "civil religion" imposed from above by the sovereign, which is specifically mentioned in the distinction between political religion and civil religion, is in this sense no different from the "political religion" unique to totalitarian regimes. Both have the vision of a regime, nation, and leader with the "power of God." In the Republican era, although these blessings towards the regime and the leader continued increasingly, the secular sanctuaries were not free from traditional religion. While the republican regime was legitimized as a regime desired by the Prophet, the will of the people was proved by the Qur'an:

"[The Prophet] (...) founded a government of God that would give honour to the nameless, freedom to the captive, truth to the weak, and happiness to the miserable, and its name was the Republic. Fourteen centuries later, my friends! In order to establish such a divine government, Allah has granted to the most pious and greatest nation to create a second miracle, this nation is the Turkish nation. The government that the Prophet Muhammad established on the walls of Mecca fourteen centuries ago, today the Turkish nation has established in Ankara. (...) By God, I bless this government. (...) And under the wings of this prayer, I ask my esteemed friends to honour our government by standing up in front of the spirit of the Republic with respect and saying 'Long live the Republic' three times." (TBMM, Zabıt C., 1339, p. 116)

The instrumentalization of religion was not only active during the establishment stage, but the "national religion" expected to be formed afterwards was also sought from traditional religion. "Religious" books were published in order for the citizens to fulfil their duties with full devotion, and provide loyalty to the homeland, duty, and the leader was conveyed as a religious responsibility in schools (Akseki, 1341).[2] While this education was generally based on the secular curriculum, it was also based on traditional religion to ensure loyalty. Ahmed Hamdi Akseki's 1925

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[2] Akseki, Askere Din Dersleri. The necessity of Turkification of the language of worship was also defended in this way (Karakuş, 2018, p. 256–259).

work entitled *Religious Lessons for the Military*, written at the request of the chief of staff, which he described as a "catechism," is an important example of the place of traditional religion in citizen education. The work was written at the request of the army, and in the presentation, the Chief of the Staff Fevzi [Çakmak] stated that the most important among the spiritual lessons of the army was the "religious education." In the work, expressions such as the "army of Islam," "the soldier of Islam," and "the soldier fighting on the path of Allah" are used frequently. Akseki declares that a soldier who learns religious lessons will first learn his duties to "Allah, his Prophet," and then to "his own soul, family, relatives, hometown, state, and nation," and finally to "his Muslim brothers and fellow people" (Akseki 1341, p. 1–2). Akseki considers the state and the nation above the brotherhood of religion and the state who performs these duties properly will find "peace and comfort both in the world and in the hereafter." The first chapter of the book is devoted to the explanation of the credo and Islamic faith for the soldier. The necessities of Islam, such as basic doctrines and knowledge of *Fiqh* (jurisprudence), as well as the issues of what is haram (forbidden) and halal (permissible), are emphasized. Apart from the "civic education," which is attempted to be given alongside religious evidence, military concepts, such as protection from diseases, faith, working and cleaning, and duties towards the government and the country, are also provided with religious references. Akseki defines the government as "a committee they choose from among themselves" to ensure public order and peace of mind. After listing the duties of the government towards the governed, he states that the first duty of the people is to obey the law and not to violate it. The public chooses "a few intelligent [men]" from among them, agrees with "everything they do," and accepts "everything they say." He wrote that the second duty is property and life tax:

"As we give our property, it is our duty to go and fight the enemy whenever the government wishes, and to use our bodies as a trench in order not to let the enemy into our country. That is what is called a life tax." (Akseki, 1341, p. 205)

If we recall Rousseau's idea that the basis of citizenship religion is patriotism and that individuals should be taught that obedience to the state is obedience to God, we can see that the sanctification of citizenship in general and military service in particular is also a social religious basis. In this respect, Akseki declares that every person who loves Allah, the Prophet, and his country will do his military service, which is a high religious and sacred duty (Akseki, 1341, p. 210). Those who flee from their military service primarily disobey Allah and the Prophet. He also describes those who do military service without their consent as "hypocrites" (Akseki, 1341, p. 211). Obedience to the commander is obedience to Allah through obedience to the Prophet. He states that martyrdom is the highest rank after prophethood, and that those who do not do their military service willingly, in other words, those who flee, should expect great punishments in the hereafter as well as punishments in this world. Expressing that keeping watch in the military is the greatest worship, Akseki supports this view with various verses of the Quran and related hadiths (Akseki 1341, p. 220).

Jean F. Bayart states that Islam is the basic principle in the construction of secular and national citizenship for the regime in the transition period (Bayart, 2015, p. 157). Indeed, Islam became a basis for the "national religion," which required loyalty and unity on a common history and purpose, and it preserved this feature even after the fortification of civil religion. The cult of the leader/person seen in totalitarian regimes, which are stated to have the characteristics of political religion, was embodied in the person of Mustafa Kemal in Kemalism, who was seen as a leader who would realize the aims of God as a reflection of civil religion. Mustafa Kemal consolidated the mentioned cult with *The Speech* he read in the Parliament. As a matter of fact, he became a leader who established a nation out of nothing and attributed divine qualities to it. These attributes allow the founding ideology to emerge as an "opposition theology" that builds its own metaphysics:

"Legends say that from Adam's left side, two ribs were opened and Eve came out; Mustafa Kemal suddenly made these legends a complete truth. A whole motherland came out alive and detached from the two ribs that were broken by falling from her horse in the Sakarya War." (Hâkimiyet-i Milliye, 1933, p. 2)

In addition to the rituals and holidays for the fortification of the regime, the placing of Atatürk statues and busts all over the country to remind the public of the sense of loyalty and civic "debt" reinforced the loyalty to the leader and the nation represented by the leader, in other words, to the regime. At the same time, by fostering a perception of "homogeneity" in the society, a feeling of trust and exaltation towards the source of that trust was produced in the citizens.

While the inclusiveness of rituals and ceremonies provides a "conceal" function with the perception of a homogeneous society, on the other hand, it ensures the domination of a community over different groups (Sarıbay & Öğün, 2013, p. 102–103), a function that civil religion reinforces through its instruments.

The elimination of the "old" with the following politics and discourses has also been decisive in the qualities of the "new." The similarity of the formed civil religion with the metaphysical understanding and elements of traditional religion, while revealing the theological foundations of politics, is also an important evidence of the instrumentalization

of religion. In this context, we can say that the characteristics of the political religion in totalitarian regimes and the civil religion mentioned by Rousseau are seen. Although the distinction between political religion and civil religion is not very clear, both situations can be evaluated together in a political-theological context and can define the secular sanctification in the Republican ideology. However, to come to a conclusion on the similarity or interactions of the period with the totalitarian regimes, or the debates as to whether the state or the regime has been sanctified, it is far from explanatory for a period in which the regime was perceived as the state and the state as the regime.

Karl-Josef Schipperges states that modern ideologies are secularized forms of religion. However, modern ideologies or political ideologies are not only "artificial religions," they are also "anti-religious" because they cannot fully encompass or alienate the mystery and magic of religion (Schipperges, 2007, p. 211). While this opposition to religion became a new "religious form," it also brought the exclusion of established religions as a counter-theology. While the official ideology of the Republic of Turkey excluded Islam, which is the established religion in the context of sanctifying politics or civil religion, as an opposing theology, on the other hand, it saw the religion as the main source of the political-civil religion it was trying to establish.

Conclusion

Ernst Kantorowicz, in his politico-theological work *The Two Bodies of the King*, said, "We are ready to find such human – unsubstantial- strange fictions that the human mind creates in advance and then becomes its slave- in the field of religion, rather than in the supposedly serious and realistic areas of law, politics and the constitution." (Kantorowicz, 2018, p. 25). This prejudice leads us to the idea that phenomena other than religion are far from "superstitions." However, based on Rousseau's idea that there is no state (or society) without religion, we can say that secularism constructs its own sanctities from time to time, and at times, it produces them by imitating traditional religions. Therefore, "strange fictions" are also written within secular structures in order to ensure the faith and commitment of societies.

The Republican ideology, which often expresses the purpose of a secular modern state and society, has also produced a civil/political religion by constructing its own sanctities and occasionally imitating them from traditional religions. However, in the period when Kemalism revealed itself as a theology, and then in the desire to establish a "national religion" by the state, the actions do not paint the image of a regime that is completely detached from traditional religion.

Rousseau stated that societies would be loyal to their nations, homelands, and leaders by means of civil religion. Civil religion provides an atmosphere in which individuals fulfil their mutual responsibilities with a sense of religious loyalty and in which secular sanctions are substituted for sacred ones.
In discussions related to political religion, the ideology of the Republic of Turkey is defined structurally as a political religion. However, it appears that civil religion and political religion cannot be subject to a categorical distinction. The political transformation, which started in the late Ottoman period, continued in the early Republican period, with the concepts of homeland, nation, sovereignty, and legitimacy later gaining secular contents. Through education and politics, the nation and its will have been exalted with secular sanctions; the regime, the state, and the leader have been loaded with divine qualities.

Over time, religious terms and institutions have gained secular meanings. In this context, Islam was both instrumentalized and provided a basis for the theological foundations of the regime.
The redefinition of the transformed political perception of the religious with the secular content has not only failed to ensure the absolute liquidation of the religious, but has also helped to preserve the importance of religion as a source of legitimacy. Although the established civil religion has no categorical difference from the political religion, which is peculiar to the totalitarian regimes, both of them reveal a theology that is either opposed to the existing religion or not.

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How cite this article

Research Article

The Effects of Information Communication Technologies on Human Capital: A Panel Data Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The transition to the information age with globalization has opened the doors of digital transformation all over the world. In this digital transformation process, each new day corresponds to new information. In addition, the dimensions of communication have started to change with new information. It has become inevitable that such developments in information and communication technologies will have an impact on human development. In this context, the effect of information and communication technologies on human capital in the academic field arouses curiosity. This study aims to investigate the effects of information and communication technologies on human capital with the panel data analysis method. Annual data based on the 2000-2019 period for 10 countries selected among the emerging economies were used in the study. The dependent variable was the human capital index; the control variables were the education index and life expectancy at birth, and the independent variable was the share of information and communication technologies exports in total exports in the study. According to the findings of the study, it was concluded that the share of information and communication technologies exports in total exports increased human capital along with the education index and life expectancy at birth.

Keywords: Information Communication Technologies, Human Capital, Education Index, Life Expectancy, Panel Data Analysis

1. Introduction

Nowadays, humans live interactively with a digital life, a digital world, and a digital economy. At this point, it is possible to state that an irreversible process has been entered regarding the spread trend in digital transformation. In the process of digital transformation, the development of information and communication technologies has accelerated over time. Although the restrictions brought by the COVID-19 epidemic process, which started in China in 2019 and spread to the world in 2020, adversely affected many sectors, the IT sector continued to progress globally in this period.

Informatics is necessary to accept that the producer is a crucial element of the welfare society. A knowledge economy is an economy with a structure in which production is organized with knowledge and where knowledge can be used, as well as labor, capital, and technology as a production factor.

Economies that can use information well and produce information are seen as developed countries, and those living in these countries create an information society. In the information society, it is possible to specify information and communication technologies as the most important factors that improve international competition and contribute to countries' economic growth and development.

This article aims to investigate the effects of information and communication technologies on human capital by using the panel data analysis method. Annual data for the period 2000-2019 of 10 countries was selected among the emerging economies in the study. To sum up, briefly, the importance and originality of this study is the use of the Common Correlated Effects Mean Group (CCEMG) method within the scope of panel data analysis with ten countries selected from among emerging economies (Argentina, China, Brazil, South Africa, South Korea, Singapore, Poland, Russia, Thailand, and Turkiye) to investigate the impact of information and communication technologies on human capital. So, the contribution of this study to the literature emerges in the context of the variables determined by the applied method and theory.

In the study, first of all, a conceptual and theoretical framework was prepared for the effects of information and communication technologies on human capital in economic development. Then, the studies on this subject in the literature were discussed. Afterward, the econometric method used to examine the effects of information and communication technologies on human capital was explained, and the findings were interpreted. In the conclusion, general information on the subject of analysis was given, the findings were discussed, and various policy recommendations were presented in line with the findings.

2. Theoretical Framework

Economic development is accepted as a process that gained importance after the Second World War and is especially relevant to developing countries. Economic development requires the development of states in many aspects, such as economic, cultural, political, social, and so on. In this respect, in the economics literature, economic development refers to structural changes in environmental, political, and social contexts, together with increased economic efficiency and material welfare in a country. Therefore, economic development, as in economic growth, does not consider only the increase in income; it takes place depending on the practical and rational use of both physical and human resources of countries and includes structural transformations. Economic development represents countries' development level and position in the world.

Economic development involves a multidimensional process with long and significant efforts. According to Rostow, development is a five-stage social process with economic dimensions. In this context, for a country to develop economically, traditional society has to go through stages of preparation for takeoff, maturity, and the age of high mass consumption (Rostow, 1960).

In addition, in terms of the realization of economic development, human capital has emerged as a strategic element both for the transition of developed countries to the information-age society and for developing countries to industrialize and close the technological development gap between them and developed countries. With the globalization that accelerated towards the end of the 1980s, developed countries have become the leading producers and users of human capital, information, and technological progress by passing into the information society.

In the 1990s, interest in the development phenomenon increased even more thanks to the information society created by producing technological information, the rapid development of communication technologies, and the formation of qualified human capital. Later, development economists started to focus on sustainable development, which means using natural and human resources at a level that can meet the needs of future generations at least as much as they do now. Therefore, the orientation from natural resources to physical capital in the industrial society has left its place to human capital in the information society. It should be noted that in these recent periods when the COVID-19 epidemic process started in China in 2019 and spread to the whole world in 2020, the importance of human capital has been

understood more clearly, the progress in information and communication technologies has accelerated, and the new development story has reached the level to be written with digital transformation.

Knowledge is a factor that allows the production of technology due to R&D activities and creates added value in economic growth. It produces labor, processes, and uses knowledge. Information and communication technologies have developed with the transition to the information society and emerged as essential determinants of development and growth. In this respect, advances in information and communication technologies provide a competitive advantage by reducing costs for both countries and companies and increasing productivity. At this point, the new economic structure is reflected in countries' development and growth strategies and turns into competitiveness through information and communication technologies.

Ultimately, this new era is named the network economy, networked economy, knowledge economy and knowledge-based economy, digital economy, learning economy, new economy, and innovation economy. Conceptually, for the first time, Machlup used the knowledge economy, and its spread became possible after Drucker's "*Age of Discontinuity*." According to the definition of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), a knowledge economy is "*the economy in which knowledge is used in production and distribution*" (OECD, 1996). In summary, what is meant by the knowledge economy is a society that allows the development of technology and science and where there is intensive knowledge-based production and service (Powell & Snelman, 2004). Therefore, the most essential feature of this new society is the intensive use of information in the production process. Applying science and technology to the production process reflects a new understanding of sustainable development by highlighting investments in information, information technologies, and human resources. Especially in the 21st century, the development of information technology and the use of this technology are catalysts for economic and social transformation. In this way, using technology in the production process leads to increased factor productivity by providing economic development.

Based on ICT, networks, decentralized computer workstations, electronics, telecommunications, software, and information media, it is considered a combination of firms and industries affecting the economy as a whole. In this respect, ICT defines computers and peripherals, computer software and other information-related office equipment (copiers, cash registers, and calculators), communication equipment, and tools (Farhadi, Ismail, & Fooladi, 2012). ICT refers to all technologies based on communication and computer technologies used in processes such as collecting and processing information, storing it, transmitting it from one place to another via networks, and making it available to users.

Reviewed the historical development process of ICT, Schumpeter, an Austrian economist and political scientist, appears before us with his studies on the contribution of knowledge diffusion effect to economic growth. Robert Solow, one of the essential names of the neoclassical approach in 1956, became a pioneering economist who argued that the surplus growth (Solow surplus), other than the increase in labor and capital, is due to technological progress (Solow, 1957). By the 1980s, approaches that included technology in growth models were developed. These approaches, advocated by economists like Romer, Lucas, and others, are called "*endogenous growth theories*." It has become possible to calculate the effects of ICT on the country's economies, thanks to the new approaches developed at the point of human capital and knowledge measurement with endogenous growth theories. Based on endogenous growth theories, it is possible to state that technological development consists of firms' R&D activities and capital accumulations and externalities (Ribeiro, 2003).

Nowadays, ICT appears to be an essential part of the economy. Almost all companies and consumers now use computers and internet connections for economic purposes such as presenting more diverse and customized products, improving product quality, and selling goods and services. Although ICT diffusion rates in terms of computer, cell phone, and internet users differ between countries and regions, the indicators of ICT usage show an increasing trend in recent years despite the global economic crisis (Farhadi, et al., 2012). With its widespread use in the sector and its effects on economic growth, ICT has increased rapidly in recent years in developed and developing countries.

3. Literature Review

Advances in technology, particularly in ICT, have significantly impacted the economy and other aspects of human life in recent years. It is almost impossible to imagine the efficient functioning of an individual, an economy, and a society that does not use ICT. These effects, especially with the effect of ICT, which has gained more importance in terms of the "*new normal*", have started to experience serious changes in many areas with the COVID-19 pandemic period. At this point, it should be noted that the health system, educational institutions, businesses, households, and even the whole world economy are developing depending on ICT (Aksentijevi'c, Ježi'c, & Zaninovi'c, 2021). In recent

years, information technology (IT), also known as ICT software and hardware in general, has become a subject of more interest to economists due to its rapid spread worldwide (Ketteni, Mamuneas, & Stengos, 2011). The study's literature review was made on the effects of information and communication technologies on human capital and economic growth in general.

In his study, Pohjola (2000) aimed to investigate the impact of ICT investments on economic growth in 39 countries. In this study, regression analysis was conducted from 1980-1995. According to the analysis results, it was found that while ICT investments strongly affected the economic growth of developed countries, they did not have a significant effect when developed and developing countries were evaluated together.

O'Mahony, Robinson, & Vecchi (2008) in their studies, a used panel data analysis method aimed to investigate whether the effects of ICT on skilled labor demand are permanent or temporary for the USA, England, and France on the 1979-2000 period. According to the findings obtained in the analysis, it was concluded that the effect of ICT on the skilled workforce in the USA is temporary.

Moshiri & Nikpoor (2010) aimed to investigate the effect of ICT on productivity in developed and developing countries in their study. This effect was analyzed by a panel data analysis method for 69 countries from 1992 to 2006. Based on the findings obtained as a result of the analysis, information technologies positively affect productivity on a global scale.

Ketteni, et al. (2011) investigated the interaction of human capital and average years of schooling with ICT and their joint effects on economic growth. An econometric analysis of the study was carried out using a semiparametric regression model with data collected from OECD databases for various countries selected based on ICT and human capital data availability during the 1980-2004 period. Based on the findings obtained in the analysis, it is concluded that the output elasticities of human capital are more significant at higher levels of ICT investments and that output elasticities of ICT are higher when there are more educated workers in a country.

Yousefi's (2011) study aimed to investigate the impact of ICT on economic growth based on 62 high, upper-middle, low-middle, and low-income countries. The study used the panel data analysis method between 2000 and 2006. According to the findings obtained in the analysis, it is concluded that ICT plays a vital role in the economic growth of high and upper-middle-income countries but does not contribute to the economic growth of low-middle-income countries.

Niebel's (2012) study aimed to estimate the effect of ICT on economic growth using the panel data regression model based on data from 59 developed and developing countries between 1995 and 2010. According to the estimation results, a positive relationship has been determined between information and communication technologies and economic growth.

Farhadi, et al. (2012) aimed to investigate the effect of ICT use on economic growth. This effect was analyzed with the GMM estimator under the dynamic panel data approach for 159 countries from 2000 to 2009. According to the findings obtained in the analysis, it was determined that the ICT usage index (the number of fixed broadband internet subscribers and the number of mobile subscriptions per 100 capita as measured by the number of internet users) positively affected economic growth. However, it was higher in high-income groups compared to other groups.

Ishida (2015) aimed to investigate the effect of ICT on economic growth and energy consumption in Japan for the period 1980-2010 with the ARDL limit test in the study. According to the findings obtained from the analysis, it was concluded that ICT reduced energy use in the relevant period and did not contribute to economic growth.

Hodrab, Maitah, & Luboš (2016) investigated the effects of ICT on economic growth from 1995-2013 through a sample of 18 Arab countries. In this study, panel regression analysis was applied within the framework of 341 observations for the basic model and 331 observations for the extended model, which includes other important macroeconomic variables. According to the findings obtained in the analysis, countries should invest more in ICT capital and labor as they positively affect economic growth.

In their study, Asongu & Roux (2017) aimed to investigate whether increasing ICT improves human capital in a sample of 49 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2000-2012. Probit regression analysis was used as an econometric method in the study. According to the findings of this analysis, although there is evidence of synergy in mobile phone penetration, it is concluded that non-oil exporting countries drive this synergy.

In their study, Bahrini & Qaffas (2019) aimed to investigate the effects of ICT on the economic growth of selected developing countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region. In the study, the GMM model was applied within the scope of the panel data analysis method from 2007 to 2016. According to the findings obtained in the analysis, technologies such as mobile phones, internet usage, and broadband usage are the main drivers of economic growth in MENA and SSA developing countries for the 2007-2016 period.

Aksentijevi'c, et al. (2021) investigated the effects of ICT use on human development among high, middle-upper, lower-middle, and low-income countries according to the 2020 World Bank classification. In the empirical analysis of

this study, which includes 130 countries, the dynamic panel data regression method was used for 2007-2019. Within the scope of this analysis, the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM), in other words, the two-stage system, was estimated by the GMM method. The findings obtained from the analysis have proven that ICT has significant and positive effects on human development, especially in low-middle-income and low-income countries. However, significant effects are not seen in high and middle-income countries.

4. Econometric Analysis

4.1. Data Set and Model

This study investigated the effects of information and communication technologies on human capital using the panel data analysis method. The research hypothesis is "*ICT exports increase human capital.*" In the analysis part of the research, depending on the availability of data, ten emerging economies were studied (N=10 and T=20) as "*Argentina, China, Brazil, South Africa, South Korea, Singapore, Poland, Russia, Thailand, and Turkiye*" based on the 2000-2019 period. The country data used in the study were taken from the World Bank (WB), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and Penn World Table Version 10.0 (PWT) databases.

In the study, while the dependent variable was the human capital index, the control variables were the education index and life expectancy at birth, and the independent variable was the share of information and communication technologies exports in total exports. The contribution of this study to the literature emerges within the scope of the variables determined by the applied method and theory.

Table 1 presents the variables, their explanations, and the sources from which they were obtained. The equation of the model established with these variables [HCI=F(EDU, LE, ICT)] is given below:

$$HCI_{i,t} = \alpha_{0i} + \beta_1(EDU)_{i,t} + \beta_2(LE)_{i,t} + \beta_3(ICT)_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

Table 1. Variables Used in the Model

Dependent Variable		
Variable	**Symbol**	**Data Source**
Human Capital	**HCI**	Penn World Table, version 10.0-PWT
Control Variables		
Education Index	**EDU**	The United Nations Development Program-UNDP
Life Expectancy at Birth	**LE**	World Bank-WB
Independent Variable		
Share of Information and Communication Technologies Exports in Total Exports (%)	**ICT**	World Bank-WB

Table 2 presents descriptive (summary) statistics. Table 3 presents the correlation matrix and significance tests of the correlation coefficients. According to this table, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. In this case, the existence of serial correlation is proved.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
HCI	200	.769125	.0840094	.594	.938
EDU	200	.71252	.1072593	.481	.869
LE	200	73.46441	6.465248	53.444	83.49756
ICT	200	11.90457	13.34849	.0599616	54.97448

Table 3. Correlation Matrix

Correlation Matrix					
Variable		*HCI*	*EDU*	*LE*	*ICT*
HCI		1.0000			
EDU		0.8301	1.0000		
LE		0.7749	0.3618	1.0000	
ICT		0.2831	0.0685	0.4908	1.0000
		HCI	*EDU*	*LE*	*ICT*
Bias-Corrected Born and Breitung (2016) Q(P)-test	**Q(P)-Stat**	28.41*	32.08*	53.46*	33.27*
	P-value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Heteroskedasticity-Robust Born and Breitung (2016) HR-test	**HR-stat**	5.09*	4.00*	7.36*	6.06*
	P-value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bias-corrected Born and Breitung (2016) LM(k)-test	**LM(k)-stat**	5.19*	3.48*	3.73*	5.52***
	P-value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.063

4.2. Econometric Methodology

The panel data analysis method, which increases the ability of economic interpretation by facilitating information, consists of using time series data and horizontal section data together. Compared to cross-section and time-series analysis, it is possible to define that panel data regression models based on the assumption of cross-section independence between units have some advantages. First, in panel data models, the number of observations increases significantly due to using cross-section and time series data together. A high number of observations reduces the likelihood of a highly linear relationship between explanatory variables by increasing the degrees of freedom. In this context, the panel data method allows for obtaining more reliable results from econometric estimations (Hsiao, 2003).

Before proceeding to the unit root tests in panel data analysis, the case of whether or not the cross-section units that make up the panel are handled independently of each other is examined. Under the assumption that the cross-sectional units are independent of each other, panel unit root tests called "*first generation tests*" are constructed, while panel unit root tests called "*second generation tests*" are constructed under the assumption that the cross-section units are not independent of each other. The cross-section dependency allows it to determine whether an economic shock in one country affects other countries. Ignoring the cross-sectional dependence may cause the analysis results to be biased (misleading) and inconsistent. For this reason, it is necessary to examine the cross-sectional dependence separately for each variable and each model. Within the framework of panel data analysis, various theses can be used to test the cross-sectional dependence. In this study, the Breusch-Pagan CD_{LM} (1980) test was applied because the cross-section dependence was T>N.

The test hypotheses are "H_0: *There is no cross-sectional dependence*." and "H_1: *There is a cross-section dependency*." The H_0 hypothesis is rejected if it is less than 0.05, and in this case, the existence of horizontal cross-section dependence is proven. In this case, second-generation unit root tests are used. Otherwise, there is no cross-section dependency; in this case, first-generation unit root tests are applied. As a matter of fact, in the panel data analysis method, whether the series satisfies the stationarity condition is extremely important in terms of the reliability of the estimates. Whether the series is stationary or not strongly affects its quality and behavior. If the variables in the regression model are not stationary, the standard assumptions valid for the asymptotic analysis become invalid, and the estimation results become biased (misleading).

The panel cointegration test of Westerlund & Edgerton (2007), which can be used under heterogeneous and horizontal cross-section dependence conditions, is used to investigate the cointegration relationship between the series. In econometric analyses, the detection of long-run relationships is considered extremely important. For this reason, there are many cointegration tests in the econometrics literature to analyze long-run relationships. Westerlund & Edgerton (2007) developed a method for panel data models. The hypotheses for the Westerlund & Edgerton (2007) cointegration test are as follows:

H_0: There is a cointegration relationship in the model.

H_1: There is no cointegration relationship in the model.

For the decision of the hypotheses, it is necessary to check the bootstrap probability values of the asymptotic and/or

bootstrap critical values of the LM Test statistics (Kırca & Akkuş, 2020: 585). After determining the cointegration relationship between the variables included in the analysis, the long-run coefficients of the explanatory variables should be estimated. This study applies the CCEMG method Pesaran (2006) developed for heterogeneous panels under horizontal cross-section dependence. This method, on the one hand, assumes that unobservable common effects are stationary and exogenous along with the explanatory variables. On the other hand, it allows for consistent and asymptotically normally distributed parameter estimates when T is fixed, N→∞ or N, T→∞. In the CCEMG method, long-run coefficients for explanatory variables are calculated by taking the arithmetic average of the coefficients for each horizontal cross-section in the panel.

4.3. Empirical Findings

Cross-sectional dependence was first tested in the analysis of the study. Panel unit root test and cointegration test were applied depending on the cross-section dependency test results obtained. Then, the CCEMG estimation method was used to test the heterogeneity of the slope coefficients.

Table 4. Cross-Section Dependency Test Results

Test	Cross-Section Dependency Test Results	
	Breusch-Pagan CD$_{LM}$	
	Statistic	*P-value*
HCI	839.6910*	0.000
EDU	761.0197*	0.000
LE	858.5284*	0.000
ICT	329.7921*	0.000
MODEL: [HCI=F(EDU, LE, ICT)]	157.2025*	0.000

According to Table 4, when the results of the horizontal cross-section dependence test are followed, the presence of horizontal cross-section dependence in both variables and models is recognized. For this reason, it is possible to explain that in the continuation of the study, unit root tests and estimation methods that consider the cross-section dependency will be used. Table 5 includes the CIPS panel unit root test results:

Table 5. CIPS Panel Unit Root Test Results

CIPS Statistics				
Variables	**Level**	**Difference**	**Critical Values**	
HCI	-1.849	-3.934		
EDU	-2.009	-4.111	1%	-2.210
LE	-2.197	-2.809	5%	-2.340
ICT	-1.985	-3.593	10%	-2.600

In the rest of the analysis part of the study, according to the results of the horizontal cross-section dependence test, whether the series has a unit root or not is investigated with the CIPS statistic developed by Pesaran (2006), which considers the horizontal cross-section dependence. The test hypotheses are "H_0: *There is a unit root in the series*." and "H_1: *There is no unit root in the series*." As can be seen from Table 5, the variables of human capital (HCI), education index (EDU), life expectancy at birth (LE), and share of ICT exports in total exports (ICT) were stationary in I(1) (at the first difference). Therefore, the conditions for Westerlund & Edgerton's (2007) panel cointegration analysis have been formed.

Table 6. Slope Heterogeneity Test (Pesaran & Yamagata, 2008)

Slope Heterogeneity Test (Pesaran & Yamagata, 2008)	MODEL: [HCI=F(EDU, LE, ICT)]	
Test Statistic	*T Statistic*	*P-value*
Delta_tilde	7.832*	0.000
Delta_tilde_adj	9.044*	0.000

Table 6 contains the slope heterogeneity test (Pesaran & Yamagata, 2008). As can be seen from Table 6, where the homogeneity (heterogeneity) of the slope parameters was tested, it is observed that the H_0 hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. These results have proven that the slope coefficients are heterogeneous.

The cointegration test developed by Westerlund & Edgerton (2007) was used. This test determines whether a long-run relationship exists between variables with the LM statistic. It also allows a cointegration test for both the model with constant and the model with trend. The null hypothesis (H_0) of the test states that there is a cointegration relationship between the variables. The decision rule of the test is that if the probability values of the calculated LM statistics are above significance levels, such as 5%, the null hypothesis (H_0) cannot be rejected; that is, it is stated that there is a long-run relationship between the variables. In this test, two probability values for the LM statistic are calculated. The first is the bootstrap probability value, and the second is the asymptotic probability value. The bootstrap probability value is considered in the case of horizontal cross-sectional dependence in the variables or model. In contrast, the asymptotic probability value is considered when there is no horizontal cross-sectional dependence. In this study, the hypotheses are evaluated by considering the bootstrap probability values since there is horizontal cross-section dependence in the variables.

Table 7. Westerlund & Edgerton (2007) LM Bootstrap Panel Cointegration Test Results

Constant	
Test	LM_N^+
Statistic	7.207
Bootstrap P-value	0.934

The results of the Westerlund & Edgerton (2007) cointegration test used due to the heterogeneous structure of the model in the analysis are shown in Table 7. Considering the bootstrap probability values, it is seen that the H_0 hypothesis cannot be rejected. For this reason, the results of the Westerlund & Edgerton (2007) test prove that there is a cointegration relationship between the variables. In Table 8, the long-term coefficients for the relationships between the series and the CCEMG estimation results in which the direction of these coefficients are determined are evaluated:

As observed in Table 8, where CCEMG estimation results are analyzed for the long term, an increase in the education index (EDU), life expectancy at birth (LE), and the share of ICT exports in total exports (ICT) also increases human capital (HCI).

Reviewing the analysis results in detail, it has been determined that a 1% increase in the education index, in the long run, increases the human capital by 0.24. In addition, it is seen that there is an increase of 0.0019 in human capital with an increase in life expectancy at birth in the long run. In addition, due to the 1% increase in the share of ICT exports in total exports, it was determined that there was an increase of 0.0031 in human capital in the long run. In this respect, the study supported the finding in question that Aksentijevi'c, et al. (2021). A significant and positive relationship at the level of 1% was found between the dependent variable, the human capital index, and all of the independent variables (EDU, LE, ICT). According to the results of the long-term effects based on countries, the group-specific coefficients were positive and statistically significant for all countries (Argentina, China, Brazil, South Africa, South Korea, Singapore, Poland, Russia, Thailand, and Turkiye).

5. Conclusion

In a digital world where technology is advancing rapidly, there is nothing more natural than changing the dimensions of communication. During the COVID-19 epidemic, which started in China in 2019 and spread to the whole world in 2020, the change in the dimensions of information and communication has become a regular flow of economic and social life. Now, many fields, including education and health, keep up with the pace of developments in information and communication technologies and are faced with a digital transformation process. Nowadays, information and communication technologies have emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors in the world.

This study uses the panel data analysis method to investigate the effects of information and communication technologies on human capital. The research hypothesis is "*ICT exports increase human capital.*" In the analysis part of the research, ten emerging economies (N=10 and T=20) were studied based on the 2000-2019 period regarding data availability. The dependent variable was the human capital index; the control variables were the education index and life expectancy at birth, and the independent variable was the share of information and communication technologies exports in total exports in the study.

Reviewed in the economic empirical literature, it is generally argued that ICT has become the basis of social and economic progress in developed and developing countries. In addition, as can be seen from the literature on this

Table 8. CCEMG Estimation Results

MODEL: [HCI=F(EDU, LE, ICT)]				
Wald chi2=9.573 P-value=0.000				
ΔHCI	*Coefficient*	*Standard Error*	*Z-value*	*P-value*
EDU	.2400958*	.195534	1.23	0.000
LE	.0005495*	.0106632	0.05	0.000
ICT	.0001165*	.0073987	0.02	0.000
Group-Specific Coefficients				

		Coefficient	Standard Error	Z-value	P-value
Argentina	*EDU*	.4131374*	.1333368	3.10	0.002
	LE	.0019739**	.0235249	0.08	0.033
	ICT	.043887***	.0235466	1.86	0.062
China	*EDU*	.0678307**	.1014658	0.67	0.004
	LE	.0485892*	.0057506	8.45	0.000
	ICT	.0002031**	.0019482	2.19	0.028
Brazil	*EDU*	.0246888*	.1226447	0.20	0.000
	LE	.0096814*	.0018788	5.15	0.000
	ICT	.0314656*	.0100482	3.13	0.002
South Africa	*EDU*	.0982735***	.0879729	1.12	0.064
	LE	.0010765***	.0027718	0.39	0.098
	ICT	.0031064*	.0004952	6.27	0.000
South Korea	*EDU*	.1113892**	.0720279	1.55	0.012
	LE	.0015642**	.0013174	1.19	0.023
	ICT	.0110222*	.0021221	5.19	0.000
Singapore	*EDU*	.2814216***	.1596357	1.76	0.078
	LE	.049578**	.023972	2.07	0.039
	ICT	.0037995**	.0017249	2.20	0.028
Poland	*EDU*	.0374955**	.0357464	1.05	0.025
	LE	.0223504*	.001244	2.24	0.000
	ICT	.0031356*	.0010452	3.0	0.003
Russia	*EDU*	.2437804*	.1087417	7.97	0.008
	LE	.0004076**	.0236707	0.15	0.040
	ICT	.0018992***	.000981	1.94	0.053
Thailand	*EDU*	.2437804*	.2352179	2.08	0.007
	LE	.003639**	.0258021	0.49	0.020
	ICT	.011467*	.0073777	1.55	0.000
Turkiye	*EDU*	1.524364**	.7320139	2.08	0.037
	LE	0308245**	.0886415	0.35	0.028
	ICT	.0004642***	.0033063	0.14	0.088
Note: *, ** and *** denote significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels, respectively.					

subject, it is possible to indicate that ICT, which has positive effects on human development, is a resource that helps poor countries' economic development. In empirical studies in both national and international literature, it is frequently emphasized that the export of information and communication technologies has a positive effect on economic growth. The importance and originality of this study is that it uses the CCEMG method within the scope of panel data analysis with ten countries selected from emerging economies to investigate the impact of information and communication technologies on human capital. So, the contribution of this study to the literature emerges in the context of the variables determined by the applied method and theory.

It is possible to list the findings obtained as a result of the analysis made in the study as follows, according to the CCEMG estimation results for the long term: an increase in the education index (EDU), life expectancy at birth (LE) and the share of ICT exports in total exports (ICT) also increases human capital (HCI). Reviewing the analysis results in detail, it has been determined that a 1% increase in the education index, in the long run, increases the human capital by 0.24. In addition, it is seen that there is an increase of 0.0019 in human capital with an increase in life expectancy at birth in the long run. In addition, due to the 1% increase in the share of ICT exports in total exports, it was determined that there was an increase of 0.0031 in human capital in the long run. In this respect, the study supported the finding in question that Aksentijevi'c, et al. (2021). It has been proven that there is a significant and positive relationship at the level of 1% between the dependent variable, the human capital index, and all of the independent variables (EDU, LE, ICT). According to the results of the long-term effects based on countries, the group-specific coefficients were positive and statistically significant for all countries (Argentina, China, Brazil, South Africa, South Korea, Singapore, Poland, Russia, Thailand, and Turkiye).

As a result, qualified human capital, which has become inevitable with the advances in ICT, creates a competitive environment for countries. Various policy recommendations can be given in the context of the effects of ICT on human

capital. It is essential to support entrepreneurs, academics, and technology suppliers in terms of developments in ICT. Countries should take essential steps such as disseminating technology workshops and increasing their quality, ensuring knowledge production with extremely high added value, and equipping their human capital in the light of knowledge. For this, it is necessary to create a qualified workforce by transferring information to human resources through training and seminars to increase information literacy, digital literacy, internet, and computer literacy, which are developed quantitatively and qualitatively with each new information. Therefore, developments in the IT sector and making the workforce durable and qualified in digital competencies also profoundly contribute to economic growth and development.

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Research Article

Dynamics of Herding Behavior in Cryptocurrency Markets Amid Market Crashes

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ABSTRACT

Herding behavior is expected to intensify with increasing uncertainty in financial markets, especially after jarring structural changes such as the pandemic. For this reason, in this study we examined herding behavior in the cryptocurrency market amid market crashes. Using daily cryptocurrency price data in 02.01.2018 - 22.03.2023 of the 9 most traded cryptocurrencies, the presence of herding behavior was investigated using the cross-sectional absolute deviation (CSAD) method. The dynamics of herding behavior was explored in 3 sub-periods: the Pre-Covid Period, the Covid-19 Period and the Post Market Crash Period after Tesla's Announcement. We also tested if the largest cryptocurrencies were driving small cryptocurrencies in the 3 sub-periods as well as the whole period. The findings of the study reveal that there is no herding in the market in significant market fluctuations. Moreover, there seems to be no asymmetric herding behavior as we distinguish between up and down markets. Hence, our findings imply rational investment decision-making. Yet, the results indicate that the largest cryptocurrencies are wielding a substantial influence over the rest of the market across the overall period and in the Post Covid Period (Period 2) in both up and down markets. However, in Period 1 and Period 3, the herding of small cryptocurrencies varies depending on whether the market returns are positive or negative. Our findings imply that the dynamics of the herding behavior between large and small cryptocurrencies has shifted with significant market crashes (outbreak of Covid-19, Tesla's announcement).

Keywords: Herding Behavior, Cryptocurrency Markets, Market Crashes, Covid-19

1. Introduction

Behavioral finance has been popular among investors, financial asset managers, and academic researchers. At its core, the field of behavioral finance seeks to understand and explain market inefficiencies and mispricing by examining behavioral biases and cognitive limitations. Several critical approaches, such as Prospect Theory and Herd Psychology, have been developed within behavioral finance to grasp how individual behavior impacts financial decision-making. Households and inexperienced investors are particularly susceptible to herding behavior, as they often rely on the knowledge and opinions of more experienced individuals when making investment decisions. Herding behavior can be defined as a form of behavior that is based on information and reputation. This behavior can be observed in various group settings, including large-scale demonstrations, riots and strikes, religious gatherings, and sporting events. Herding behavior is believed to be driven by various factors such as peer pressure, a desire to save time by not conducting extensive research, and a fear of guilt (Tversky The popularity of cryptocurrencies has increased in recent years due to their decentralized nature, transparency, and security, which is based on cryptography. Cryptocurrencies offer a decentralized form of exchange that utilizes cryptographic functions to execute financial transactions and leverages blockchain technology to achieve decentralization, transparency, and immutability. Furthermore, the security of cryptocurrencies is primarily based on cryptography, as evidenced by the use of Elliptic Curve Cryptography in Bitcoin transactions. This type of public-key cryptography uses mathematical algorithms to guarantee the security of financial transactions (Stancel, 2015); (Antonopoulos, 2017). & Kahneman, 1989).

The popularity of cryptocurrencies has increased in recent years due to their decentralized nature, transparency, and security, which is based on cryptography. Cryptocurrencies offer a decentralized form of exchange that utilizes cryptographic functions to execute financial transactions and leverages blockchain technology to achieve decentralization, transparency, and immutability. Furthermore, the security of cryptocurrencies is primarily based on cryptography, as evidenced by the use of Elliptic Curve Cryptography in Bitcoin transactions. This type of public-key cryptography uses mathematical algorithms to guarantee the security of financial transactions (Stancel, 2015); (Antonopoulos, 2017).

The cryptocurrency market has experienced rapid and uneven growth since its inception, with the launch of the first cryptocurrency, Bitcoin, in January 2009. Today, cryptocurrencies have gained widespread acceptance and have seen substantial development, and thus more than 8,000 cryptocurrencies are being traded in the market (Arias-Oliva, de Andrés-Sánchez, & Pelegrín-Borondo, 2021). Many hedge funds and asset managers have incorporated cryptocurrency-related assets into their investment portfolios and trading strategies in response to this growth. In addition, the proliferation of financial technologies and the emergence of new financial assets have led to the recognition of cryptocurrencies as an emerging asset class. With a global market capitalization of around $400 billion, the cryptocurrency market is rapidly approaching the size of a medium-sized stock market or some of the largest US companies, highlighting the significant growth and development of the cryptocurrency market in its short lifespan (Goforth, 2019).

One of the crucial characteristics of cryptocurrencies is the absence of financial intermediaries in the transaction process, resulting in reduced transaction costs for investors. Additionally, cryptocurrencies are not controlled by any central authority due to their decentralized nature within the blockchain framework, making them theoretically resistant to government control and interference. The lack of intermediaries and decentralization of cryptocurrencies have made them attractive to investors.

The outbreak of the highly contagious coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, declared as a large-scale emergency by the World Health Organization, has led to drastic decreases in sales and production of many companies in the global economy as well as significant changes in consumer purchasing habits. The impact of COVID-19 is widely recognized as an unprecedented global catastrophe, with a far-reaching impact on public health and the economy. As a result, the pandemic has seriously affected many assets in the global financial markets, particularly in the foreign exchange (Feng, Yang, Gong, & Chang, 2021); (Fasanya, Oyewole, Adekoya, & Odei-Mensah, 2021) and cryptocurrency markets (Demir, Bilgin, Karabulut, & Doker, 2020); (Iqbal, Fareed, Wan, & Shahzad, 2021). In this context, investor asset allocation, portfolio management decisions, as well the handling of financial instruments have garnered significant attention from academic and investment communities.

Herding behavior, especially during times of crisis when investors may experience similar fears and become more vulnerable to widespread financial unrest, is a topic of interest in the literature. Herding behavior occurs when investors, faced with uncertain information, tend to follow the investment decisions and actions of others, or rely too heavily on publicly available information at the expense of their knowledge (Bikhchandani & Sharma, 2000); (Chiang & Zheng, 2010); (Galariotis, Rong, & Spyrou, 2015). The COVID-19 pandemic has generated a "black swan effect" on

cryptocurrencies leading to behavioral anomalies such as herding behavior. Thus, herding remains influenced by market trends, but its strength did not increase during the COVID-19 pandemic (Yarovaya, Matkovskyy, & Jalan, 2021).The uncertainty and instability brought on by pandemics such as COVID-19 can increase investor fears about investing in cryptocurrency markets, leading to the imitation of other investors' behavior and herding behavior.

Therefore, examining the behavior of cryptocurrencies in the face of the pandemic is necessary to comprehend the effects of the pandemic on this emerging asset class. Since herding behavior is expected to intensify with increasing uncertainty in financial markets, especially after jarring structural changes and market crashes such as the pandemic, herding behavior was explored in 3 sub-periods: the Pre-Covid Period, the Covid-19 Period and the Post Market Crash Period after Tesla's Announcement. Moreover, we tested if the largest cryptocurrencies were driving small cryptocurrencies in the 3 sub-periods as well as the whole period. Daily cryptocurrency price data from 02.01.2018 until 22.03.2023 of the 9 most traded cryptocurrencies were utilized. In the post-Covid-19 period, the cross-sectional absolute deviation (CSAD) was used to explore herding behavior in the cryptocurrency markets. This provides a fresh comparison of investor behavior in unprecedented situations, which has not been explored extensively in the existing literature.

The findings of the study reveal that there is no herding in the market in significant market fluctuations. Moreover, there seems to be no asymmetric herding behavior as we distinguish between up and down markets. These results imply rational investment decision-making. Yet, the results indicate that the largest cryptocurrencies are wielding a substantial influence over the rest of the market Moreover, we explore if the largest cryptocurrencies are driving small cryptocurrencies in the 3 sub-periods as well as the whole period analyzed. To the best of our knowledge, this is one of the first studies to investigate if the dominance of large cryptocurrencies varies in different market conditions. The findings of this study may offer valuable insights to investors, asset managers, and policymakers by shedding light on the impacts of the pandemic and market crashes on the herding behavior and dominance of large cryptocurrencies in the cryptocurrency markets. These insights can help them make more informed decisions regarding investment strategies, risk management, and regulatory frameworks.

2. Theoretical Framework

Herding behavior in financial markets refers to investors' tendency to imitate other investors' behavior, leading to excessive volatility and short-term trends (Banerjee, 1992); (Kabir & Shakur, 2018). This behavioral bias can result from unintentional factors, such as events that cause investors to sell and buy the same asset simultaneously (Lakonishok, Shleifer, & Vishny, 1992), and deliberate factors, such as knowledge ladders and reputational concerns (Forbes & Rigobon, 2002). Previous research has attempted to measure market-wide herding behavior through the relationship between cross-sectional distribution and stock returns (Christie & Huang, 1995); (Hwang & Salmon, 2004) and has found that herding behavior is driven by emotional and psychological factors rather than macroeconomic factors (Lakshman, Basu, & Vaidyanathan, 2013); (Chen, Jang, & Kim, 2007).

Studies on herding behavior have primarily focused on stock markets (Chiang & Zheng, 2010) and commodity markets (Demirer, Lee, & Lien, 2015), with mixed and inconclusive evidence for their existence (Galariotis et al., 2015). However, it is essential to distinguish between actual herding behavior, where market participants act in unison, and "fake herding" behavior, where market participants make similar decisions based on similar information.

The evidence for herding behavior in cryptocurrency markets is limited, with a few studies suggesting its existence (Bouri, Gupta, & Roubaud, 2019); (Kaiser & Stöckl, 2020); (Kallinterakis & Wang, 2019). While the Efficient Market Theory suggests that fundamental factors drive market price formation, it cannot explain the volatility observed in speculative markets (Javaira & Hassan, 2015). Therefore, the extreme volatility in cryptocurrency markets may be driven by behavioral factors, such as herd psychology. The study of herding behavior in cryptocurrency markets has become increasingly crucial as cryptocurrencies have gained widespread attention due to their impressive returns and have attracted many new investors to the financial markets.

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a unique opportunity to examine herding behavior in cryptocurrency markets during this unprecedented "black swan" event. However, it is essential to note that while the COVID-19 pandemic may be considered a "black swan" event for cryptocurrency markets, it is not entirely unprecedented for traditional financial markets. Previous studies have discussed the impact of pandemics and infectious diseases on the economy (Bloom, Floetotto, Jaimovich, Saporta-Eksten, & Terry, 2018). The literature also provides evidence of the impact of previous pandemics, such as SARS, Ebola, Zika, H1N1, and HIV/AIDS, on economies and markets (Haacker, 2004); (Hoffman & Silverberg, 2018). The evidence for herding behavior in cryptocurrency markets is limited; the COVID-19 pandemic has provided a unique opportunity to examine this phenomenon in this emerging asset class.

The Sectional Standard Deviation (CSSD) and Sectional Absolute Deviation (CSAD) proposed by Christie and Huang (1995) and (Chang, Cheng, & Khorana, 2000) respectively, are commonly used techniques for measuring herding behavior in financial markets. These measures are based on the distribution of returns and are considered static measures. However, many researchers have found that dynamic models are necessary to capture the structural breaks and nonlinearities in the data. For example, Bouri et al. (2019) studied the swarm behavior for 14 cryptocurrencies and found no significant swarm behavior under static models but discovered swarm behavior when using the "rolling window" technique. The study suggested that uncertainty increases the tendency for herding behavior.

Poyser (2018) found that herding behavior is present in positive market returns when examining asymmetric herding for 100 cryptocurrencies. Haryanto, Subroto, and Ulpah (2020) detected herding behavior in up and down markets to distinguish between positive and negative market returns and suggested that herding behavior follows market trends. Vidal-Tomás (2021) observed swarm behavior only in down markets when analyzing asymmetric swarming for 65 cryptocurrencies. Finally, Ballis and Drakos (2020) concluded that there is swarm behavior after examining asymmetric swarming for six leading cryptocurrencies.

The literature provides conflicting results on herding behavior in cryptocurrency markets. Various studies suggest that herding behavior may be present in cryptocurrency markets, but the results vary based on the type of model used and the market conditions. da Gama Silva, Klotzle, Pinto, and Gomes (2019) claimed that herding behavior was mainly observed during bear market days, unlike Kyriazis, Papadamou, and Corbet (2020) who asserts that herding behavior mainly occurs in the cryptocurrency market during bull markets.

3. Data and Methodology

The aim of the current study is to investigate the price reactions of cryptocurrencies and the dynamics of herd behavior in the cryptocurrency market amid market crashes. To examine the herding behavior in cryptocurrencies, 9 cryptocurrencies with the largest market volume were analyzed (a list of the cryptocurrencies included in the study together with the trading volumes are given in Appendix 1). Cryptocurrencies, the market cap of which are above 0.5% were included in the study. Hence, 9 cryptocurrencies were considered, the total market cap of which represents approximately 83.28% of the total market (See Appendix 2). We used a market portfolio with equal weights to calculate market returns, consistent with the approach of previous studies such as (Chang et al., 2000) and (Chiang & Zheng, 2010).

From the Investing.com database, daily price data for the period from 02.01.2018 to 22.03.2023 were obtained for analysis. In addition, periodic analysis was performed alongside a comprehensive global examination. The duration of the study was divided into three distinct intervals to facilitate our analysis. The initial period, which lasted 743 days, ran from 02.01.2018 to 14.01.2020. The second period, which included a total of 492 days, ran from 15.01.2020 to 19.05.2021. Finally, the final period, with a total duration of 671 days, extended from 20.05.2021 to 22.03.2023.
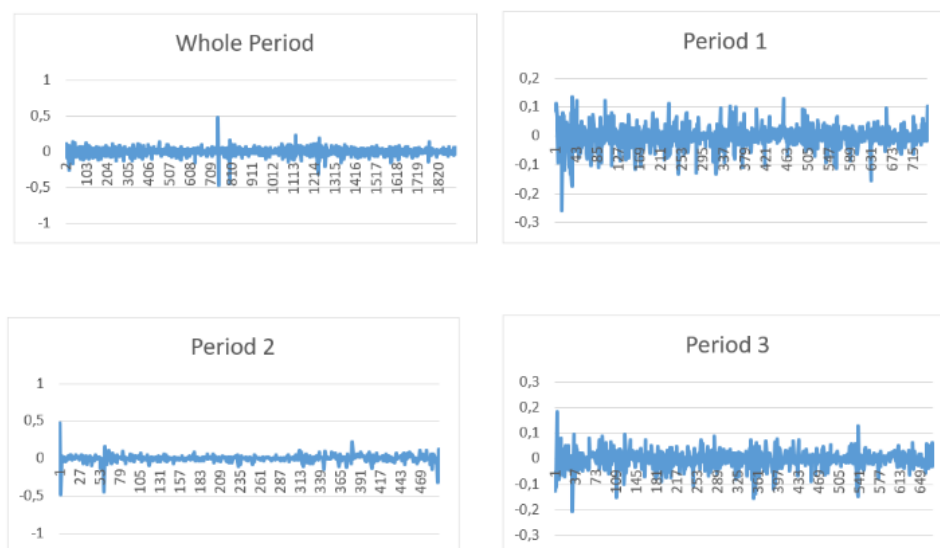

Figure 1: Market Portfolio Returns 02.01.2018 - 22.03.2023.

The first sub-period represents the pre-covid market conditions until the market crashes on the 15th of January 2020 (Day 746) by 47.4% upon the outbreak of the pandemic. The second sub-period represents covid-19 dominant market conditions until the market crash of 31.3% on 19th of May (Day 1235) following Tesla's Announcement regarding the withdrawal of the decision to accept the digital payments over concerns about the adverse impacts of cryptocurrency mining on the environment (Smith, 2023). The third sub-period represents the post market crash period after Tesla's Announcement until 22nd of March 2023.

Methods for identifying herding behavior fall into two broad categories. Lakonishok et al. (1992) and Sias (2004) are among the proponents of the first approach which focuses on a micro perspective and examines instances where certain types of investors exhibit herding behavior. As for the second approach, its advocates are (Christie & Huang, 1995); (Chang et al., 2000). With this second approach, attention is paid to the macro level which examines market activities and the prices of financial products accessible to any investor. The second approach forms the foundation of this study.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Market Returns

	Whole Period (%)	Period 1 (%)	Period 2 (%)	Period 3 (%)
Mean	0.0259	-0.1485	0.4737	-0.1094
Standard Error	0.1008	0.152	0.2517	0.1395
Median	0.231	-0.0397	0.6043	0.1018
Standard Deviation	4.4023	4.143	5.5827	3.6133
Sample Variance	0.1938	0.1716	0.3117	0.1306
Kurtosis	2207.4059	336.505	3069.0204	400.1264
Skewness	-101.2729	-57.9591	-146.826	-61.529
Range	94.6278	39.2654	94.6278	38.5822
Minimum	-47.4485	-25.8811	-47.4485	-20.3958
Maximum	47.1793	13.3843	47.1793	18.1863
Sum	49.3551	-110.3127	233.0658	-73.398
Count	1906	743	492	671

Thanks to the method developed by (Chang et al., 2000) herding behavior can be spotted across the range of market returns. This is achieved by using the cross-sectional absolute deviation (CSAD) of returns, which is expressed by equation (1).

$$CSAD_{m,t} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} |R_{i,t} - R_m, t|}{N} \tag{1}$$

The variables in equation (1) are defined as follows: $R_{i,t}$ refers to the return of a specific asset i during a given time period t, $R_{m,t}$ refers to the average cross-sectional return of the market portfolio at time t , and N represents the total number of assets considered in the analysis. Later, in the regression equation (2) the dispersion of returns in the event of large market fluctuations is used by the method.

$$CSAD_{m,t} = \alpha + \beta_1 r_{m,t} + \beta_2 |r_{m,t}| + \beta_3 r_{m,t}^2 + u_t \tag{2}$$

In accordance with the Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM), Chang et al. (2000) expressed the CSAD method, with evidence that the variation in returns is proportionally related to market returns in a linear fashion. According to

Vidal-Tomás (2021) a significant negative β3 coefficient shows the presence of herding behavior, while a significant positive β3 coefficient indicates rational asset pricing

Following Chiang and Zheng (2010), to identify the asymmetric herding effect, which is based on whether the market is rising (up) or falling (down), we divided the market returns into two categories. The regression equation (3) embodies the generalized form that incorporates all market return distributions.

$$CSAD_{m,t} = \alpha + \beta_1(1-D)r_{m,t} + \beta_2 Dr_{m,t} + \beta_3(1-D)r^2_{m,t} + \beta_4 Dr^2_{m,t} + u_t \tag{3}$$

The variables (1-D) and D are considered as dummy variables that take the value 1 when $r_{m,t} \geq 0$ and rm,t t<0, respectively.

To better understand the inner workings of this market as a final step, we observed whether smaller cryptocurrencies display herding behavior with larger virtual currencies. We followed the methodology employed by (Chiang & Zheng, 2010) whereby we split our sample into two sub-markets, with the aim of distinguishing between smaller and larger cryptocurrencies. The first sub-market comprises the 4 largest cryptocurrencies in terms of market capitalization, namely Bitcoin, Ethereum, Tether, and BNB, which represents 78.21% of the total market in terms of market cap. The second sub-market comprises 5 small cryptocurrencies namely XRP, Cardano, Dogecoin, TRON and Litecoin, which represents 5.1% of the total market in terms of market cap. (See Appendix 2).

$$CSAD_{s,t} = \alpha + \beta_1(1-D)r_{s,t} + \beta_2 Dr_s,t + \beta_3(1-D)r^2_{s,t} + \beta_4 Dr^2_{s,t} + \beta_5 CSAD_{l,t} + \beta_6(1-D)r^2l,t + \beta_7 Dr^2l,t + u_t \tag{4}$$

In equation (6), subscript denoted by 's' pertains to a sub-market comprising of small digital cryptocurrencies, whereas 'l' denotes a sub-market consisting of the largest ones.

4. Findings

4.1. *Is there herding behavior in the market in significant market fluctuations?*

Table II demonstrates the regression results of CSADm,t on market returns for the generalized form. It seems there is no herding in the market in significant market fluctuations as indicated by the absence of a negative coefficient $r^2_{m,t}$. Thus, these positive coefficients align with predictions made by rational asset pricing models.

Table 2: Regression Results of CSADm,t on Market Returns (Whole Period)

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	0.0135	0.0005	24.42	0.0000***
$r_{m,t}$	0.1609	0.0083	19.286	0.0000***
$|r_{m,t}|$	0.1322	0.0177	7.471	0.0000***
$r^2_{m,t}$	2.3336	0.0624	37.372	0.0000***

***significance at the 1% level;
** significance at the 5% level;
* significance at the 10% level

4.2. Is there asymmetric herding behavior?

The results in Table III indicate there is no asymmetric herding behavior as we distinguish between positive and negative market returns. The positive coefficients (1-D)r2m,t and Dr2m,t imply that the behavior of market participants in up and down markets was consistent with rational investment decision-making.

Table 3: Regression Results of $CSAD_{m,t}$ on Market Returns for Up and Down Markets (Whole Period)

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	0.0137	0.0005	24.926	0.0000***
$(1-D)\, r_{m,t}$	0.2337	0.0218	10.733	0.0000***
$Dr_{m,t}$	-0.0156	0.0204	-0.765	0.444
$(1-D)r^2_{m,t}$	2.7641	0.0921	29.997	0.0000***
$Dr^2_{m,t}$	2.0730	0.0744	27.869	0.0000***

***significance at the 1% level;
** significance at the 5% level;
* significance at the 10% level;

4.3. *Are the largest cryptocurrencies driving small cryptocurrencies?*

Table IV furnishes compelling evidence that small cryptocurrencies are herding with the largest cryptocurrencies. Significant negative values of $(1-D)r2l,t$ and $Dr2l,t$ indicate that the largest cryptocurrencies are wielding a substantial influence over the rest of the market across the overall period. In the Pre-Covid Period, the largest cryptocurrencies seem to drive the small ones when market returns are negative, but not when market returns are positive. Since the outbreak of Covid-19 the dynamics of the herding behavior between large and small cryptocurrencies have changed. Small cryptocurrencies seem to herd with the largest ones both in up and down markets. Yet, there seems to be another shift in the herding behavior after the market crash following Tesla's Announcement. Hence, in the last sub-period the dominance of large cryptocurrencies seems to disappear in down market while it continues in up markets.

In short, the results suggest that the performance of the rest of the market was driven by the behavior of the large cryptocurrencies in the whole period and in the Post Covid Period (Period 2) in both up and down markets. The positive and significant values of $CSADl,t$ during the whole period and Period 2 highlight the dominance of Bitcoin, Ethereum, Tether, and BNB in the cryptocurrency market. However, in Period 1 and Period 3, the herding of small cryptocurrencies varies depending on whether the market returns are positive or negative.

5. Conclusion

Using daily cryptocurrency price data in 02.01.2018 - 22.03.2023 of the 9 most traded cryptocurrencies, this study investigated the herding behavior in the cryptocurrency market amid market crashes by employing the cross-sectional absolute deviation (CSAD) method. The data of the study comprise the 4 largest cryptocurrencies in terms of market capitalization, namely Bitcoin, Ethereum, Tether, and BNB, representing 78.21% of the total market in terms of market cap, and 5 small cryptocurrencies namely XRP, Cardano, Dogecoin, TRON and Litecoin, representing 5.1% of the total market in terms of market cap.

Firstly, we explored if there was herding behavior in the market in significant market fluctuations, and we found that there seems to be no herding. Secondly, we distinguished between up and down markets, and similarly, we found no evidence for asymmetric herding behavior. These results imply that there was rational investment decision-making in the cryptocurrency market during the investigated period, which contests the commonly held perception that herding behavior becomes more pronounced under amplified uncertainty. In this respect, our findings are consistent with (Yarovaya et al., 2021). Finally, we examined whether the largest cryptocurrencies were driving small cryptocurrencies.

Regarding the dominance of the largest cryptocurrencies in the market, our results highlight that the largest cryptocurrencies were wielding a substantial influence over the rest of the market across the overall period) in both up and down markets. These findings are consistent with (Vidal-Tomás, 2021). Our study differs from similar studies as

Table 4: Regression Results of CSADm,t on Market Returns for the Small and Largest Cryptocurrencies

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Whole period				
Intercept	0.0113	0.0008	14.767	0.0000***
$(1-D)r_{s,t}$	0.1906	0.0228	8.374	0.0000***
$Dr_{s,t}$	0.0043	0.0213	0.202	0.834
$(1-D)r^2_{s,t}$	1.6729	0.0389	43.032	0.0000***
$Dr^2_{s,t}$	1.3472	0.0381	35.396	0.0000***
$CSAD_{l,t}$	0.2631	0.04818	5.462	0.0000***
$(1-D)r^2_{l,t}$	-3.2998	0.4559	-7.238	0.0000***
$Dr^2_{l,t}$	-1.7141	0.1063	-16.124	0.0000***
Period 1				
Intercept	0.0129	0.0011	11.271	0.0000***
$(1-D)r_{s,t}$	0.1212	0.0593	2.042	0.0415**
$Dr_{s,t}$	-0.0917	0.0402	-2.281	0.0228**
$(1-D)r^2_{s,t}$	1.7818	0.4708	3.785	0.0002***
$Dr^2_{s,t}$	0.6888	0.3343	2.060	0.0394**
$CSAD_{l,t}$	0.0908	0.0636	1.427	0.1541
$(1-D)r^2_{l,t}$	0.1166	0.6341	0.184	0.8541
$Dr^2_{l,t}$	-1.0023	0.5985	-1.675	0.0944
Period 2				
Intercept	0.0095	0.0021	4.422	0.0000***
$(1-D)r_{s,t}$	0.2595	0.0501	5.178	0.0000***
$Dr_{s,t}$	0.0966	0.0567	1.703	0.0891**
$(1-D)r^2_{s,t}$	1.5805	0.0721	21.917	0.0000***
$Dr^2_{s,t}$	1.2283	0.0841	14.605	0.0000***
$CSAD_{l,t}$	0.6306	0.1233	5.116	0.0000***
$(1-D)r^2_{l,t}$	-6.2984	1.1009	-5.721	0.0000***
$Dr^2_{l,t}$	-1.7065	0.1638	-10.418	0.0000***
Period 3				
Intercept	0.0115	0.0008	14.733	0.0000***
$(1-D)r_{s,t}$	0.2290	0.0485	4.726	0.0000***
$Dr_{s,t}$	-0.0800	0.0345	-2.317	0.0208**
$(1-D)r^2_{s,t}$	1.6908	0.4903	3.448	0.0006***
$Dr^2_{s,t}$	0.7490	0.2051	3.652	0.0002***
$CSAD_{l,t}$	0.0112	0.0676	0.166	0.8680
$(1-D)r^2_{l,t}$	-4.7671	0.8804	-5.415	0.0000***
$Dr^2_{l,t}$	-0.6012	0.4775	-1.259	0.2085

we analyze the dynamics of the herding behavior between large and small cryptocurrencies in different sub-periods. According to the findings of the study, although the performance of the rest of the market was driven by the behavior of the large cryptocurrencies in the Post Covid Period (Period 2) in both up and down markets, the herding of small cryptocurrencies varied depending on whether the market returns are positive or negative in Period 1 and Period 3. Hence, our results imply that the dynamics of the herding behavior between large and small cryptocurrencies has shifted with significant market crashes (outbreak of Covid-19, Tesla's announcement).

Our findings are limited by the time and the sample of the study. We focused on only 9 cryptocurrencies. Although these cryptocurrencies represent a significant portion of the market cap, the conclusions drawn may not fully apply to the entire market. Besides, we determined the sub-periods of the study by identifying the market crashes rather than applying structural break tests. Further studies may explore how the dynamics of the herding behavior between large and small cryptocurrencies change with structural break tests.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Cryptocurrencies Included in the Study

ID	Cryptocurrency
1	Bitcoin
2	Ethereum
3	Tether
4	BNB
5	XRP
6	Cardano
7	Dogecoin
8	TRON
9	Litecoin

Appendix 2: Market Cap Analysis of Selected Cryptocurrencies

ID	Crypto	Symbol	Market Cap (Million $)	Market Cap (%)	
1	Bitcoin	BTC	545.290	47.6%	
2	Ethereum	ETH	219.440	19.2%	
3	Tether	USDT	79.040	6.9%	
4	BNB	BNB	51.590	4.5%	**78.21%**
5	XRP	XRP	23.020	2.0%	
6	Cardano	ADA	12.990	1.1%	
7	Dogecoin	DOGE	9.990	0.9%	
8	TRON	TRX	6.140	0.5%	
9	Litecoin	LTC	5.870	0.5%	**5.1%**
Total	**Sample**		**953.37**		
Total	**Universe**		**1144.781**		**83.28%**

Review Article

Post-Socialist Ethnic Symbolism, Suppression of Yugoslav Social Memory, and Radical Populism Psychology

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ABSTRACT

The paper argues that post-socialist neoliberal democracy is hindered by the exposed or conditioned ethnic symbolic radical populism, particularly in the post-Yugoslav ethnonationalism political behavior. Moreover, the approach toward the fascist ideology symbols disregards the communist social memory of stability and human security and a collectivism-oriented community. Neoliberal globalization has strengthened national identities, supported by the war-related creation of ethnic homogenous territories. Consequently, former Yugoslavia's historical conflicting memory cultures from WW2 to the Yugoslav wars present enduring processes within sociopolitical ethnic-religious traditions. The collective historical and social memory that forms people's identities is manipulated, falsified, reduced, and politically instrumentalized. Contemporary ethnic-symbolic politics communicate through conservative political orientations: re-traditionalism behavior (including some left-wingers) advocates public acceptance. Historical anti-fascism actors have been stigmatized within attitudes toward fascist ideology symbolism and traditional Balkan sociopolitical mythologies. Frequent use of (often) antagonistic ethnic symbolism in textual, rhetorical and visual forms expresses it. Various methods of conducting historical revisionism in the symbolic and ideological vocations decrease Yugoslavia's social memory. Institutional and non-institutional engagement is normatively needed in a battle for correct memory. Citizens' participation in political decision-making outside the ethnoreligious paradigm is crucial. The consequence of populist political orders in ethnoreligious partitioned post-socialism is ethnic-symbolic collectivism. It oppresses individual identity and excludes the possibility of distinct classification. Contemporary notions of autonomy and mind, adapted to modern society, provide a theoretical framework for formulating political strategies in a post-national context. Acquisitive components of civil society and the society's stagnation due to slow consolidation can abruptly transform into political apathy motivating violent disorder. Accordingly, many sociopolitical realities symbolize and indicate that "democratized" post-socialist and post-Yugoslav states are more "inadequate" and "ineffective" than Yugoslavia.

Keywords: post-socialism, ethnic symbolism, radical populism, political psychology, Yugoslav social memory, ethnopolitics, historical revisionism

Introduction

Global politics (globally meaning comprehensive) is an ever-changing field, with if nothing else, a pace of change that accelerates over time. It refers to all elements within the system, not just the system as a whole. While such an approach acknowledges that a significant (and perhaps growing) spectrum of political interactions is now taking place globally, it rejects the idea that the global level has, in any sense, transcended policy at the national, local, or in that case, any other level. From this perspective, the advent of global politics does not imply that international politics should be consigned to the dustbin of history. Rather, "the global" and "the international" coexist; they complement one another and should not be seen as rival or incompatible modes of understanding (Heywood, 2014). A decade ago, nationalism seemed like a marginal phenomenon, essentially responding to the loss of regional power in the globalized world. The resurgence of nationalism in post-socialist European countries (Hungary, Slovakia, Poland) and the strengthening right-wing parties in Western Europe (Germany, France, The Netherlands) is a transient expression of socioeconomic discontent reaction to the Europeanization and globalization process.

Nevertheless, the demand for dignity and resentment policies point to political community challenges. The line of separation is often strengthened through mistrust and intolerance. This is also periodically evident through manifest ethnoreligious violence and nationalism, as in the Balkan wars. When socialism fell in Eastern Europe and Eastern European countries, with more or less success, the transition to becoming liberal democracies with a capitalist economy was initiated - the Balkan region did not take that path. Instead, it relied on one, perhaps the most dangerous ideology, ethnonationalism. Drawing on the work of Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm, Cas Mudde defines nationalism as "a political doctrine that seeks to match cultural and political communities, such as nations and states." In other words, the critical goal of nationalism is to achieve a monocultural state (Mudde, 2007). In this sense, Mudde refers to ethnic nationalism in which the ethnic community is considered the "primary or fundamental unit," while the state is considered the political will of the ethnic community.

The Allied victory in WW2 set the stage for democratic development in the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, and Italy, and finally in Portugal and Spain. Nevertheless, with all the legitimacies that did not, at least verbally, literally stand behind the universalist spirit of the political Enlightenment, the ground slipped away. However, on the other hand, great expectations and hopes soon continued in short or selective memory and political pragmatism and cynicism of new geostrategic divisions, new power games, and cold wars. Moral universalism (as the initial capital of victory) melted before the clash of opposing ideological paradigms, militaristic contests, and economic wars. True, the defeat of totalitarianism opened up promising new opportunities for the world, but the course of political and cultural history after 1945 spilled over into the backwaters of partial national-state and nation-centric interests or interest alliances (Habermas, 1998). The year 1945 in political and cultural memory (as well as in very concrete political actions) is presented as reworked, selectively (re) interpreted, instrumentalized, and adjusted to situational political interests and relations of political forces. The ideological amalgams, alterations, revaluations - whether the result of continuing and traditionalizing individual or collective experiences and memories of "Victory" or "defeat" in 1945, either in the form of the revitalization of old ideological struggles, myths, and prejudices (after the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and the loss of the center of ideological control) - especially after the experience of the 1991-1995 war and military aggression against Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) (Bosto & Cipek, 2009). The "Yugoslavia case" will never stop creating various fears and ghostly-atavistic illusions for the right, but also be an inexhaustible source of activist-theoretical reflections and lessons on the achievements of emancipatory-universalist policies for leftists. This indicates the natural character of the achieved levels of transition in people today and here, in a space euphemistically called a region -instead of fairy tales about liberal values democracy and prosperity in a market economy, a period marked by wars served as a brutal marking of the original accumulation and restoration of capital (in the manner of the already started criminal privatizations of the once social, and then state ownership)- we have come to the truth about the former Yugoslavia transition (Hromadzic, 2020).

In modern democracies, but also during their history, they resort to corrections of the classical understanding of democracy to establish effective control of the eruptive power of the most prominent ethnic group as a significant feature of a multicultural society. Consociation, federalism, decentralization, various forms of autonomy and self-government, and affirmative action are the most common forms of democratic governance in multicultural societies. Civic democracies also emphasize interculturalism as a particular strategy for regulating social relations. In contrast, populism, as a rule, violates the ideal of good governance in multiethnic societies. It advocates citizen participation in political life through the institute of direct democracy that lacks the subtlety to reconcile specific interests that derive from the ethnocultural identities of citizens. The parties of the left have lost to nationalists precisely among those poor or working-class voters who should be their strongest supporters (Fukuyama, 2018). The European working class did

not fall under the banner of the Socialist International in 1914 with the beginning of the First World War but with its national leaders. "The message of the awakening was intended for the classes. It was delivered to nations by a terrible postal error" (Gellner, 2009). Francis Fukuyama (2018) believes a similar condition happened to the Arab Spring events: a letter addressed to classes, delivered to religion. Instead of a social revolution demanding a better standard of living and greater civil liberties and rights, we got a religious revolution and demanded more political Islam in public life and consequently fewer individual freedoms. A comparable situation occurred and is resulting in all newly formed post-Yugoslav societies. To a greater or lesser extent, all post-Yugoslav societies, in economics, human dignity, rights, and freedoms, delay following a vibrant Western Europe. However, the most dominant dispositions are national, ethnic, religious, cultural, or linguistic identity. In the former Yugoslav countries, ethnic, national, and religious affiliation add to political radicalization. As a form of political power, politicized religions are, psychologically speaking, unconscious non-faiths. Due to the new national-state theoretical inadequacy (i.e., nationalism as an ideology), religion is used as an instrument of socialization and legitimization of new national-political state subjects. When nation and religion become "controversial" identification and mark others as potentially dangerous, through a policy that allegedly aims to "affirm" and "protect" its people and their faith, then in local historical and current circumstances, it essentially implies antagonism in the most dramatic conflicts (Hadžić, 2020).

The populism that "threatens others" is found in racial, ethnic, and religious differences; "xenophobic" populism. Fear from diversity, distrust according to immigrant cultures, rhetoric, prejudices, and stereotypes quickly lead the "mass" into nationalism, racism, chauvinism - features of xenophobic populism. As a rule, populism based on xenophobia is bad populism; it is the enemy of multiculturalism, causes instability, destroys connective social relations, exists in conflicts and fear. At its core are fear and the construction of the enemy. Umberto Eco's essay "Constructing the Enemy" indicates that we are in the process of history that has been accompanied by the need to identify the enemy concerning whom we evaluate and confirm our value system. That need is so strong that if there is no real enemy, we tend to "construct" it, and that matrix implies the construction of stereotypes about us as the embodiment of good and "Them" as the cause and embodiment of evil. The myth of the "evil" Jew, which has been around for centuries, deposited irrational hatred toward members of its own nation. It had a crescendo in the Holocaust. Bulgarian ethnologist Adela Peeva indirectly described Balkan ethnic antagonism in the documentary "Whose is this song."[1] It follows the melody of a folk song in different countries (Albania, Bulgaria, B&H, Macedonia, Turkey, and Serbia) but has a different text and hence is different. Thus, each Balkan nation thinks that "their" song is the best and that other nations cannot write and compose a beautiful song. Small-scale narcissism and ethnocentrism are breeding grounds for populism, putting the unscrupulous diversity of cultures, languages , and religions at the center of achieving a political goal (Bašić, 2017). "A nation is a narration, a story that people tell about themselves to land meaning to their social world." All these are discursive sketches that represent differences between social classes, ethnic groups, genders, and others and are shaped by the efforts of cultural power. It is better to say cultural powers because the actors of power in discourse are changeable (Wodak et al., 2009). In this context, the relevance of neoconservative forces will be expressed in antagonistic rhetoric and growing radical populist propaganda that relies on sovereignist principles in public appearances.

Long before the European Union (EU) was founded, the South Slavs created a community that would bring together differences and unite many South Slavic similarities for peace, stability, human security, and economic prosperity. Indeed, Yugoslavia was not ideal because it was totalitarian. However, it was a more liberal, gentle form of communism for almost the entire period of its existence.

In a Modern Diplomacy article, "How Yugoslavia was Syrianized 25 years ago", first published by New Eastern Outlook under the title: "A Yugoslavian Fantasy: 24th versus 149th Place," English expert Phil Butler argued that if Yugoslavia survived, the country would be a world power and Belgrade - Europe's capital. He writes: "But what if Yugoslavia had survived? What if the tremendous ethnic-socialist experiment had worked? Our world would be totally different today. With the Non-Aligned Movement of Nation-states (NAM) operating within its current borders, the EU would be less potent and far less influential geopolitically. All of Europe might have led to Belgrade and, from there, into the six republics (currently seven) now fighting for crumbs from Brussels. To galvanise how my fantasy Yugoslavian nation might look, I will leave you with the relative economic situations of current Balkans states and Yugoslavia's GDP in 1991, positioned at 24th among world nations. As of 2015, B&H is 112th economically, and conditions are worsening. Still, the poor Bosnians think joining the EU will solve all problems. Croatia is currently 76th in the world economically, but Bloomberg just named the country one of the 10 worst on Earth. Macedonia ranks 130th, with agriculture being the only real industry, and unemployment is above 40%. Despite the tiny country's sheer beauty, Montenegro is 149th among world nations. Like some other former republics, Montenegro believes EU ascension will

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[1] See: Dimitrova D. (2012). Youtube, "Whose is this song"

solve everything. Serbia is ranked 87th in GDP. Slovenia ranks 81st in GDP and is a potential miracle if tourism and other industries continue to grow there. I recall a moment of prosperity in the former Yugoslavia, the 1984 Olympics in Sarajevo, B&H. Those were the first Winter Olympics ever held in a Communist nation. The torch relay through Dubrovnik, then Split, Ljubljana, Zagreb, and countless other Yugoslavian cities culminated in a proud moment in Sarajevo. The names of the gold medal athletes there have become blurred in my mind now, but the little wolf mascot Vučko, created by the Slovenian painter Jože Trobec, is framed in my mind's eye for some reason. In a cartoon in Yugoslavia at the time, the little wolf represented the people of these Balkan nations well. Wolves are prominent in Yugoslavian fables; they are the embodiment of courage and strength, and they also symbolise winter. As I type this final text, I think about what Yugoslavia's courageous and strong people might have won had outsiders not interrupted their destinies. 24th place is a far cry from 149th in the Olympics. As for Yugoslavia, that nation is gone forever. First, Yugoslavia fell apart because of the West's influence, as the West did not find it suitable to have a powerful country in the heart of Europe. Second, Yugoslavia would have never fallen apart if the Yugoslav people did not have that seed of breakdown if they were not fertile ground for downfall." (Butler, 2016) Thus, it is evident that the people of Yugoslavia had much more opportunities in the past than they do today. They enjoyed excellent social welfare, a high socioeconomic status, economic prosperity, critical human security, and one of the most reputable passports globally, highly respected in the West and the East. The society was multi-ethnic, and people took pride in being Yugoslavs.

It would be wrong to ignore or underestimate national conflicts as the cause of the instability of Yugoslavia. However, it did represent the best and most inventive solution to various national issues in the region. Presently, Yugoslavia and Yugoslav nostalgia seem to have fewer in post-Yugoslav states. On the contrary, the impression is that there are more and more radical supporters - or at least they are more and more visible in the public, nationalist, and religious-fundamentalist organizations. After the collapse of the communist systems in Europe and the collapse of the USSR, it became clear that space was opening up for the restoration of traditional values and new versions of the interpretation of national history. At the forefront of this process are right-wing political parties that, rooted in traditionalism, create party policies based on their policies of remembrance.

For the actual demonstration of the nation's construction and, most importantly, its memory, the Yugoslav case is one of the better examples, not only because the whole construction of Yugoslavia was built and dismantled in more than a century. Hence, it is available for research and that in this framework, the Yugoslav state was quite successful for a certain period. Nevertheless, the fact is that after the Second World War, socialist Yugoslavia became a kind of European success story. Between 1960-1980, it had one of the highest economic growth rates in the world, a decent standard of living, free medical care and education, a guaranteed right to work, one of the most respected passports, one-month paid vacation, a literacy rate of over 90 percent, and a life expectancy of 73 years, in terms of living standards and freedoms ahead of most Eastern European countries and certain branches of the economy ahead of some Western European countries. After Tito's death, the most significant fact was that civil democracies did not replace communism but ethnonational ones. The contradictions between the political and economic spheres did not enable Yugoslavia's pacific self-transformation but extensive violence (Hadžić, 2021). In 1981, when the Albanians from Kosovo demanded a republic, it was called a counter-revolution while the socialist ideology was still valid. Suddenly, in the mid-1980s, a new wave came that was no longer called a counter-revolution -meaning in the socialist-style: revolution and counter-revolution- but was called an ethnic-religious threat.

Unlike historical culture resulting from educational, institutional, and ideological efforts around "unity of forms in which historical knowledge is presented in one society," culture of memory unites activities within different socio-cultural areas. It is based on the abilities of individual (ethnic, social, moral) communities to actively shape the pluralism of cognitive and moral consensus in society. The connection of personal memories with the social context, the influence of inherited beliefs, prejudices, and tacit knowledge with which individuals manifest their belonging to a particular community (Kirin, 2009). The thematization of the Yugoslav case is inspiring because it can simultaneously point out the advantages and limitations of the functions of shared social memory in multiethnic and multireligious societies and the deep dependence of the state's survival on the skill of working on national memory. However, the short spring of civil society concepts and the formation of social capital in the 1980s quickly turned into the ethnicization of Yugoslav society. The consequences were, in principle, ethnically homogeneous communities whose internal social capital was produced to the detriment of restrictions and the struggle against other ethnic communities. Just as globally, parallel universes of migrants and the local population meet and intertwine only by the necessity of life, so parallelism sometimes coexists in the Balkans. Often there are no authentic touches and among which there is a latent possibility of conflict. It is confirmed by forms of less national and religious imprisonment, retrograde, and authoritarian mindset supporting a way of life that nurtured patriarchalism and religious and national exclusivism (Hadžić, 2021).

The countries of the Western Balkans during the 1990s were dominated by competitive authoritarian regimes that

combined multi-party elections with nationalist rhetoric and the privatization of the state to related business interests. The current competitive authoritarian systems are structurally different from those of the 1990s. After a move towards democratization in the early 2000s across the region, authoritarian practices began re-appearing in the late 2000s. This form of competitive authoritarianism results from weak democratic structures, facilitated by the weakening and insufficient transformative power of external actors, first and foremost the EU (Biener, 2018). There are similar practices of populism and authoritarian regimes. Populism is very pragmatic; like a chameleon, it adapts to different political goals and connects with other ideologies like nationalism, ethnonationalism, socialism, and authoritarianism (Pajnik, 2019). The sentence "Now one can beat you expect your Police" echoes in the Balkans from April 1987, in the commotion that arose during the demonstrations in front of the House culture in the field of Kosovo, addressed to the citizens by the then President of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic. At first glance, there is nothing disputable in the sentence. Violence is not the way to resolve any dispute, and the state is obliged to prevent it. However, suppose the context in which this sentence was uttered is understood. In that case, when Slobodan Milosevic addressed ethnic Serbs and Montenegrins and the force was expressed by members of the "people's" militia in predominantly ethnic Albanians, it got a different meaning. Especially, since it is after Milosevic uttered it, he gained widespread support, which he did welcome in the preparations for the Eighth Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists Serbia, where he dealt with dissidents and became one of the most influential politicians in the area of the former Yugoslavia (Basic, 2015). Slobodan Milosevic spread the politics of the strong leader, a "savior of the people." He "directly" conveyed the "will of the people" and mobilized them on some comprehensive and emotional majority principle. It had the form of politics with a democratic face but an authoritarian configuration.

In all Yugoslav republics, Slovenia, Croatia, B&H, Serbia (with the autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina), Montenegro, and Macedonia, citizens defined themselves as belonging first to the Yugoslav state, followed by their republic. Is the unanimous condemnation of the Declaration[2] on a Common Language of all the states of the former Yugoslavia sufficient? Is this the end of the crisis with the "Yugoslavs" and social memory in this region? For example, the Croatian (the EU member) intellectual community, it is true, reacted to this provocation with a quality harangue, according to the laws of nature - but thus, the danger of Yugoslavism is not even remotely suppressed because, in addition to the public, there are also private - therefore secret - manifestations of deviant behavior. What about, for example, those citizens of Croatia who did not sign the Declaration but remember Yugoslavia in a more favorable light than is tolerable? The countries do not have a mechanism, i.e., equipped to determine such personages. In order to protect national interests, it is necessary to step into the space of personal memories and clear out Yugoslavia, which is being preserved there, which is squatting in deception and arranging for a favorable moment to take to the open stage and take on epidemic proportions. It is reasonable to believe that many undermine Croatia through personal memories without us even noticing it. Reasonably, the creators and signatories of the Declaration on a Common Language intended to open just that rift, to make people think that the truth could be more important than the state. Far from being the first case of insidious factual extremism, namely the efforts to weaken and derogate state-building enthusiasm by bare facts. Therefore, the Yugoslavs and the general chase launched against them are trying to redirect to their benefit, sowing doubt in the meaning and strength of the Croatian state (Ivancic, 2017). It also implies other post-Yugoslav countries.

There are conflicting memories of Ustashaism and communism in Croatia, and conflicts over the memory regime occur daily, even though 75 and 30 years have passed since the disappearance of the Ustasha and communist orders, respectively (Capo, 2015). Moreover, the conflicting memories are reproduced by politicians and politicized media, and this is precisely why the signifiers "communist" and "Ustasha" are empowered in everyday discourse. Moreover, anti-fascist and partisan monuments are an unwanted heritage in all post-communist states, particularly in the case of former Yugoslavia states. Unlike the post-communist countries of the Eastern Bloc, where the personalities of the political system were essentially glorified through public sculpture, it should be emphasized that the post-socialist countries of Yugoslavia are among the countries with the highest number of casualties in World War II, to the extent of commemorating the victims. It is also important to say that monuments in the Eastern Bloc countries have been publicly removed or touristed. The logic of capitalism, dictated by the instinct for expansion and accumulation of capital, in addition to being emancipated into a more aggressive degree of dynamics by the concept of neoliberal capitalism, carried out the so-called doctrine of shock, which is not based on gradual reform, instead of on the rapid and destructive dismantling of the old social infrastructure of life in order to create a capitalist paradigm in sterile conditions, but also to overtake the first dissatisfaction with the real effects of capitalist realism.

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[2] See: Jezici i nacionalizmi, Deklaracija, Retrieved from http://jezicinacionalizmi.com/deklaracija/

Even in liberal democracies such as the USA, "the new politics of abuse, cronyism, corruption, cruelty, and violence are also a kind of remix and repetition of the past. They are all things we have seen before under fascism. Sadly, far too many seem to greet this abusive remix and repetition with all the pleasurable fondness and charm of nostalgia. Fortunately, the remix resistance to this abusive fascist politics is an equally inescapable part of our culture, and it is growing too. The same digital tools being used by fascists are simultaneously being used against fascists through the production of a politicized, anti-fascist art that is both a response and a weapon against fascism. The struggle continues even though the terrain has shifted. The remix of racism, anti-Semitism, and fascism has become a potent force in our current political culture. It is in the White House. It is in the news. It is a part of daily life" (Stanovsky, 2017). We live in a world dominated by images in which the images shape political events and how we understand them. Indeed, visual images not only represent and reflect the world but also affect and reshape the embedded ideologies and the connected systems of values they carry out. Thus, regarding fascism, the visual strategy allows readers to see the transnational rise of the right as it fed off the agitated energies of modernity and mobilized shared political and aesthetic tropes. Using photography, graphic arts, architecture, monuments, and film—rather than written documents alone—produces a portable concept of fascism, useful for grappling with the upsurge of the global right a century ago and today (Thomas & Eley, 2020).

The current Balkan policies towards the anti-fascist heritage and monuments (numerous examples) are such as that have been desecrated and destroyed everywhere in the past thirty years to erase the memory of the fight against fascism, to destroy what unites different peoples and religions, and to promote nationalist and fascist politics. It recalls the advent of communism, which leads to the encouragement of fascism. In Uzice, Tito's followers are pushing for the return of his monument. The monument was removed in 1991 when the country began to sink into a new war. The city used to be called "Tito's Uzice" because of the role it played in the fight of Yugoslav partisans against fascist forces and almost every street was named after a fighter while the five-meter-tall statue of the then-leader dominated the city's central spot - Partisan Square. Monuments to Josip Broz Tito have been erected throughout the former Yugoslavia, and in some places, they are still visited by those who gladly remember the shared state. The statues were erected in several places throughout the former Yugoslavia, in Kumrovec, in front of Tito's birthplace. However, he was attacked by unknown perpetrators by activating an explosive device in 2004. It is speculated that the attack was carried out in response to the Croatian government removing monuments to the Ustashas[3] (Ristic, 2013). One of the reasons people appreciate Tito's monuments is that they are monuments throughout that period, the period of social and economic stability, overall security, and the international reputation of the former Yugoslavia. That should be nurtured.

As one of the younger psychological disciplines, political psychology, among other issues, has been trying to discover what drives, directs, slows down, and determines the role and position of the individual in the structure of relationships and processes relevant to his political behavior. The individual as part of the more comprehensive and complex social structures and relations that prevail in it, for the psychological understanding of political processes, is the critical bearer of political action and its perception, beliefs, opinions, values , and interests (along with all other "external" factors) are the basis of political behavior and action. Political psychology from the individual's position is interested in the individual's perception of the politically relevant environment, his satisfied and unmet needs, attitudes he forms about the politically relevant environment, and the behavior that results from all this (Siber, 1998). Research on political behavior that seeks to shed light on the nature of the relationship between politics and the individual has intensified in recent decades in psychological science across several scientific fields (social psychology, personality psychology, political psychology), but the rapid development of political behavior research has not, and there is still no consistency in the operationalization of political behavior. In addition, situational and cultural characteristics of the individual, such as socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, and place of residence, initially dominated the explanation of preference and participation of individuals in political activities (Houghton, 2009). However, he later clarifies the role of personality dispositional variables in an individual's political activity.

Social psychology, political psychology, and political science provide valuable research directions and a stimulating analytical framework for sociopolitical events. Underlining the role of social psychology in this frame is critical and can provide outputs relevant not only to academics but, critically, to policymakers and educators. Such outputs can potentially be used to increase political literacy from an early age, allowing a more critical evaluation of populist messages and, possibly, minimizing populist appeal. However, it remains to be tested and would undoubtedly require active, fluent collaboration among relevant stakeholders (such as researchers, practitioners, and educators) (Stathi and Guerra, 2021). Furthermore, the interaction between the mind of a political being and his environment occurs in a

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[3] The Ustaše was a Croatian fascist and ultranationalist organization active, as one organization, between 1929 and 1945, formally known as the Ustaša – Croatian Revolutionary Movement. During World War II, its members murdered hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews, Roma, and political dissidents in Yugoslavia.

cognitive process. It involves receiving and interpreting information from the outside. The cognitive process leads to voluntary action, where the voluntary action of the actor is the result of his/her decision to act (Cottam et al., 2010). Interest in public policy actors, and thus their will, is research into the decision-making process; the way we make our choices (Smith & Larimer, 2009). In this sense, the literature on public policy often uses rational choice theory. In an ideal rational world, public policies and option decisions are objective and consider the optimal efficiency and effectiveness of the chosen solutions. B&H's three maximalist nationalisms in B&H pushed into a two-entity and District (i.e., Brcko District) division. First, Serb nationalists do not appreciate (like) the B&H framework; although minimal, Bosniak nationalists do not like the entity division, while the least numerous Bosnian Croats want their entity. Nada Beglerovic (2020), in the Discourse-historical analysis of the behavior of Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik, has uncovered the identity formation of democratic antagonism. B&H has a complicated institutional setup. It has a political system that appears to be ethnonational, allowing political elites with different aspirations to maintain power by using nationalist rhetoric. With his rhetoric, Dodik not only portrays his vision and construction of the Republic of Srpska entity (the other entity is the Federation of B&H) and Serb identity, but he also emphasizes ethnic antagonism. Dodik instrumentalizes the past, or his version of it, to portray national victimization, which might serve as a pretext for a political or armed attack on the "other." Dodik plays the ethnic/religious card and tries to rekindle forgotten ideas or create non-existent grievances. Dodik's rhetoric, more nationalistic by the day, exposes him as a bulwark against a united B&H. Dodik may not be willing to forswear brinkmanship, which has turned out, although a gamble to be beneficial for him in the past (Beglerovic, 2020).

At the same time, public opinion research focuses mainly on how political influence is exercised through communication and how such influence manifests in forming political will. Instead, propaganda is a means by which political beliefs and notes are made palatable and famous in a technological society; this is essential for forming political will, but it does not necessarily result in harmful effects. Political manipulations and far-right populism have become the primary political tools in the Western Balkans. As a result, negative peace seems to have become, even decades after the wars, the most significant epochal reach and value in this region, and the fundamental values that adorn civilized nations such as a good standard of living, a strong economy, and mutual respect for the other and the difference will have to wait for other generations and some better times (Iseric, 2018). Albert Hirschman's 1970 study "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty" uses the terms "going out," "voice," and "loyalty" to describe how members of businesses, organizations, and states behave in problematic situations or crises. "Going out" means withdrawing from a group that has faced problems, "voice" describes a situation in which members offer solutions to overcome a crisis, while "loyalty" means expressing support and commitment to group leadership. These three types of responses can also be applied to voter behavior. The "exit" option implies political abstinence; voting for new parties and options can be understood as a "vote," while voting for mainstream, established parties means "loyalty." The application of Hirschman's model to the results of local elections suggests that no significant change has taken place in Croatia. Most Croatian citizens opted for the "exit" option, i.e., political abstinence (Salaj & Grbesa, 2021).

The truth about the Yugoslav transition is that it is not a given linear-historical, evolutionary-progressive construct, from some imaginary point and according to the imaginary point, but just the opposite. We are witnessing the reversible nature of the transition that takes us back to social conditions, relations, and circumstances of the backwardness of late feudalism, clothed in the thin cloak of (neo) colonial capitalism from the European (semi) periphery, what preceded our short a historical episode of emancipation through socialism. It is a picture of the former Yugoslavia transition reflecting re-feudalized societies in disintegration, ideologically and practically produced conditions of late-capitalist exploitative realities (Hromadzic, 2020). Nationalism used populist strategies while exploiting frustrations with the former order and national identity complexes accumulated under the Yugoslav policy of disciplining nationalisms, and exploited after the fall of the socialist ideological concept and established itself as the leading hegemonic force. However, because nationalism, unlike capitalism, prioritizes the politics of identity, that identity has been exposed to radical purification and censorship of the cultural-memorial heritage of socialism — that is, the politics of oblivion. Absolute to irrationality by war polarization, in the unilateral exclusion of the socialist concept, nationalism fatally rejected the fruits of the socialist modernization of society. In antagonism, it is critical to note that nationalism, which was fundamentally confronted with all paradigms of the socialist period (Markovina, 2015), was not so interested in alternative modernism offered by the West with capitalist liberalism. Then, for the pre-modern and anti-modern concepts of its own "long 19th century" (Duda, 2010), wanting to establish continuity with its imaginary past rather than synchronous integration with the values of modern Western societies. The least that an exemplary Croatian patriot needs is to remember how an undemocratic order with one party that does not allow the exploitation of workers can be less cynical than a parliamentary façade of capital than the possibility of voting for one of a hundred political parties and each supporting exploitation. Castration of memory is one of the better ways for an exemplary Croatian patriot to

exercise his right to be exploited. Furthermore, along the way, to erase the remaining traces of modernity at the expense of hearth fanaticism (Ivancic, 2017).

At the heart of the radical right's policy is ethnocentrism. It is based on emphasizing the uniqueness and superiority of a particular national culture. Supporters of the radical right should not be sought exclusively among the "losers of transition," but above all among people who seek a secure a foothold in a time of uncertainty caused by the rapid changes caused by globalization. They find security in their national identity. These are people who shy away from the "Other", believing that foreigners are endangering their national identity and the material goods of their nation. It is precisely the definition of the "Other" as an enemy that is at the root of revisionist interpretations of the past. The myth of a homogeneous nation is at the heart of the radical right ideology. It is characteristic of nationalism that starts from the romantic notion of the nation as a single body, which essentially determines the language that reflects the "people's soul." It is about understanding the nation that places it somewhere "halfway between demos and ethnos" (Mikenberg, 2000). Similarly, one could say that the radical right is moving between two banks, the fascist and the conservative, once docking on one bank and once on the other, because one cannot always drive in the middle of a river (Ziegler, 2018). Therefore, it is not questionable that its anti-Enlightenment and nationalism sometimes have fascist features, but it is not a political position that wants to eradicate democratic institutions. It should be reiterated that the radical right wants democracy exclusively for the members of its nation and rejects the liberal elements of the modern Western political order.

Throughout the world, attempts to revise the results of World War II falsification of historical facts are punishable. However, in the former Yugoslavia, collaborators of Hitler's genocidal machines and members of political-military/paramilitary formations (including convicts of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia) regularly receive pensions and medals. Schools and streets are named after them, and they are celebrated at rallies. Ceremonies regularly led by religious officials accompany the commemoration of the events (e.g., the gathering of Chetniks members at the-Ravna Gora movement, tributing Draza Mihajlovic). Paradoxically, World War II strongmen, the Croat Ante Pavelić[4], and the Serb, Draža Mihailović[5] and their Ustaša and Četnik followers are being praised by nationalists and clerics of the region as patriots. At the same time, genuine anti-fascists and communists have acquired the stigma of national traitors. According to some media, Ustaša, Četniks, and the like are becoming more and more noble (Hadžić, 2020). Politics of parallel memory[6] and a revisionist historical narrative within the politics of fear spread influence among young people among whom ethnopolitical indoctrination has reception and is left to chance, creating solid preconditions for hostilities in future generations to escalate into violence in specific political-economic circumstances (Hadzic, 2020).

Systematically, the ideologies and policies of the radical right have the following characteristics: a) the supremacy of the collective (nation, state) over the individual - in contrast, liberal democracy emphasizes the importance of the inviolable rights of the individual; b) anti-pluralism - the state and society should be homogeneous, and minorities are always a disruptive factor; c) anti-parliamentarism - reduction of politics to a friend-enemy relationship; d) an authoritarian state, which protects a homogeneous nation from liberal individualism and is the "logic" of universal human rights - they are there exclusively for members of their own nation; and e) the frequently present historical revisionism and anti-Semitism, which denies or relativizes fascist crimes and advocates a conspiracy theory about the Jewish world government; in recent times there has been f) intolerance towards Islam; and finally, g) emphasizing the importance of "metapolitics" which, through the mastery of specific discourse, should win the "souls of people" and ensure the cultural hegemony of the right. Suppose the above definition of the radical right is applied to the situation in B&H. In that case, it can be noticed that the radical right of B&H has all these characteristics, but elements of its ideology can be found in several other B&H parties. The central place of her ideology is occupied by ethnonationalism, religious fundamentalism, and anti-communism. B&H differs from the Western European right in its even more pronounced, extreme anti-communism. Namely, in the West, after the collapse of communist dictatorships, anti-communism becomes secondary, and the radical right considers "decadent" liberalism as its main enemy (Weiss,

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[4] Ante Pavelić was a Croatian politician and dictator. He founded and headed the fascist ultranationalist organization known as the Ustaše in 1929 and governed the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), a fascist puppet state built out of parts of occupied Yugoslavia by the authorities of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, from 1941 to 1945.

[5] Draža Mihailović was the leader of the Četniks detachments of the Yugoslav Army during World War II. His ambitions were: the struggle for the liberty of our whole nation under the scepter of His Majesty King Peter II; the creation of a Great Yugoslavia and within it of a Great Serbia which is to be ethnically pure and is to include Serbia, Montenegro, B&H, Srijem, the Banat, and Bačka; the struggle for the inclusion into Yugoslavia of all still unliberated Slovene territories under the Italians and Germans (Trieste, Gorizia, Istria, and Carinthia) as well as Bulgaria, and northern Albania with Skadar; the cleansing of the state territory of all national minorities and national elements; the creation of contiguous frontiers between Serbia and Montenegro, as well as between Serbia and Slovenia by cleansing the Muslim population from Sandžak and the Muslim and Croat populations from B&H.

[6] For example: For Croatia, the military action "Storm" in 1995 (The last major battle of the was a significant factor in the outcome, against the self-declared) was considered a magnificent victory. For Serbia, it was a case of ethnic cleansing. The attitudes of ordinary citizens, Serbs, and Croats, have not changed significantly. Many believe that the relations between the two states on the anniversary of "Storm" are becoming tenser each year. The fight against revisionism is an ongoing process. In the case of B&H, that story intensified in 2006 and continues to this day. The agents of revisionism have organized and strengthened institutionally (Slobodna Europa, 2016).

2017). Unlike the circumstances in Western Europe, in B&H, we are witnessing the phenomenon of anti-communism without communists. All the liberal values that establish the Western democratic order have proclaimed some remnants of communism.

Moreover, radical right politics advocate a similar thesis in Croatia. The basis of historical revisionism in the post-Yugoslav states, including B&H, is radical anti-communism. On the one hand, this position seeks to rehabilitate fascist movements and quisling regimes and movements (Ustasha, Chetnik[7], foreign Muslim militias[8]), and on the other hand, to present the anti-fascist movement and the Communist-led NOB[9] as absolutely criminal (Cipek, 2019). The inability of society and politics to shape collective memories of Ustashaism and Communism and evaluate past events (Cipek 2009) spills over from politics and the media to various dimensions of society, including the academic community (Capo, 2015).

Croatian President Zoran Milanovic, and the most dominant Croatian socialist left-wing party, SDP, relativized the Srebrenica genocide twice in 2021, creating a more prominent dishonor than the one that led to his unworthy comments about Europe's most significant war crime since World War II. Thus, willingly or unwillingly, Milanovic added to his now-established practice of supporting Milorad Dodik's[10] secessionist policy towards B&H's willingness to participate in even more destructive than bad politics; it prevents good in advance: relativizing crimes, insulting victims, and denying the truth (Pavelic, 2021). Moreover, paradoxically, World War II strongmen, the Croat Ante Pavelić and the Serb Draža Mihailović are being praised by nationalists and clerics of the post-Yugoslav region as patriots. At the same time, genuine anti-fascists and communists have acquired the stigma of national traitors. According to some media, Ustaša, Četniks, and the like are becoming nobler. Finally, humankinds great concern stems from the increasingly aggressive foreign policy, xenophobic sentiment, and the growing inclination of the autocratic populist government to stop the transition of violence to democracy in the scientifically-technologically and culturally-spiritually objectively connected global community (Hadžić, 2020).

Method, Research Design, and Literature Review

Both general scientific (deduction, analysis, and synthesis) were used in the study. In addition, the study included an in-depth theoretical literature review and examination of a range of other sources such as primary documents relating to "social relations" (media accounts and academic reports). Research on populism traverses multiple disciplines, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies. The roles of social psychology, political psychology, political science, political sociology, and peace and conflict scholarship could help us better understand contemporary populism associated with ethnic nationalism. The interdisciplinary theoretical nature of the study and understanding helps us avoid several traps within descent-based attributes, ethnic and political contextual factors that are challenging to generate over a brief period in post-conflict divided societies like the Balkans, i.e., former Yugoslavia.

Discussion and Results

Ethnic symbolism is ideologically appropriated and manipulated by the conservative right to restore traditional values and a symbolic heritage that is considered politically acceptable. Politically acceptable parties of the right consider the historical heritage and values of the establishment before the communist rule. Therefore, worldview and political cleansing are carried out from individual and collective memories directly related to the period of communism. There is a renaming of streets and squares, demolition of monuments, and even those representing symbols of participation in the anti-fascist coalition and the fight against fascist evil. The execution sites of those defeated in World War II are being rehabilitated and celebrated. This practice of the politics of remembrance is represented by the political parties of the right, which are in parallel fighting to realize other values related to the conservative worldview by winning on a symbolic level.

Josip Broz Tito was known symbolically-politically and nationally as the "greatest son of the Yugoslav people," loved

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[7] Četnik is an expression used to denote members of the Serbian nationalist-chauvinist movement of Greater Serbia ideology. The word "Chetnik" has changed its meaning throughout history. It was used in the 19th century and early 20th century in Serbia, Macedonia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Today's meaning of Chetnik is Members of a Serbian military organization with a distinctly nationalist chauvinistic Greater Serbia goal. A Yugoslav royalist and Serbian nationalist movement and guerrilla force in Axis-occupied Yugoslavia. Although it was not a homogeneous movement, it was led by Draža Mihailović.

[8] Bosnian mujahideen were foreign Muslim volunteers who fought on the Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) side during the 1992–95 Bosnian War. They first arrived in central Bosnia in the second half of 1992, intending to help their Bosnian Muslim co-religionists in fights against Serb and Croat forces. Estimates of their numbers vary from 500 to 6,000.

[9] It is the national liberation struggle of Yugoslavia during the Second World War. Although most world and domestic historians consider the People's Liberation Struggle one of the greatest struggles of World War II, neo-Nazis, Balkans Ustasha, Chetnik, and similar movements often try to denigrate and portray it as harmful.

[10] He is a Bosnian Serb politician serving as the 7th and current Serb member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the collective federal head of state. Dodik has been on the US Department's black-list for many years, and his time in power has been characterized by authoritarianism, repudiation of Bosnian federal institutions, and closer connections to Serbia and Russia (Kovacevic, 2019).

Figure 1. *in Pula, Croatia, Tito's monuments are dotted with Ustasha far-right, ethno/national/religious symbols, and fascist messages with the Nazism inscription "The park of Ante Pavelić"*
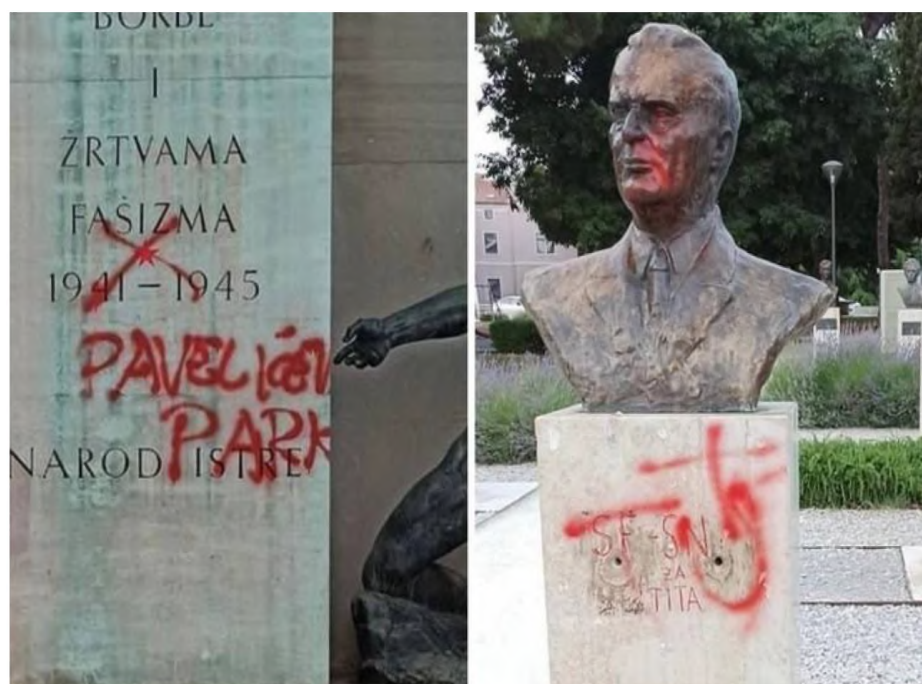
Source: GlasSrpske, 2021.

by many Yugoslavians (particularly the working class). Vojislav Šešelj, a Serbian (B&H-born) right-wing politician, an academician, convicted war criminal (ICTY) and founder of The Serbian Radical Party (SRS), an ultranationalist political party in Serbia and B&H, with his supporters on May 4, 1991, on the day of Tito's death (May 4, 1980), wanted to drive a "hawthorn stake" into Tito's graveyard in Belgrade, Serbia. He also requested that the body of the former president of Yugoslavia be removed from Serbia to his native Kumrovec in Croatia. Seselj stated in 2017: "When we then brought a hawthorn stake to Tito's grave, it was a demonstration that this evil (Tito) must leave Serbia. Of course, I had courage, but you cannot hack a granite grave with a hawthorn stake. It was symbolic, and then we managed to destroy the cult of Tito. He added that even after so many years, he still has the same opinion about Broz: "He was an autocrat and criminal who brought great evil. He killed more Serbs than Hitler, and we must constantly remind our people of that. As soon as "We Radicals" come to power, we will expel that Vampire from Dedinje[11]." (Vecernji, 2017) This ethno-nationalist anti-Yugoslavian propaganda by Seselj influenced ordinary people's acceptance of collective violence and participation in violence during the wars (military brigade of Vojislav Seselj "Sesljeovci"[12]). Besides, Seselj's radical nationalism was not just advocating and justifying the coercion and violence of Serbs against non-Serbs. It has activated the suppression of Yugoslav social memory through radical populism behaviour.

Based on the assertion of the supremacy of the Serbs among the Yugoslav peoples, untruths and abuse of history - a common propaganda technique of xenophobic nationalist discourse - Seselj denies the Serbian enemies within the former Yugoslavia the right to a state, territory and borders that in any way limit the Serbian goal of uniting all Serbs, even and when they are a small local minority. The consequences of Seselj's ethnic nationalism are accepting and justifying coercion and violence in the relations between Serbs and non-Serbs and rejecting non-violent resolution of conflicts between states and peoples. Since ethnic groups hate each other and have always been so, the statecraft in areas with mixed populations consists in separating them. Since the Serbian goal of uniting all Serbs into one state is legitimate and there can be no compromise on it, provided that the Serbian opponents reject the Serbian demands, the separation will be forced (expulsion) to the detriment of the non-Serbs. (Oberschall, 2009)

Hence, Mudde points out that "nationalism, xenophobia, racism, a strong state, anti-democracy, tradition, and revisionism are the fundamental ideological characteristics of right-wing parties" (Mudde, 2000). Other actors of society, with their contributions, also participate in restoring traditional values and attempting to legitimize and

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[11] The neighbourhood of Belgrade, Serbia.

[12] The White Eagles, also known as Šešeljevci or Vigilantes, were a Chetniks paramilitary formation that participated in armed conflicts and commited war-crimes on the territories of Croatia and B&H during the war in Croatia and B&H.

implement the memory policies of conservative parties. "It primarily refers to the circle of intellectuals and the media, which side with traditionalism and revisionist activities within the right by their actions. Others are free shooters" (Freeden, 2006). Therefore, the presence of numerous actors in creating and accepting a particular policy of remembrance based on a symbolic struggle will result in numerous consequences for democracy. Thus, political revisionism and threats to liberal democracy, especially conservative party activities, occur.

Furthermore, Yugo-nostalgia paradoxically harkens back to a shared cultural history, even as it provides the raw material for new national identities that continue dividing the former Yugoslav republics (Volcic, 2007). Vjekoslav Perica, a Croat historian, stated, "in sports arenas, kill and slaughter are shouted, fascists march through the streets, mutual lawsuits are filed for genocide, military parades are held, provocative commemorations are organized in support of nationalism, genocide is denied, and mythomania within the transitional crime, corruption, and interethnic hatred "(Perica, 2016). Both classical and modern theorists believe that ethnicity is primarily a political phenomenon. The basis of a collectivist pattern in post-Yugoslav countries is the identification of cultural-ethnic and institutional-political factors by which the political community fully identifies with the national or ethnic community. As an ideology of a pure kind, ethnicism in the former Yugoslavia is a speculative skill of "counting blood cells" and a controversial rule "in the people's name." Such undisguised exclusivity of self-selected nominations prevents any possible communion and dialogue between them. It enabled political decision-makers, within the pernicious ideological-pragmatic manipulation of nationalized religion to serve daily political goals, to act according to the matrix of the old feudal-imperialist conception that each community and each territory has its religion and each individual belongs first to his/her community, and only then to the political space. The connection between ethnonational policies, violence, and religion is visible in recent wars, where war has found proponents of personal sacrifice for the nation's good in all national religions (Hadžić, 2020). Thus, for obvious reasons, the former Yugoslavia requires a unique approach: religious references were reactivated in a war frame to the most destructive genocidal apocalypse in the heart of Europe. In a study on the involvement of religions in the war, the sociologist, Srdjan Vrcan, concluded that it is about strengthening the link between Orthodoxy and nationalism in Serbia, the affirmation of ecclesiae militants in a climate that is very conducive to Catholic integration in Croatia, and the strengthening of pan-Islamism in B&H. He argues that "religions have shown, in the Yugoslav crisis, that (...) they are more capable of distancing than of uniting, of separating than of gathering, of opposing than of bringing together, of igniting rather than calming." In the early 1990s, the multiethnic tradition could not resist the nationalism that had penetrated through all the pores of disintegrating communism. Consequently, various anti-communist and nationalist elements began to gain increasing influence (Hadžić, 2020).

According to Ivan Siber, following the psychological literature, nationalism implies the "pathology of the national, in a priori negative, hostile attitude towards members of other nations" (Siber, 2007). One of the central criticisms considers authoritarianism and political orientations. In this sense, Shils states that Adorno and co-workers were committed exclusively to right-wing authoritarianism, with fascists at the right and democrats at the other, offering equivalent characteristics to the authoritarian left (Siber, 1998). Therefore, it signifies a syndrome of psychological traits possessed by a non-free individual in a non-free society.

The nature of social change in advanced developed societies has prompted the re-actualization and even redefinition of the concept of civil society. There are multiple reasons for the problematization of civil pluralism and the relationship between civil society and the state. At the same time, the social changes in Central and Southeastern European societies after the fall of socialism were even more profound and more comprehensive. After the Dayton Peace Agreement, B&H, some calling it "little Yugoslavia," found themselves in the so-called "double transition." B&H is the only post-socialist country of all former socialist states that had a war at the beginning of transforming the social and political system. This fact marks it different from other countries regarding political and economic measures in the post-war phase and transition. The ideological ethnonationalism has metastasized into a social organization's daily political discourse that produces uncritical subjects in all three constitutive ethnic governments. Spiritual usurpation has moved into the realm of identity (Hadzic, 2021). B&H's imposed ethnopolitical concept of "constituent peoples" removes the civic order and decreases political collectivism. The Dayton Peace Accords patterned ethnic-religious exclusions and the unconstitutional "hybrid" identities (Hadžić, 2020). However, the Critical Peace and Conflict Studies should be primarily concerned with the quality and nature of peace in cultural (ethnic/religious), social, economic, and political terms, ranging from the international system to the state and communities.

The policy of conservative parties in the 21st century is undoubtedly leveled by awakened ethnonationalism that finds their present and future from radical history. The return to the past implies a battle for the symbols, values , and dormant ideas during communism. In an active state of vigilance and political significance, conservative practices of political parties ideologically and subjectively approach the choice of motives, myths, symbols, and other components related to ethnic-symbolic discourse. Such an approach to historical heritage produces the existence of revisionism, but one that

aims to belittle, degrade, reject anti-fascist values and symbolism accepted after World War II, and which is now not considered state-building and desirable in the period of newly formed states and political systems after 1989. Continuity is a critical determinant in forming national identities from ethnic symbolism. It can be seen that conservative and right-wing parties use the mentioned approach, which is realized in solid political symbolism exhausted in different historical stages. The issue is manifested in the flirtation of ethnic symbols with fascist structures during World War II. Above all, thanks to quisling regimes (i.e., Croatian NDH[13]). It is precisely the apologists of such quisling creations in modern politics who wage revisionist battles in the field of an ethnic symbolic narrative that, selectively used, threatens democratic values and justifies the consequences of fascist atrocities. In their public activities, conservative parties abound in activities that promote ethnic symbols of a revisionist character. The goal is their affirmation and general social acceptance, even though most of these symbols from the right-wing propaganda apparatus are infected with elements of fascist symbolism. Moreover, the membership of an ethnic community is based on ethnic criteria such as the principle of origin and nationality (Mudde, 2000).

The communists could not separate society from the state and set out immediately after the war to totalitarianism. The one-party system meant a one-party state as well as a one-party society. The separation of party and state from religion and national civic organizations involved dismantling all social non-communist organizations, including cultural and humanitarian ones. The Orthodoxy of the communist movement was proved by the power of reckoning with the national past. Neither religious communities nor believers were exempted from this calculation. They were allowed to exist outside the state and politics. It was ensured by many religious officials and the majority of believers in the anti-fascist struggle. Socialism sought and built people of a "new forge," non-national, anti-religious, infinitely loyal to the movement and its historical goals. However, the Yugoslav leader Tito managed to rise above mass crimes and hatred and created a life framework that has provided peace and prosperity for many people for half a century. In socialist Yugoslavia, there was historical silence to answer the most problematic historical questions: the textbooks did not cover interethnic conflicts during the Second World War.

Currently, controversial and deeply divided memories of Ustashaism and socialism/ communism in Croatia persist, and their conflicts occur daily, although many years have passed since the collapse of the Ustasha and communist regimes. Discussions on World War II and Communist memories include the question of the role of Ustashas and Communists or, more precisely, according to Vjeran Pavlakovic, the most critical issues and controversies such as the establishment of concentration camps, cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and the Ustasha order, the relationship between anti-fascism and communism, post-war communist revenge and general repression (Pavlakovic 2014). The emergence of controversy over memory and ideology is not surprising in everyday politics and the media, although we expect both labels to be used more carefully and responsibly. However, it is genuinely astonishing in the academic community, pointing to the ideologization of contemporary Croatian humanities and social sciences. In the hands of politicians and manipulators, the complex historical legacies and heterogeneous memories of World War II, Communism, and the 1990s War of Independence is often reduced to a simple and easy-to-use opposition that equates anti-Communists with Ustashas and Partisans with Communists. This totalizing stereotype was created in the Yugoslav era. However, while it was clear which side was negative and positive, this is not entirely clear in the post-Yugoslav era, and the assessment depends on the position from which the person speaks. Both equations are generalizing and historically incorrect reductions because not all anti-communists were Ustashas, nor were all partisans communists (nor Serbs). Since such a simplification of historical complexity can be used for ideological and political purposes, it was gladly used in the communist and post-communist eras. Today, it still provides fertile ground for harmful political manipulations and discrediting (political) opponents (Capo, 2015).

Presently, "imposing an obligation to remember the Yugoslav and socialist past exclusively in dark tones is the most explicit testimony to the darkness in which we live today" (Ivancic, 2017). Nevertheless, nothing that has anything to do with the system of socialist Yugoslavia must be remembered in a favorable light. Such treacherous memories should be covered entirely by the powerful clichés that label the totalitarian past: Goli otok[14], Bleiburg[15], and related. For example, people in socialism solved their housing queries without difficulties and enjoyed free education, health care,

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[13] The Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*) was a World War II-era puppet state of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. It was established in parts of occupied Yugoslavia after the invasion by the Axis powers. Its territory consisted of most modern-day Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and some parts of modern-day Serbia and Slovenia and excluded many Croat-populated areas in Dalmatia, Istria, and Međimurje regions (today, part of Croatia).

[14] It is an uninhabited island that was the site of a political prison used when Croatia was part of Yugoslavia. The prison was in operation between 1949 and 1989.

[15] The Bleiburg event occurred in May 1945, at the end of World War II in Europe. Tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians associated with the Axis powers fled Yugoslavia to Austria as the Soviet Union (Red Army) and Yugoslav Partisans took control. When they reached Austria, the British refused to accept their surrender and instead directed them to the Partisans. The war prisoners were subjected to forced marches and columns captured by other Partisans in Yugoslavia. Tens of thousands were executed; others were taken to forced labor camps, where more died from harsh conditions. The events are named for the Austrian border town of Bleiburg, where the initial repatriation was carried out.

and social security – at an incomparably higher level than today. Moreover, it should be overshadowed by memories of people with fear and discomfort who went to Church or Mosque, which they do entirely freely today.

Everyday citizens witness the fact, which is confirmed by the analytical mechanisms offered by political psychology, that the world we live in is elusive and ideal, which is recognized by experts who, according to Smith & Larimer, see at least two reasons: consider rational decision making unrealistic when it comes to public policy. These are political and practical restrictions. Namely, citizens, as the most numerous political actors, strive for current solutions to current problems, which significantly limits the time frame for the preparation and implementation of public policies and thus the ability to make optimally rational decisions. Moreover, in the sphere of practice, the complexity of problems and issues that focus on public policies or proposals goes well beyond people's cognitive capacities as political actors (Smith & Larimer, 2009). However, it is not entirely realistic to expect the ability of political actors to obtain all relevant information, nor to recognize all possible consequences and results of the considered options for action, and of course, can only see a limited number of options. Reality limits the rationality of decision-making. Ivan Siber starts from the definition of political behavior as any behavior aimed at maintaining or changing the existing structure and power, leaving a vast space for interpretation of which specific behaviors and activities constitute political behavior (Siber, 1998). In the operationalization of this notion, Milas (2007), by political behavior, implies attitudes and actions initiated to achieve certain principles and values and thus somewhat more concretely determines the key variables that make up this notion.

Although we still do not have a clear definition of this concept, at least in the field of political psychology, political behavior on a manifest and measurable level in most current theoretical discussions is seen through two primary forms of political involvement: political activity, i.e., the quantity and quality of the political activity, and orientation, that is, the ideological-value orientation of the individual, which is reflected in the direction and degree of ideological saturation of political behavior (Siber, 1998). For Jacques Ellul, the technical capacity that characterizes political propaganda in modern society is a cause for ambivalence because propaganda is an instrument of public manipulation and deception. Nevertheless, as he defines it, propaganda is a necessary means by which institutions can match the scale of major societal problems (Ellul, 2021). In either case, propaganda is appropriately understood as a modern manifestation of instrumental reason. Furthermore, ethnocentrism is one of the main characteristics of political actions and preferences in the Western Balkans, primarily in B&H (some call it tiny Yugoslavia). For years, B&H's political elites pursued an identity policy, forming their political goals exclusively against other ethnic groups. They also derive their legitimacy from each of their ethnic groups. Out of fear of the domination of another group and the desire for their domination, it gives them power and ensures the status quo. Such a policy of identity in the form of political populism proved harmful for B&H because political elites put the idea of ethnocentrism before the idea of citizenship, and the idea of collectivism before the idea of individualism which brought B&H to a state of economic prosperity and the typical rule of law (Jahic, 2020).

History is the remembered past to which we no longer have an "organic" relation—the past that is no longer an essential part of our lives—while collective memory is the active past that forms our identities. Memory inevitably gives way to history as we lose touch with our pasts. Historical revisionism and the "evil" memory developed into a behavioral practice in the Western Balkans (Hadžić, 2020). The rhetoric of the President of Croatia, Zoran Milanovic in 2021, is, if not denial, then certainly relativization of the Srebrenica genocide. It all started on Monday, November 29, in the House of Peoples of the B&H Parliamentary Assembly. Three members of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) of B&H - Dragan Covic[16], Marina Penedes, and Lidija Bradara - supported the proposal of the Serbian People's Club, in which Dodik's SNSD and SDS party proposed repealing Valentin Inzko's prominent law banning genocide denial in B&H. It should be noted that this is the Law on Amendments to the Criminal Code of B&H of July 28, 2021, according to which the Criminal Code of B&H introduced very similar provisions prohibiting genocide denial and incitement to hatred, as the Republic of Croatia has in its Criminal Code. Dragan Covic's political move - direct Croatian support for Milorad Dodik and Serbian president Aleksandar Vucic's[17] denial of the Srebrenica genocide - sparked anger in B&H and Croatia (Pavelic, 2021). Moreover, a common phrase in the Balkans is "Lack of political will." It is a situation where even governments change and do not adopt different public policies. It reflects on why people fail to change how they manage such points. "The citizens have become hostages of a widespread culture of

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[16] He is a Bosnian Croat politician who served as the 4th Croat member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2002 to 2005 and from 2014 to 2018. He is the current President of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ B&H) and is a member of the national House of Peoples.

[17] He is a Serbian politician serving as the President of Serbia since 2017 and as the President of the populist Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) since 2012. He is the former leader of Vojislav Seselj's Serbian Radical Party (SRS), a far-right party whose core ideology is based on Serbian nationalism and creating a Greater Serbia. He was one of the SRS's volunteers who visited the army that kept the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo (Ciric, 2018), under the most prolonged siege in modern history. He has been described as an authoritarian, autocratic, or illiberal democratic regime, noting shortened press freedom (Bieber, 2018).

mistrust. It is paradoxical that the democratization of society has led to a decrease in trust in democratic institutions and that the universal demand for transparency will not restore lost trust but will deepen distrust in political institutions and political leaders. History testifies that civil distrust in government is a crucial element of any democratic system, but when a certain threshold is exceeded, such distrust weakens the position of citizens. if you do not trust anyone, you cannot change anything" (Krastev, 2013).

This paper's section is related to "radical populism behavior and social memory." Therefore, I will start with the historical background. In 1945, the events gained new dimensions, values , and accents in various dimensions of social life in the former Yugoslavia. Thus, in the new political and ideological self-understanding, culture and art, and the systems of upbringing and education.

It is evidenced by the research contributions of this collection, which is broadly thematic and problematic: the first thematic block entitled Politics of the Past shows that cultural memory is subject to shaping and instrumentalization and that ideological and political projects significantly mediate it. The outcome of world wars (e.g., theory, ideology, and utopia of Marxism and communism and projects of national emancipation) are on the energy and pathos of victory coupled with the myth of the historical project of the revolution. The analysis of the heritage of 1945, which obliges and co-shapes memory, includes the ethical, moral question of crime and punishment, that is, the question of guilt and its ethical reflection. The topic of women's culture of memory, as well as articles on the semantics of social memory narratives (namely "marked" and "unmarked" in the structure of social memory constructed and instrumentalized within the national state and its self-representation), is an equally important dimension of memory that co-shapes sociocultural actions and interactions. It is a complementary study of communities and memory regimes and their relations to power relations but also concerns their corrective in the norm of responsibility. Finally, this perspective of the politics of the past finds its philosophical illumination in the article interpreted by National Socialism and Fascism in light of the epochal project of subject destruction (destruction ideologically and biologically) given in naturalism as a means of power politics. In a particular historical (local and regional) context of Yugoslav national histories from the point of view of the culture of memory, i.e., given the contents and forms of that memory - it turns out that 1945 is in political and cultural memory, in very concrete political actions present as reworked, selectively (re) interpreted, instrumentalized and adjusted to situational political interests and relations of political forces. Whether it is the result of continuing and traditionalizing individual or collective experiences and memories (according to the 1945 "victory" or "defeat" matrix), or in the form of revitalizing old ideological struggles, myths, and prejudices (after the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and the loss of ideological control) - especially after the experience of the 1991-1995 war, i.e., military aggression against Croatia and B&H. The year 1945 thus gained new dimensions, values , and accents in different dimensions of social life: in the new political and ideological self-understanding, culture and art, and education systems (Bosto & Cipek, 2009).

Because Yugoslavia is an example of a country that began to disappear when it gave up on constructing a standard memory, and that disappeared when it was no longer able to control the public imagination of different "communities of memory" (Vahtel, 1998). Considering that social memory is usually constructed in one of three ways that often coincide and mix, it evaporates down to establishing and symbolically representing social cohesion, legitimizing institutions, and the status of authority. Ultimately, strengthening socialization, shared beliefs, and values, then it is clear that the post-war Yugoslav society applied all these procedures and that, in that period, given the previous non-consolidation, it did so with great success. Newcomers' ethnocultural identities in the former Yugoslavia were found in the inevitable phase of subsequent consolidation of national identities and state creations. Research of political myths in the former Yugoslavia, especially those concerning Serbian political mythologization, pointed out the dimension of political myths. Its (manipulative) essence wants to distort rather than hide crucial facts from political reality, especially political history.

Those actors who produce myths are most often the rare institutions themselves. "The fact that a nation is a story does not challenge its reality because myths are not mystifications" (Wodak et al., 2009). Moreover, political myths have a vital role in creating the political basis for designing the basics of the emergence and establishment of a political community. This is because founding myths becomes such an unavoidable segment of the consciousness of the Constitution of national political order regardless of its size and character. Myths bridge the collective and individual gap between the individual, the ethnic group, and the political community (Despotovic, 2019). Moreover, the revisionism of official history, ethnoreligious school curricula reform, cultural and media production, and the national literary canon have mostly been completed.

Without a doubt, a Yugoslav is, among other things, anyone who does not agree to discipline and control of memory, and who surrenders to unedited memory. If someone remembers better days from the period of Yugoslavia, he has no faith, but he is openly hostile to it. Even if it is intimacy or mere nostalgia, there is no such thing as "mere nostalgia." It

is a big mistake to believe that there is harmless nostalgia, especially when dealing with Yugonostalgia. As the famous demonologist, Mitja Velikonja said, "There is no greater insult to the existing order than the uncritical celebration of the previous one." What if the deviant people we address do not practice "uncritical celebration" of the previous regime but remember its reality? Modern Yugoslavs, the most dangerous varieties, do just that; they glorify Yugoslavia through the process of real memory. They assume that the former state, despite all its democratic deficits, was superior to the creations created after its disintegration, including Croatia. Some of the more daring zealots of such a profile even explicitly explain it. For example: "When you look back, you see pure progress" (Ivancic, 2017).

Populism provides meaning and personal significance to the leader and his/her followers. It incorporates the role of charismatic leadership, authoritarianism, and nationalism and the use of conspiracy narratives and persuasive strategies. There is the rise of the radical right throughout Europe. Some of its symptoms refer to historical revisionism. Theories of totalitarianism are used in public not to strengthen a democratic political culture but almost exclusively as a powerful and adverse political tool. Egocentricity, Machiavellianism, and populism are a "dark triad" of personality traits that create political depravity. Radical populists display a serious disordered personality that is ego-syntonic and frequently is not amenable to clinical intervention.

The former Yugoslavia's mono-state media transformed before the conflict, replacing "dying socialist terminology" with demagoguery, irrationality, radical rhetoric, agony, destiny decisions, and "God-sent messages and roles" (Thompson, 2000) and framings of visual politics and emotions began to occupy sociopolitical consciousness of each ethnicity, nation, and religion in former Yugoslav countries. The aggressive collective mobilization began in the name of the nation and its faith. Moreover, a new process occurred during the wars in former Yugoslavia and after the brutal conflicts, including genocide, ethnic cleansing, culturocide, and the creation of pure ethnoreligious entities/states. Proceeding heretofore to national (ethnic, religious) identity in the former Yugoslavia puts populists in a position of superiority over others as a "shelter" that develops its greatness. It could not be expressed in global (regional) competition, flourishing in Poland, Hungary, the United States (Trump era), and the Balkans. The overemphasis on one's nation, ethnicity, and religion is accompanied by the closure of borders, sociopolitical hegemonism, and the creation of destructive discontent against neighbors in the post-war Western Balkans. Populist parties - whether in power or opposition - discredit all supranational alliances. As a result, the UN, NATO, the EU, and all the achievements created over decades, which harmonized the interests of different countries and tried to prevent conflicts, have often been put to unrestricted use.

We can define populism as a political ideology based on an understanding of politics as a conflict between a good and honest people and an immoral and corrupt established political elite. The typical features of all populist options are frequent positive references to the people and general political anti-elitism. At the same time, these options differ significantly in their understanding of the people and attitudes toward certain social groups (e.g., minorities). Earlier sociological and political science research in Croatia has included, for example, populist actors and parties such as Željko Kerum[18], Most, Živi Zid, Mislav Kolakušić, and Miroslav Škoro. However, the last local elections have shown that many Croatian citizens understand politics as a conflict between good people and a wrong political establishment (Salaj & Grbesa, 2021). Speaking on the show on Croatian state television, the mayor of Split, Zeljko Kerum, insulted Serbs. In an interview with journalist Aleksandar Stankovic, Kerum said he did not want Serbs and Montenegrins in Split (the second-biggest Croatian city), nor in his family as he is Catholic. He is also against Serbian investors doing business in Croatia. "I would not bring Serbs. They have never brought us (Croatians) anything good. Neither they nor the Montenegrins", said the mayor of Split (RTS, 2009).

The notion of populism is often associated with the terms resentment and frustration attributed to sympathizers of such policies, but one should be careful with such a definition. Outraged individuals do not exist independently but always concern superiors from whom they subconsciously demand recognition and respect; "resentment leads people to the slow poisoning of their souls" (Muller, 2016). Such psychological diagnoses confirm the people's opinion about the ruling elites who underestimate and belittle others while failing to fulfill their liberal democratic ideals. Frustration, anger, and resentment do not exist by themselves, but most people can explain why they feel that way. It does not mean that the reasons for the frustration of the people can be taken for granted or that they are entirely credible, but it is also not good to transfer the debate about the injustice caused by the indignation of citizens to the field of social psychology (Muller, 2016). Muller states, "Not only is it disparaging to explain the whole phenomenon as an unarticulated political

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[18] Željko Kerum is a Croatian entrepreneur and politician who served as Mayor of Split from 2009 to 2013. Kerum has been known to own expensive cars including a Hummer, a Mercedes S500, a BMW 7, a Maybach 62, a Ferrari F430, and a Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano. His Cessna Citation X, a business jet worth approximately $17 million, is the most expensive privately owned aircraft in Croatia. In 2009, he surprised the public by publicly announcing he was divorcing his wife to be with his pregnant mistress Fani Horvat, who was nearly 25 years his junior. The news caused many in the media to point out the hypocrisy in his political image, where he has consistently presented himself as a supporter of traditional values, christianity and a conservative world view, but had been participating in an extramarital affair (Net.hr, 2009).

expression of alleged "losers in the modernization process," but it is not the correct explanation (Muller, 2016). As interest in the study of populism rises, social psychology scholars strive to understand (social) psychological factors associated with it. Social psychology, political psychology, and the political science framework are highly topical and may provide an avenue of communication of current theoretical and empirical perspectives that will stimulate an informed discussion on understanding the appeal of populism, its consequences, and ways of tackling it. This way, we aim to spark a scientific dialogue that will enhance social psychological theory and practice and advance understanding of contemporary (and future) sociopolitical issues (Stathi & Guerra, 2021).

Pragmatic Slobodan Milosevic's Populism at the end of the 80s and beginning of the 90s encouraged the nationalists and chauvinists that existed among Serbs and Albanians and among other peoples of the former Yugoslavia and their political leaders to openly advocate the disintegration of Yugoslavia at all costs, even at the cost of civil war and ethnic cleansing. Milosevic was not the most passionate nationalist in the Balkans, nor was he the only politician contributing to the catastrophic outcome of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, but the "right" populism that was used sparingly to achieve political goals is a feature of his overall policies (Basic, 2017). The consequences of such a policy are still being felt today - decades later, the mentioned sentences in the region are interethnic relations bad, national policies multiculturalism is segregative, and the ethnic distance of the peoples in the region is a clear indication of xenophobia (Basic, 2015). The former President of the Republic of Croatia, Kolinda Grabar Kitarović, addressed the public on the occasion of the final verdict of the Hague Tribunal against six Bosnian Croats, which confirmed their sentences, for crimes against humanity, during the Herceg-Bosna (HB BiH)[19]. It should be recalled that General Slobodan Praljak drank a bottle of poison during the sentencing, from which he died a few hours later. Praljak said he "is not a war criminal and rejects this verdict with contempt." President Grabar Kitarović stated in 2017, "Dear Croats and all citizens. At the outset, I would like to express my condolences to the family of Slobodan Praljak, a man who preferred to give his life rather than live convicted of acts he firmly believed he had not committed. His act deeply touched the Croatian people (...) No one else, not even the International Hague Tribunal, will write our Croatian history!" (Slobodna Dalmacija, 2017).

The relative strength of right-wing populism combining an ideology of rejecting elites and institutions and calling for a "people" with xenophobic and nationalist elements sets political systems at risk of new forms of authoritarianism. Nenad Kecmanovic, a Bosnian Serb academic and politician, notes at the conference entitled "Republika Srpska in the face of new challenges" in 2021, "We have a dangerous rift for some other entity competencies to move to Sarajevo by re-voting in the joint B&H Parliamentary Assembly by votes and procedures. However, nothing and no one will help us unless Serbs are united and determined. If nothing else, we should endure until the US is weak enough, and Russia and China become strong enough to establish a global balance of power." He predicts, "The Bosniak appeal to the empire will fail again!" (Conference "Republika Srpska facing new challenges," 2021). Florian Bieber confirmed that authoritarianism exists alongside formal democratic institutions today in the Balkans. The result is that competitive authoritarian regimes use social polarization to retain power (Bieber, 2020). Many narratives about the great "leaders of the people" are constructions of ethnopolitics that emerged from the war as victors. There are parallel memory politics and disseminated religious myths of "innocence" under the socio-political ideologies within the leaders' nationalist-archaic constructions whose "amnesia" results from their national-religious narcissism (Hadzic, 2020). "Populism is not just antiliberal; it is anti-democratic—the permanent shadow of representative politics" (Muller, 2016).

The dominance of populist political parties is visible today in societies without a significant democratic background and countries with a long democratic tradition and a developed system of democratic institutions, where populist parties dominate or participate in parliamentary coalitions, increasingly controlling the legislature, judiciary, and executive, which allow them to bring their populist programs into institutions. As a result, the ruling regimes enjoy significant support. If political platforms abuse the support of people, it often leads to an authoritarian concept of society, which ultimately ends in a personal autocratic dictatorship of the national leader, with severe consequences for democratic institutions, human rights and freedoms, and minority groups, which as a rule leads to poverty, violence, and war (Hadžić, 2020). In the study "The Authoritarian Personality," authoritarianism is "a general predisposition to glorify, subordinate and uncritical of the authoritarian figures of their group, taking the position of punishing non-members of the group in the name of some moral authority" (Mudde, 2000). In the study, Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, and Levinson, presented the results of research "begun in 1943 on the relationship between personality structure and political behavior, more specifically on prejudice against Jews and dramatic events in Nazi Germany" (Siber, 1998). The research included a potentially fascist personality, i.e., acceptance of fascist ideology, whose structure is such that

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[19] It was an unrecognized geopolitical entity and proto-state in Bosnia and Herzegovina, proclaimed on November 18, 1991, under the name Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna.

it expresses exceptional susceptibility to anti-democratic propaganda, including anti-Semitism. In authoritarianism, nationalism was one of the main features.

If we rely on the latest official voter lists in Croatia, it would mean that two million citizens did not exercise their right to vote in the recent elections. One of these citizens probably chose a physical "exit" and left Croatia, looking for "happiness" in migrating to other countries. However, most of these citizens have decided to mentally "get out" of Croatian politics, probably convinced that their political engagement can change nothing significant. As such, most Croatian citizens opt for political abstinence and apathy; such a situation is not new and has been going on for a long time. Moreover, this category of citizens "won" an absolute majority in the parliamentary elections for the first time, last year, i.e., exceeded 50 percent. Unfortunately, Croatia ranked second in the European Union, behind Romania, with the lowest turnout in the parliamentary elections. The second-largest group in local elections in which we can classify citizens is "loyalty." Thus, it means voting for traditional parties such as HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union, major conservative, center-right political party), SDP (the largest social-democratic Croatian center-left political party), and other established parties IDS, HNS, HSS, HSLS, HSP, PGS. The election results show that close to a million citizens who participated in the elections decided on this option. The smallest group, which we will return to later, consists of citizens who have chosen to "vote." We mean voting for new political movements, platforms, and parties, such as "We Can," the Homeland Movement, Center, and Focus, but also for independent candidates (Salaj & Grbesa, 2021).

There is an atmosphere of aggressive intolerance of the homogenized discourse of monolithic nationalism as evidenced by the pressure on authors who are somewhat more critically distant from the euphoria of collectivism, irrationalism of the masses, and the production of populist-demagogic myths and narratives. The "witch from Rio," who led the protagonists of the affair to emigrate, moved from the cultural motherland to dissident status. In order to illustrate the discursive unification and suspension of individual difference in the name of national unity, Baker (2016) singles out the symbolism of the appearance of all essential names of the Croatian stage in the so-called Croatian Band-Aid, were gathered in one choir, they sang verses of a patriotic character (Baker, 2016).

The acceleration of capitalism realism and its implementation was significantly due to the consensus of former socialist societies on the uncritical acceptance of the capitalist paradigm, motivated more by images of imaginary Western capitalism and the consumerist spectacle of a utopian society of abundance than by a fundamental understanding of capitalism. In that sense, Western analysts were surprised mainly by the pace with which post-socialist societies accepted capitalism. However, they were surprised by everything: the fall of socialism, the peaceful disintegration of the USSR, and the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia. William Outhwaite and Larry Ray (2005) explicitly addressed this subject in Social Theory and Postcommunism. Moreover, Slovenia, for example, which has prospered economically in the post-Yugoslav era, generates forms of nostalgia that counter the current bare-knuckled competition of its aggressive form of "catch-up" capitalism (Volcic, 2007). The truth about the former Yugoslavia disenfranchisement, economic and social hopelessness, abolition of all fundamental preconditions for some form of sovereign policies, institutionalized nationalism, neoconservatism, and neo-fascisms adhering to assigned positions of unimportant margins and appropriate places (semi) peripheral colonies. Taking this perspective, with a retrospective view that points to cracks and discontinuities within the embellished hegemonic narrative epoch, the picture of our transition is becoming dystopian dark (Hromadzic, 2020).

Just as the works of the despised Marxist theory have been thrown out of sight en masse and thoroughly when this theory was to be especially reactivated due to the current class social changes and the project of introducing a capitalist order, the enthusiasm of the then "cultural grammar" obscured the critical knowledge and methods of the postmodern mind, from deconstructive anti-essentialism to cultural studies. Thus, the ideological unmasking and denaturalization of fundamental cultural and social aporia. They are inclined to the side of Lyotard's statement about disbelief in great stories, Derrida's views on "inscription(s) of absence in the constitution of every identity" (Biti, 1997), Derrida's findings of paradox in labeling strategies under the paradigm of logocentrism and its exegesis of contradictions in every statement. Foucault analyzes discursive networks as the dissemination of power, regulation, supervision, and discipline and even by the buoyancy of mythical thought. First, the mythological discourse of militant nationalism is justifiably assessed as a winning narrative in the once open post-communist market of ideologies, a narrative whose name one will most directly succeed in taking the vacant seat of power and gain unquestionable legitimacy from the masses. Gal Kirn rightly assesses that it is no coincidence that the referendum question on state, i.e., national and ethnic independence, was not formulated in the necessary form in which it should have been posed given the true nature of entering the transition process: "Do you want to be in the next decade?" Witnesses to the increase of class differences and unemployment, reduction of annual vacations and pensions, and privatization of health services? (Popović and Gajić, 2011).

Although, on the other hand, accumulating throughout history a destructive eruptiveness if, in the natural evolutionary

rhythm, it is hindered and made unfinished by the truncated processes of (modern) nation-building, mostly political subordination. The persistence of these forces is illustrated by both the NDH creation and the interethnic conflicts. The Yugoslav community disintegrated due to the necessity to fulfill evolutionary stages even when they are historically asynchronous (NDH-opting with fascism) or anachronistic. A dream on the threshold of the 21st century, when the globalist paradigm of the nation-state as a political unit, and in this context even more important economic sovereignty, has taken over, making it a disenfranchised relic of the overgrown order. With a retro-utopian perspective – a tilt that another demonologist, Predrag Brebanović, even called retro-yu-utopia – they understood that it was not just a struggle for memories, but, rather, a struggle with memories. They do not forget. They are behaving in a terroristic manner. As far as Yugoslavia is concerned, these actors suspect that untamed memory contains an explosive charge, so they place their destructive hopes in a model of timed memory (Ivancic, 2017).

It should be added as a guarantee against the "erasure" of the temporal effect, i.e., the passage of time, thus establishing itself as a transgenerational and transtemporal memory structure. Therefore, the authors will often explain the publication of their notes in the prefaces or introductory chapters with the characteristically repeated expression "kidnapped from oblivion." In such a crucial historical moment of the threat of war, legality comes into force. As formulated by Assman, "Since the culture of memory is not biologically hereditary," and "group memory has no neurological basis" as individual memory (processed by anatomy), it is replaced by culture" so that sociocultural "synapses" perform the memory tasks of the collective mind of the community through time, transgenerationally. That is, how the contents of organic memory through various symbolic expressions, i.e., cultural and artistic genres, would be "culturally maintained through generations" (Assmann, 2011). In this context, many productions are initially and explicitly motivated to publish purposefully in the function of a document, regardless of qualitative reach or historiographical significance, accumulating on the documentary corpus as a potential for which only time, or some indefinite moment of pragmatic necessity in the future. The bulkiness of these plants, detachments mobilized for the above purposes, produced innumerable amounts of material in missions of ethnonational importance.

In the post-socialist circumstances in such a denigration of the general situation (by absolutizing individual examples), the Croatian left-wing party "Zivi Zid"[20] out in particular.

An essential function of this strategy is to alleviate the politically emotionalized, from which populism lives, and which, at the same time, makes it hardly subject to any argument because a rational approach has little chance of mass mobilized feelings. The character of the enemy, who hinder the well-being of the populace (from "elites" to migrants), mark what can be called a "neurotic behavior," without which such movements can hardly exist. Because contemporary populism can mix different ideologies (which Mussolini and Hitler had already started with, but gradually brought the worldview components of their promotional actions "in order"), the enemy's characters vary but are given almost powers and influence on everyday life. This is well illustrated by the attitude of the Polish and Hungarian leaders – but also the Croatian and Serbian far-right. Numerous major right-wing parties in (Western) Europe are signaling a "return to the center," such as the Austrian and Dutch Christian Democrats. However, this "political center" reflects the populist radical right much more strongly than a decade ago. In addition, right-wing extremist parties are still represented in all right-wing factions in the European Parliament, while extreme right-wing positions on immigration and Islam are propagated in almost all factions, including the Social Democrats. Amid the general strike initiated by the opposition in 2002, Venezuelan Hugo Chavez stated, "This is not about whether you are for Chavez or against Chavez, but about patriots being against the enemies of the homeland" (Zuquete, 2008).

Elections in post-conflict societies such as post-Yugoslavia show how solid and unbreakable collective identity policies are. National-ethnic-religious identities are at the forefront. Even those environments where collective identities are not threatened are marked by political competition in the national and religious flattery of the electorate. Apart from ethnonationalism, the ideology of a considerable number of Balkan politicians is characterized by power continuance. Most of the former members of the League of Communists represent anti-communism and ethnonationalism. The solid non-freedom, above all the suffocation of press freedom, exists in the region. There are elements of the cult of personality of today's Balkan leaders. However, a cult is not created only around the leader. The cult of inviolability around undebatable topics is considered to affect the core of the national quintessence and the survival of the ethnic nations. Given the limited space, we will consider the example of Serbia in this section (although most post-Yugoslav countries represent comparable patterns). In Serbia, managing fears and anxieties is used as political fuel and distributed to the people with the help of the media. As a result, a coalition of quasi-right populism has changed its content: nationalism

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[20] Živi Zid (English "Live Wall") is a political movement and a Croatian parliamentary party that brings together all social strata and groups that overlooks ideological divisions and directs all its energy to solving fundamental social problems. The party accepts the label "left or right" because it is rightmost when one should stand for home and leftmost when one should stand by the people.

has been transformed, proclaimed self-sufficiency has opened the way to Europeanism, and the ranking of "dangerous others" has also changed, but the matrix of political behavior has remained the same. From the position of a clear parliamentary majority, it absolutizes the principle and importance of the majority, belittles the role and importance of the minority, and creates intolerance of dissent and criticism. "Dangerous others" – are ranked instrumentally according to the needs of the given moment – sometimes they are Americans, once Croats, Albanians, or Bosniaks. As competitors on the political scene, the political elites of the former regime and tycoons are treated as "dangerous others," but also all those who are ready to criticize and do not obey the policy of one man who controls not only the ruling coalition but almost all of the state, even independent institutions, and critical state media and tabloids (Lutovac Markovic, 2017). Thus, the policy of anti-pluralism is an essential feature of Populism in Serbia today.

The source of mistrust is "the general belief that powerful interests have captured democratic institutions in many Western democracies and that citizens are powerless to change that" (Krastev, 2013). Only a change in this belief can lead to the "liberation" of institutions. It is in some way evidenced by the theory of public value, which offers the concept of exercising power through networked communities, where the focus of public authority is shifted from the state and the market to civil society. For proponents of this new paradigm of government, it is an adequate model of governance in a constantly changing context, permeated by a diverse population, burdened with complex, volatile, and risk-sensitive needs. *Public policies* are strategies shaped by civil society and implemented through networks and partnerships in such an environment (Krastev, 2013).

We know from social capital theory that trust is generated at the level of individuals, families, groups, networks, and communities and the relationships that govern within them, and this is an additional reason why the issue of political will should not be left to political rhetoric. It is because of, even worse, manipulation. There is a well-founded suspicion that the way our networks and communities are organized and function can be linked to the transformations of political will on which the success of public policies that seek to change and humanize society depends. We must examine, prove and put these foundations in the function of progress.

There is a constant struggle between lesser and greater patriotism, for example, BH, Bosniaks, Croats, or Serbs. Civic parties, incapable and unable to introduce their policies into public space and eager to seize power, also resort to state, national, and religious identity policies, thus destroying the possibility of civil society in the long run. The desire for ethnonational and religious freedoms have turned into slavery to one's nation and religion, to a greater or lesser extent in all former Yugoslavia societies. The more insolvent and more educationally and culturally neglected societies are, the more complex civic and social policies are. The more requests there are for collective consolidation, the less freedom an individual has. The longing for recognition, which the Greek philosophers called the third part of the soul (thymós), also concerns man's economic status. Paradoxically, the socially marginalized, uneducated people are most often classified with identity policies in the first place, which is not a change in their social status but a more robust ethnic, national, and religious connection.

The political elites of B&H, despite their daily actions, aggressively invoking God, Faith, and the Sublime, thus practically embodying the most mundane, transparent-pragmatic combination of the economic-political type of personality axiologically. Observing this combination of descriptive categories of humanistic psychology, the most important representative of the theoretical Erich Fromm's twentieth-century humanism is an exploitative character who, with all his strength and "cunning of the mind," takes away everything he needs. The exploitative type of view "(...) is painted with a mixture of hostility and manipulation" (Bajtal, 2009). The difference is that "populists justify their actions by claiming that they are the only ones representing the people, and this allows them to engage very openly in such practices" (Muller, 2016). Interestingly, corrupt practices often do not harm populist politicians because they justify such behavior by fighting for the people in conflict with the elites. However, in the Western Balkans, they are the most dominant elites. Milorad Dodik, a Bosnian Serb politician on the US State Department "black-list," is a leading figure of constant secessionist rhetoric. An analysis of Dodik's discourse in the study by Nađa Beglerović (2020) revealed Dodik's contradictions and inconsistencies and his ability to use various strategies when consistently discussing the (RS) identity and its relation to B&H. His discursive practices' populist and manipulative nature is evident by insinuations, allusions, and banal comparisons. The context of Dodik's discourses is viewed from an intertextual and interdiscursive perspective. Intertextuality revealed Dodik's contradictory statements, while inter-discursiveness showed that the concept of the referendum was intertwined with secession, independence, national identity, and the role participation of the international community in B&H (Beglerovic, 2020).

What do visual representations of War and Peace in Serbia and B&H, the most critical discourse of former Yugoslavia multiculturalism, and the most fragile Western Balkan country, look like today? How can post-conflict peace-building in the Western Balkans be achieved and promoted through creative approaches, and what are the potential challenges and limitations in realizing postwar peace-building through creative approaches? Based on primary qualitative visual

data and interview data generated on the photographic exhibition of "War of Memories" curated in 2017 by the Centre for Non-Violent Action, a civil society organization working on the theme of postwar peace-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) and Serbia, findings suggest the creative initiatives can play a positive role at the individual level, but their translation into macro-level sustainable social Peace is challenging, as long as the structural impediments to Peace, prevailing unequal ethnic power relations and ethnicized social and political ordering of the society remain unaddressed (Jeremic & Jayasundara, 2022). Furthermore, by analyzing numerous media narratives and visual presentations in the B&H, we have the existence of ethnoreligious and ethnopolitical symbolism and uncritical idioms: "the Muslim side, Muslim government, Serbian/Orthodox New Year, Serbian forests, Muslim-Croat/Catholic federation, Muslim-majority municipalities, Muslim intellectuals, etc." (Karabegovic, 2017). The total clerical ethnicization of public consciousness enabled the most comprehensive open support for any unethical practices committed in the name of the "people." Thus, divisive ethnonationalism/ethnoreligious rhetoric and disagreements continue to permeate the sociopolitical climate, hampering democratic progress. Media and public communication practices are determined by and contribute to social stagnation.

Conclusion

Contemporary ethnic-symbolic politics communicate through conservative political orientations: re-traditionalism behavior patterns of political conservatism (including some left-wingers) advocate public acceptance. Historical anti-fascism actors have been stigmatized within their attitude toward the fascist ideology symbolism and Balkan's sociopolitical mythologies. Shaping the doubled existence produces growing nationalism. Neoliberal globalization has strengthened national identities, supported by the war-related creation of ethnic homogenous territories. Frequent use of (often) antagonistic ethnic symbolism in textual, rhetorical and visual forms expresses this. Various methods of conducting historical revisionism in the symbolic and ideological vocation decrease Yugoslavia's social memory.

Radical political populism is a powerful tribal identity and collectivist ideology. It often leads to social, intra-state, inter-state conflicts, and peace stalemates, particularly in post-conflict and fragile societies such as the Balkans. There does not seem to be much difference between populism and authoritarian regimes. One of the main features and consequences of populist political orders in ethnoreligious partitioned post-socialism is ethnic-symbolic collectivism. Ethnopolitics oppresses individual interests, social groups, and identity in the name of the ethnoreligious collective. It excludes the possibility of distinct classification, which is the basis for authoritarian and totalitarian order. The common good defines some authority, and all who disagree are considered competitors. The national position requires definition through the ethnoreligious origin (i.e., B&H- Bosnia and Herzegovina); democratically retrogressive and controversial positions.

Former Yugoslavia's historical conflicting memory cultures from WW2 to the Yugoslav wars present enduring processes within sociopolitical ethnic-religious traditions. Unfortunately, the active collective historical and social memory which forms people's identities is manipulated, falsified, reduced, and politically instrumentalized. Moreover, institutional and non-institutional engagement is normatively needed in a battle for correct memory and citizens' participation in political decision-making outside the ethnoreligious paradigm. Furthermore, it must not act out the nationalization of memory to achieve full Croatia(zation), Bosnian(zation), Serbian(zation), Montenegro(zation) of memory, not only in general but also individually.

Ethnonational policy dominance can be practically mitigated by creating conditions for more prominent participation of citizens in political decision-making outside the ethnoreligious paradigm. Contemporary notions of autonomy and mind, adapted to modern society, provide a theoretical framework for formulating political strategies in a post-national context. Acquisitive components of civil society and the society's stagnation due to slow consolidation can abruptly transform into political apathy motivating violent disorder. Accordingly, many sociopolitical realities symbolize and indicate that "democratized" post-socialist and post-Yugoslav states are more "inadequate" and "ineffective" than Yugoslavia.

Post-Yugoslav civil societies, regarding the community development within the democratic, multicultural, and liberal direction should recognize, define and influence public interest policies —the process of shaping political will. If citizens reject adverse ethnopolitical behavior practices and accept the progressive public policies as objectification of the political will. Therefore, as a fundamental human survival strategy, the public policy community's social life can transform sociopolitics.

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b) Book Translated into Turkish
Mucchielli, A. (1991). *Zihniyetler* [Mindsets] (A. Kotil, Trans.). İstanbul, Turkiye: İletişim Yayınları.
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Ören, T., Üney, T., & Çölkesen, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Türkiye bilişim ansiklopedisi* [Turkish Encyclopedia of Informatics]. İstanbul, Turkiye: Papatya Yayıncılık.
d) Turkish Book with Multiple Authors
Tonta, Y., Bitirim, Y., & Sever, H. (2002). *Türkçe arama motorlarında performans değerlendirme* [Performance evaluation in Turkish search engines]. Ankara, Turkiye: Total Bilişim.

e) Book in English
Kamien R., & Kamien A. (2014). *Music: An appreciation*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

f) Chapter in an Edited Book
Bassett, C. (2006). Cultural studies and new media. In G. Hall & C. Birchall (Eds.), *New cultural studies: Adventures in theory* (pp. 220–237). Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.

g) Chapter in an Edited Book in Turkish
Erkmen, T. (2012). Örgüt kültürü: Fonksiyonları, öğeleri, işletme yönetimi ve liderlikteki önemi [Organization culture: Its functions, elements and importance in leadership and business management]. In M. Zencirkıran (Ed.), *Örgüt sosyolojisi* [Organization sociology] (pp. 233–263). Bursa, Turkiye: Dora Basım Yayın.

h) Book with the same organization as author and publisher
American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (6*th* ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Article

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Mutlu, B., & Savaşer, S. (2007). Çocuğu ameliyat sonrası yoğun bakımda olan ebeveynlerde stres nedenleri ve azaltma girişimleri [Source and intervention reduction of stress for parents whose children are in intensive care unit after surgery]. *Istanbul University Florence Nightingale Journal of Nursing, 15*(60), 179–182.

b) English Article
de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (1999). The discursive construction of national identity. *Discourse and Society, 10*(2), 149–173. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0957926599010002002

c) Journal Article with DOI and More Than Seven Authors
Lal, H., Cunningham, A. L., Godeaux, O., Chlibek, R., Diez-Domingo, J., Hwang, S.-J. ... Heineman, T. C. (2015). Efficacy of an adjuvanted herpes zoster subunit vaccine in older adults. *New England Journal of Medicine, 372*, 2087–2096. http://dx.doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa1501184

d) Journal Article from Web, without DOI
Sidani, S. (2003). Enhancing the evaluation of nursing care effectiveness. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 35*(3), 26–38. Retrieved from http://cjnr.mcgill.ca

e) Journal Article wih DOI
Turner, S. J. (2010). Website statistics 2.0: Using Google Analytics to measure library website effectiveness. *Technical Services Quarterly, 27*, 261–278. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07317131003765910

f) Advance Online Publication
Smith, J. A. (2010). Citing advance online publication: A review. *Journal of Psychology*. Advance online publication. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a45d7867

g) Article in a Magazine
Henry, W. A., III. (1990, April 9). Making the grade in today's schools. *Time, 135*, 28–31.

Doctoral Dissertation, Master's Thesis, Presentation, Proceeding

a) Dissertation/Thesis from a Commercial Database
Van Brunt, D. (1997). *Networked consumer health information systems* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 9943436)

b) Dissertation/Thesis from an Institutional Database
Yaylalı-Yıldız, B. (2014). *University campuses as places of potential publicness: Exploring the politicals, social and cultural practices in Ege University* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Retrieved from: http://library.iyte.edu.tr/tr/hizli-erisim/iyte-tez-portali

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Tonta, Y. A. (1992). *An analysis of search failures in online library catalogs* (Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley). Retrieved from http://yunus.hacettepe.edu.tr/ tonta/yayinlar /phd/ickapak.html

d) Dissertation/Thesis abstracted in Dissertations Abstracts International
Appelbaum, L. G. (2005). Three studies of human information processing: Texture amplification, motion representa-

tion, and figure-ground segregation. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B. Sciences and Engineering, 65*(10), 5428.

e) Symposium Contribution

Krinsky-McHale, S. J., Zigman, W. B., & Silverman, W. (2012, August). Are neuropsychiatric symptoms markers of prodromal Alzheimer's disease in adults with Down syndrome? In W. B. Zigman (Chair), *Predictors of mild cognitive impairment, dementia, and mortality in adults with Down syndrome*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Orlando, FL.

f) Conference Paper Abstract Retrieved Online

Liu, S. (2005, May). *Defending against business crises with the help of intelligent agent based early warning solutions*. Paper presented at the Seventh International Conference on Enterprise Information Systems, Miami, FL. Abstract retrieved from http://www.iceis.org/iceis2005/abstracts_2005.htm

g) Conference Paper - In Regularly Published Proceedings and Retrieved Online

Herculano-Houzel, S., Collins, C. E., Wong, P., Kaas, J. H., & Lent, R. (2008). The basic nonuniformity of the cerebral cortex. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 105, 12593–12598. http://dx.doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0805417105

h) Proceeding in Book Form

Parsons, O. A., Pryzwansky, W. B., Weinstein, D. J., & Wiens, A. N. (1995). Taxonomy for psychology. In J. N. Reich, H. Sands, & A. N. Wiens (Eds.), *Education and training beyond the doctoral degree: Proceedings of the American Psychological Association National Conference on Postdoctoral Education and Training in Psychology* (pp. 45–50). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

i) Paper Presentation

Nguyen, C. A. (2012, August). *Humor and deception in advertising: When laughter may not be the best medicine*. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Orlando, FL.

Other Sources

a) Newspaper Article

Browne, R. (2010, March 21). This brainless patient is no dummy. *Sydney Morning Herald, 45*.

b) Newspaper Article with no Author

New drug appears to sharply cut risk of death from heart failure. (1993, July 15). *The Washington Post*, p.A12.

c) Web Page/Blog Post

Bordwell, D. (2013, June 18). David Koepp: Making the world movie-sized [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/page/27/

d) Online Encyclopedia/Dictionary

Ignition. (1989). In *Oxford English online dictionary* (2nd ed.). Retrieved from http://dictionary.oed.com

Marcoux, A. (2008). Business ethics. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.). *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*. Retrieved from http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-business/

e) Podcast

Dunning, B. (Producer). (2011, January 12). *in Fact: Conspiracy theories* [Video podcast]. Retrieved from http://itunes.apple.com/

f) Single Episode in a Television Series

Egan, D. (Writer), & Alexander, J. (Director). (2005). Failure to communicate. [Television series episode]. In D. Shore (Executive producer), *House*; New York, NY: Fox Broadcasting.

g) Music

Fuchs, G. (2004). Light the menorah. On *Eight nights of Hanukkah* [CD]. Brick, NJ: Kid Kosher.

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