The Socio-Political Attitudes of the Youth in Turkey

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper was to examine the differences in the attitudes of the Turkish youth regarding political interest, religious commitment, social conformity, autonomy, support for national technologies, and trust in media and public institutions based on demographic factors including age, gender, education, social class, and marital status. The data were collected through a public opinion survey administered to 812 young people in Turkey, aged 15-29 years. A quota-random sampling method was used in the survey. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) resulted in the identification of 7 factors; patriotism, autonomy from family, trust in government/institutions, political interest, religious commitment, social conformity, and trust in the media. The data indicated a strong patriotic attitude among young people regarding domestic/national technologies. However, trust in the government/institutions and media was at a low level. Young people were seen to have a positive attitude towards social conformity and religious commitment, and more than half of the young people supported the pursuit of autonomy from family. The data indicated that young people have an emotional attachment to their country, but wish to move abroad, particularly due to a lack of trust in institutions and the pursuit of a better life.

Keywords: Youth's socio-political attitudes, patriotism, trust, religious commitment, political interest, autonomy from family.

Öz: Bu makalenin amacı, Türkiye'de gençlerin siyasi ilgi, dini bağlılık, sosyal uyum, özerklik, ulusal teknolojilere destek, medya ve kamu kurumlarına güven gibi konulardaki tutumlarının yaş, cinsiyet, eğitim, sosyal sınıf ve medeni durum gibi demografik faktörlere göre farklılıklarını incelemektir. Veriler, Türkiye'de 15-29 yaş arası 812 gence uygulanan bir kamuoyu araştırması aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Ankette kota-rastgele örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Açımlayıcı Faktör Analizi (AFA) sonucunda vatanseverlik, aileden özerklik, devlete/kurumlara güven, siyasi ilgi, dini bağlılık, sosyal uyum ve medyaya güven olmak üzere yedi faktör belirlenmiştir. Bulgular, gençler arasında yerli/ulusal teknolojilere ilişkin güçlü bir vatanseverlik tutumuna işaret etmektedir. Ancak devlete/kurumlara ve medyaya güven düşük düzeydedir. Gençlerin toplumsal uyum ve dini bağlılık konusunda pozitif bir tutuma sahip olduğu görülmektedir. Ayrıca gençlerin yarısından fazlası aileden özerklik arayışını desteklemektedir. Veriler, gençlerin ülkelerine duygusal bir bağlılık duyduklarını, ancak özellikle kurumlara olan güven eksikliği ve daha iyi bir yaşam arayışı nedeniyle yurtdışına taşınmak istediklerini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gençlerin sosyo-politik tutumları, vatanseverlik, güven, dini bağlılık, aileden özerklik.
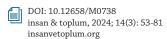
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Introduction

Young people are the most dynamic age group in any society. Understanding the socio-political attitudes of the youth of a country is crucial in terms of understanding the change in that country. In many countries, including Turkey, the attitudes and conduct of young people are influenced by globalization and modernization. As this social change accelerates, the differences between generations also widen more rapidly. Issues such as the lack of understanding between generations in the workplace and the declining interest of young people in politics are among popular topics of discussion.

Bauman (Bauman & Lyon, 2018) emphasizes that change has never been as fast and deep in the world as it is today. The characteristic of modern times is that change occurs at a high speed and can be experienced within a human lifespan. However, social scientists point out that young people around the world are increasingly faced with similar socio-economic, political, and cultural situations (Bozkurt, 2023).

Today, the intensity of technology use by young people is considered an important distinguishing feature. Therefore, young generations are referred to by various names such as digital natives, i-gen, social media generation, or post-millennium generation. The intensity of information and data spread through digital opportunities today is felt in societies like an electronic invasion (Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2014; Stupak, 2000; Bayhan, 2019; Dolot, 2018). Young people are undoubtedly among those most affected by this digital technological transformation.

Although the Turkish population is aging, it still has the youngest population in Europe. According to the Household Use of Information and Communication Technologies Survey 2022, while the 15-29 years age group in European Union countries constitutes on average 16.3% of the population, 23.0% of Turkey's population falls within this age range (TÜİK, 2021). With the widespread availability of technology, young generations have easily accessed digital networks and participated in broad discussion platforms. Participation has facilitated communication between different social strata on an unprecedented scale. The increasing diversity of communication also affects the attitudes of young people towards traditional institutions.

Globalization, modernization, and technological developments have resulted in events that occur anywhere in the world affecting people more quickly. This situation has particularly increased similarities among young generations. For example, in many countries, the duration of education is increasing compared to previous generations. In this "fluid world," insecure working conditions have become more widespread, social rights have declined, and inequalities have increased. This

can result in young generations facing similar problems and sometimes exhibiting similar attitudes (Dolot, 2018; Thorpe & Inglis, 2019). The structure of politics in Turkey changed after 2000 (Karakoç, 2020). The change of power at home and globalization and technological developments abroad have affected the whole of society, but especially the youth.

This research focuses on the impact of globalization, modernization, economic and technological developments on young people in Turkey. In this context, the research questions that aim to examine the socio-political attitudes of young people and the social dynamics underlying these attitudes through a representative sample can be listed as follows:

- What is the level of political interest among young people in Turkey? How is political interest related to demographic factors such as age, gender, education, social class, and marital status?

- How does the level of religious commitment of young people affect their socio-political attitudes? How does this interaction vary according to demographic variables?

- What is the relationship between social conformity and the search for autonomy from the family among young people? How are these attitudes related to demographic factors?

- How do patriotism/support for national technologies and trust in the media and public institutions affect young people's socio-political attitudes?

These research questions aim to develop a comprehensive understanding of the different socio-political attitudes of young people in Turkey. The questions aim to reveal the social dynamics underlying youth socio-political attitudes by examining issues such as political interest, religious affiliation, social cohesion, autonomy from family, support for national technologies, and trust in the media and public institutions in the context of demographic factors. In this way, the study aims to contribute to the existing academic literature on the socio-political attitudes of young people in Turkey.

In other words, in a world where modernization and the aforementioned changes have separated people from their roots, the attitudes of young people were analyzed with a representative sample data set and an interdisciplinary approach. Academic interest in the socio-political attitudes of young people in Turkey is currently quite high, although the topic is highly dynamic and there is a need for new research in this area. Therefore, such research with a representative sample of young people

covering different dimensions such as political interest, religious affiliation, social cohesion, autonomy from family, support for national technologies, and trust in the media and public institutions is of great importance. The results of this research will contribute to policy-makers, educators, other professionals working with young people, and the literature.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

There is no generally accepted theory for understanding the socio-political attitudes of young people. However, the possibilities offered by Social Identity Theory, Political Socialization Theory, Modernization Theory, and Globalization Theory can help in understanding different dimensions of the problem. For example, according to social identity theory, people look outside the self to the social structure because views of the self are shaped by the world around them. Social identity theories show how identity is defined and how the concept of self and the content of the self are constructed in terms of the rules and orders that prevail in social contexts. According to Mead and Cooley, the self develops through contact with others.

Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner's Social Identity Theory describes the processes that are important for an individual to identify with social groups (Hyejin Iris Chu, 2008). Social Identity Theory allows for the study of young people's attachments to different social groups, such as national, ethnic, and religious groups. It can also help to explain how young people's political interests and religious affiliations interact with their social group identities to influence their social integration and their search for autonomy from the family. It is argued that social identity, which is derived from an individual's group membership, has an impact on attitudes and behaviors. For example, the political attitudes of a young person from a conservative family will be different from those of a young person from a secular family. Political socialization is a part of general socialization (Akın, 2009).The socio-political attitudes of individuals are largely shaped by demographic factors.

In terms of modernization (Inglehart, R. (1997) and globalization theories (Robertson 1999; Bauman, 2000), interaction with societies and cultures beyond national borders is reflected in the attitudes and behaviors of young people. According to Robertson (1999), globalization refers to both the shrinking of the world and the strengthening of world consciousness. The modernization that accompanies globalization, on the one hand, breaks traditional ties and on the other, offers the opportunity to freely choose identity and social roles (Giddens, 2010). According to Bauman (2000), modernity is an irresistible drive to eliminate differences in people's values, lifestyles, languages, traditions, beliefs, and behaviors. In other words, the theory of modernization shows the transition from traditional to modern social

structures and its impact on the values, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals. Young people's search for autonomy, support for national technologies, trust in the media and public institutions can be seen as reflections of the modernization process. In contrast, globalization theory provides an important framework for analyzing how young people's socio-political attitudes are transformed and shaped under the influence of global interactions and technological developments.

Political Interest, Trust, and Patriotism among Youth

The socio-political participation of young people is important for the future of democracies. Youth interest in politics has been decreasing and this claim has been repeated for many years, with a decline in their participation in political groups (Putnam, 2007; Keeter et al., 2002). According to the National Democratic Institute's Youth Political Preferences Survey Report, youth interest in politics is comprised of 35.4% of those who say they "follow almost every day" and 33.3% who say they "follow sometimes" (NDI, 2021).

According to research conducted by KONDA, four out of five young people in Turkey are not members of any political party and have no desire to join any party. The same research shows that 90% of young people in Turkey rate the functioning of democracy with a score of 5 or less on a scale of 1-10 (KONDA, 2022b). Lack of political participation and trust in democracy, including the absence of volunteerism or membership in civil society organizations, is a common problem among young people. However, of the civil society activities in which young people participate, Twitter hashtag campaigns come first. Young people who prefer to express their views through hashtags and participate in social reflexes and demands prioritize freedom of expression and thought as the most important human right. However, the last four places are shared almost equally by the right to protest, the right to property, the right to organize, and the right to assembly and demonstration (KONDA, 2022b).   According to the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute, the level of optimism among young people regarding the next five years has decreased dramatically. In 2017, the percentage of those who believed in the development of their personal growth was 53.2%, while in 2020 this percentage decreased to 42.3% and in 2021 to 26.6% (TÜİK, 2022).

A study on the measurement of value differences according to age and political generation affiliation found that contrary to expectations, the young generation aged 20-32 years had more conservative and traditional values in their political attitudes than the participant groups aged over 54 years (Özgür, 2013). Regarding the political attitudes and value perceptions of university students, a sample of 420 participants revealed that 68.6% believed that national values are eroding and on a

downward trend due to Western values, while 31.2% believed that change is natural. Of those who expressed concerns about the loss of national values, 84.1% identified themselves as religious, while 15.9% of those who expressed that change is inevitable also identified themselves as religious (Özgür, 2013). In terms of support for Turkey's EU membership, the attitudes of young people has been shown to be equally divided into two groups, with the proportion of those who support EU membership equal to the proportion of those who do not (Bülbül & Sinan, 2010).

After the global financial crisis, particularly in 2008-2009, feelings of skepticism, distrust, and xenophobia towards financial globalization have increased worldwide (Colantone & Stanig, 2019; Rodrik, 2017; Inglehart & Norris, 2017). Several studies (Parker et al., 2019; Seemiller & Grace, 2018) claim that younger generations are more liberal and democratic than previous ones. However, the growing trend of populism in response to rising inequalities (Aytekin, 2022) is exacerbating tensions between countries and strengthening nationalist policies that prioritize the production of domestic and national technologies in many countries.

During the formation of the European Union, it was predicted that European identity would be an inclusive identity. However, research indicates that nationalism has increased in Europe, particularly in the aftermath of the 2007-2011 economic crisis (Fligstein, Polyokova, & Sandholtz, 2012). A quantitative study conducted in China found that provocative discourse against China during the 2008 US presidential elections increased nationalist sentiment among highly educated Chinese youth (Shen, 2011). In a study conducted in Russia, a generally negative relationship was found between higher education and xenophobia in a sample group of 11,202 participants. However, a positive correlation was detected between income level and an increase in xenophobia (Herrera & Butkovich Kraus, 2016). Scholarly literature has highlighted a paradoxical global trend across different geographies. While regional integration efforts, in the case of the European Union, seek to strengthen supranational identities, economic crises and political tensions often reinforce nationalist sentiments.

Religious Commitment among Youth

The theory of secularization claims that the influence of religion on society decreases during the process of modernization (Norris & Inglehart, 2004; Swatos & Christiano, 1999; Dobbelaere, 2006). According to research findings, the level of religious commitment among young people is lower than that of the elderly. There has also been shown to be a relationship between education, social media use, socioeconomic status, and religious commitment (Voas & Crockett, 2005; PEW, 2015).

According to the "Statistics on Youth 2021" report published by the Turkish Statistical Institute in May 2022, religion ranks third among the social interests of young people aged 18-29 years, at the rate of 53.2% (TÜİK, 2022). According to the findings of the Youth Human Rights Perception Survey, 28% of young people describe their lifestyle as traditional-conservative, while 11% describe themselves as religious-conservative. In terms of religiosity, 47% of young people consider themselves to be believers, while 36% describe themselves as religious (KONDA, 2022b).

According to the "Social Media Religiosity" study, 44% of young people aged 14-30 years are interested in religious content shared on social media (Oyman, 2016). According to the Religious Life Survey conducted by the Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey, 9.4% of young people aged 18-24 years acquire religious knowledge via the internet, compared to 4.8% in the general population. The same survey indicates that the rate of acceptance of other conventional media as a primary religious source is 25.7% (DİB, 2014).

According to a study conducted on the youth of conservative families, even though young people receive religious knowledge from their families, they differentiate themselves from their families in terms of religious practices and their attitudes towards performing religious rituals are weaker. The emphasis on individuality and freedom in the expressions of young people is remarkable. Even if young people adopt the legacy of their religious traditions from their families, the unlimited freedom space of social media has affected their interpretations of religion and changed their perceptions of privacy (Odabaşı & Aydın, 2020).

In another study, it was found that as the religious awareness of young people aged 18-28 years increases, there is a negative correlation with the need to seek meaning in their lives (Topuz, 2016).

The results of a quantitative study which aimed to measure young people's religious knowledge and perception of deism, showed that the total percentage of those who express that they know what deism means was 75.14%, while the percentage of those who said that at least one of their friends was a deist was 27.22%. In the same study, 48.82% of respondents claimed to have complete knowledge of Islam, and 59.47% stated that they had become disillusioned with religion due to the statements of communities, foundations, religious orders, and leaders (Koç, 2022).

According to a study of Turkish youth aged 12-24 years in the UK, there is a significant relationship between the religious level and identity perceptions. It was determined that young people who are more strongly attached to religious beliefs and practices experience fewer identity crises or are better able to overcome crises

(Ayten, 2012). Another study conducted in the UK revealed that although Muslim youth perform their religious duties less than adults, they give more importance to religion in the context of matching their religious identity, and like Christian youth, they have shown a liberal attitude towards issues such as same-sex marriage and legal abortion (Kashyap & Lewis, 2013). In another study of young people in European Union member states, it was reported that groups with strong religious tendencies supported the Union, while those who identified as atheists or agnostic took a critical approach to the European Union (Nelsen & Guth, 2003).

Although the fundamental principles of religions remain unchanged over time, there has been shown to be a change in how religious people understand and interpret their language. The widespread use of digital networks in particular, has brought about some changes in the transmission and learning of religion. With the influence of digital technologies, religious interpretations have become more pluralistic. Therefore, changes have emerged in the heavy ritualistic or "spiritual" structure of religion, and young people have the opportunity to follow these changes through social media tools (Faimau, 2007; Yeniyol & Karakaya, 2022).

Autonomy from the Family in Youth

The youth period is known as a time of change and an increasing search for autonomy from the family (BUDAK & Yıldız, 2022). Modernization and social change also strengthen young people's search for autonomy from their family. In particular, an increase in educational level enhances the self-confidence and ability of young people to make independent decisions. However, this situation can also lead to problems between young people and their parents (Yavuz & Özmete, 2012). The autonomy of young people from the family is closely related to the societal culture.

The existence of the family institution is directly related to the social structure and has undergone changes throughout history. The family is a social institution that reproduces its past characteristics according to the current needs and changes in power relations within it (Aytaç, 2015). In this context, the younger generation's perspective of the family structure and their tendency to deviate from traditional values are not abnormal. Research conducted in Europe and Latin America shows that young people exhibit a flexible approach to family values, demand more freedom, and have the belief that the family has become dysfunctional (Torres et al., 2021; Sollie, 1997). Similar trends have also been observed in research conducted in Turkey.

According to the Turkey Youth Survey 2021 report published by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 33.5% of Turkish families consist of at least five members. In terms of the values that young people value the most, family ranks first with a

significance level of 96.6%. According to the same study, while the proportion of those who consider the family as the foundation of society is 91.2%, the proportion of those who consider the family as an outdated and unnecessary institution is 5.8%. However, only 18.4% of the respondents indicated that their future goal was to start a good family, and trust in their families was expressed by 46.9% of the young people (Konrad, 2021).

According to the Youth Needs Survey conducted by KONDA for the Community Volunteers Foundation, even if the facilities at home are sufficient, 26.2% of young people preferred to live in univeristy halls of residence, while 21.9% were undecided. According to the survey, almost half of the young people were inclined towards moving out of the family home into halls of residence at university. Moreover, nearly all of the respondents (87.5%) stated that they need to be consulted in decision-making processes (KONDA, 2022a).

In a study aimed at measuring the perceptions of young people regarding family and marriage, it was found that female university students have a more moderate and traditional approach to marriage. According to the findings of the sample of 931 university students aged between 17-27 years, a significant difference and negative correlation were found in terms of their approach to marriage and family according to their age. The findings suggest that positive attitudes towards marriage and family decrease as age increased (Bener & Günay, 2013).

In another study measuring family values among university students, it was found that female students placed more importance on democracy and participation in family decision-making processes compared to their male counterparts (Erkol & Şahin, 2021).

In another study of 17-29-year-old children of religious families, the results showed that the majority of young people were trapped between religion, tradition, and modernity. A notable finding of the research was that while 52.8% of men approved of their wives being cultured and educated, this rate was 92% among women. Although an agreement was reached between both genders regarding the division of household chores, both parties exhibited a negative attitude towards living with their spouse's family after marriage. The most important result of that study was that 6% of conservative young people approved of same-sex marriage (Dilekli &Koyuncu, 2022).

According to the "Turkey's Youth Research 2020 Report" published by SODEV, the importance that young people place on freedom of expression was above 8 on a scale of 1-10 (SODEV, 2021). It is crucial to reach a consensus on freedom of

expression among young people from conservative and secular families. With the prevalence of digital networks, it is possible to monitor how this attitude among young people is reflected in terms of values. Various research findings have shown that while there is no complete breakaway from traditional family values in the younger generation, changes in attitudes towards the traditional family structure and representation are observed.

Trust in Media/Influencers/Artists

Marshall McLuhan, one of the most important media theorists of the 20th century, predicted that electronic mass communication tools worldwide would turn everyone into a global village accessible to each other (McLuhan, & Lapham, 1994; McLuhan, & Powers, 2020). Today's younger generation has been immersed in digital networks almost from the moment they were born, regardless of social differences such as class or ethnicity. Data show that digital networks have a significant impact on shaping and managing attitudes. Particularly considering the intensity of social media use, young people are highly likely to be influenced by social media influencers and artists through these digital networks.

According to the 2022 We Are Social Global Digital Report, Turkey ranks 6th in the world in active social media usage and first for Instagram usage. Internet usage in Turkey has been embraced at a higher rate than the global average and has been adapted to every aspect of life, reaching 82%. Similarly, the social media usage rate is 80%. However, according to the report, the trust level in social media influencers in Turkey is quite low, ranking third to last in the world (Kepios, 2022). This attitude contradicts the technological determinist approach towards mass communication tools (McLuhan, & Lapham, 1994; McLuhan, & Powers, 2020; Al, 2017). If only technological opportunities in mass communication were able to guide and control attitudes and behaviors in society, it would be easier to control problems and mass movements (Tüfekçioğlu, 2022).

In the context of adaptation to digital networks, Turkey is significantly above the world average. This adaptation makes it possible to observe the sociological effects of the renewed and "updated" change through digitalization in various fields ranging from traditional social institutions to religion and family, supported by data. Studies have shown that the rate of internet addiction among young people aged 14-18 years is the highest, with 38% of young people stating that their communication weakens when they interrupt their Facebook usage, but only 5.5% of respondents believed that new media technologies have the power to change life. Studies on the role of social media in young people's information acquisition process reveal that 92.4%

of young people view the internet as a source of information. In addition, Facebook ranks 4th as the "most commonly used" source of information among young people with a rate of 70%. Overall, it can be concluded that the internet and social media networks are an empirical reality as the primary source of information for young people (Kırık, Arslan, Çetinkaya & Gül, 2015).

The impact of social media on political participation has become apparent in global social movements such as the "occupy" movements and the Arab Spring (Gerbaudo, 2017); (Costanza-Chock, 2012). For example, according to the Arab Social Media Report, during the Arab Spring, the most active social media usage in the region, at a rate of 51%, was in Kuwait, with Twitter being the most widely used social media platform (Salem, 2012). After Hosni Mubarak's resignation, the number of tweets in Egypt increased from 2,300 to 230,000 in one day (Kırık, 2014).

According to Marc Prensky, the prevalence of digital networks can explain the attitude change between the younger and older generations. He argues that the "digital natives" and "digital immigrants" can be distinguished by the fact that digital natives use the language of digital media as their mother tongue and develop the corresponding consciousness, behavior, perception, and attitudes, whereas digital immigrants try to adapt to the digital network with their old habits (Prensky, 2001). Even news sources are different between the two generations, as digital natives have the ability to quickly check, verify, criticize, and interact with users from various social groups. The rate of attitude change between digital natives and digital immigrants can also be evaluated based on this ability to adapt to this interaction (Prensky, 2001). Among the purposes of using the internet, entertainment ranks first at the rate of 25%, followed by research at 22%. Among the purposes of using social media, entertainment ranks first at the rate of 23%, followed by communication at 16%. According to that study, the most widely used social media platform is Facebook (Köroğlu, 2015). Overall, the digital tools of digital natives indicate young people who actively use social media, and research on this concept shows that young people's purposes of using the internet and social media are for entertainment and research. The possibility of social media has greatly expanded the limited perception of space. Certainly, basic variables such as class and gender have a significant impact on attitudes, but in contemporary society, social media is a significant force for users to reach beyond their limited normative boundaries.

Method

The data for this study was provided by the Method Research Company, one of the leading research organizations in Turkey. This research is based on a survey of 812 respondents representing the 14-29 years age group across Turkey. The survey was conducted in seven geographical regions of Turkey using a quota-random sampling method. With this method, the results are representative of the youth population in Turkey with a 95% confidence interval. Of the total respondents, 23.6% (n= 192) came from the Marmara region, 15.8% (n=128) from the Aegean region, 16% (n=130) from the Central Anatolian region, 10.8% (n=88) from the Black Sea region, 12.6% (n=102) from the Mediterranean region, and 21.2% (n=172) from the Eastern and Southeastern regions. This distribution of participants shows that the study is able to examine the socio-political attitudes of young people in Turkey within a broad geographical framework. The distribution of participants by city is as follows: 12.8% Istanbul, 6.2% Ankara, 6.3% Izmir, 5.5% Adana, 6% Van, 5% Samsun, 4.9% Antalya, 4.4% Kayseri, 3.7% Erzurum, 3.6% Denizli, and the remaining participants were from other cities.

The participants comprised 49.6% females and 50.4% males, with 21.9% aged 14-18 years, 43.7% 19-24 years, and 34.4% 25-29 years. The distribution of participants according to their level of education is as follows: 17.9% (145 participants) are primary school graduates, 50.9% (413 participants) are high school graduates, and 31.3% (254 participants) have a university degree or higher. This distribution shows that the study is broadly representative of young people from different educational levels across Turkey.

The majority of the respondents (89.2%) were single, 9.1% were married and 1.7% were divorced. It was stated by 25% that they were the primary breadwinner in their household. One third of the participants (33.6%) were employed, 73% of the unemployed were students, while the rest were wholly unemployed. Of the unemployed participants 20.4% were actively job-seeking, and 6.7% were not. Socio-economic class was stated by 22.8% of the participants as upper-middle or upper social class, while 50.4% reported belonging to the middle class and 26.7% to the lower-middle or lower social class. Of the total participants, 76% lived with their families, 11.7% lived alone, and the rest lived with friends, relatives or in public/private dormitories/university halls of residence. Only 4.2% of the young participants reported being members of a civil society organization. The voluntary work reported was related to issues such as environment/climate, youth work, social responsibility projects and animal rights.

Attitudes were measured using a questionnaire with 5-point Likert-type responses coded as 1 for "strongly disagree," 3 for "neutral," and 5 for "strongly agree." In the initial stage, Exploratory Factor Analysis was computed for the questions, and 7 factors

were obtained. The KMO value was 0.80, and the explained variance was 65%. The first factor (F1) was named "Patriotism and National Technological Development." The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) for this factor was 0.84. The total of "agree" (4) and "strongly agree" (5) responses for each item under each factor was given in the "agree" column.

The second factor (F2) consisted of five autonomy questions, especially expressing the independence of young people from their families. This factor was named "Autonomy from Family," and the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was 0.82. The total of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses for each question in this factor was given in the "agree" column.

Table 1.

Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

	Agree %	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
F1. Patriotism/National Technological Development I support all native and national efforts	74%	.796						
I find the steps taken in our country's defence industry successful	63%	.776						
I support the TOGG project	63%	.776						
I believe that oil and gas exploration activities will be beneficial in reducing our country's energy dependence.	65%	.744						
I support the establishment of the Turkish Space Agency and its work	62%	.712						
F2. Autonomy from the Family A young person should marry someone from a different religion, even if their family objects	48%		.862					
A young person should marry someone from a different sect, even if their family objects	57%		.826					
A young person should marry someone from a different ethnic background, even if their family objects	56%		.813					
It is normal for a young person who has turned 18 to live separately from their family	61%		.632					

		F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
A young person should be able to marry the person they love, even if their family objects	69%	.594					
F3. Trust in Public Institutions Level of trust in the Government	25%		.824				
Level of trust in the President	24%		.806				
Level of trust in the Parliament	36%		.779				
Level of trust in the Police	50%		.610				
Level of trust in the Army	58%		.538				
F4. Political Interest							
I follow political developments in my country and stay informed	57%			.795			
I follow political developments around the world and stay informed	48%			.772			
Political topics come up in my conversations with friends	38%			.764			
Political topics come up in my conversations with family	36%			.727			
F5. Devotion to Religion and Tradition							
It is important for me to fulfill the duties of my religion	70%				.791		
I am a religious person	76%				.772		
I am attached to my traditions/customs	64%				.696		
F6. Social Conformity and Responsibility I follow social etiquette	88%					.763	
I have a sense of responsibility towards society	82%					.744	
I am a responsible person	86%					.733	
F7. Trust in the Media and Artists							
Level of trust in social media influencers	6%						.819
Level of trust in artists	14%						.813
Level of trust in the media	13%						.747
Cronbach's Alpha		.84	.82	.84	.80	.85	.75	.75

KMO: 0.80; Explained variance: 65%; Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis, Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

The third factor (F3) included questions related to trust in government institutions such as the government, president, parliament, police, and army. This factor was named "Trust in public institutions" and had a reliability coefficient of 0.84. The F4 factor consisted of four questions reflecting young people's interest in politics and had a reliability coefficient of 0.80. Factor F5 included questions related to tradition/ custom and religious commitment, while the F6 factor included three questions related to social conformity and responsibility. The F7 factor included questions about trust in social/traditional media and artists. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) of all factors were 0.75 or higher. The percentage of respondents who answered "agree" or "strongly agree" (total of 4 and 5) for all questions is shown in the "agree" column in Table 1.

The results obtained from the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) did not show normal distribution in the analyses. Therefore, the non-parametric tests of Spearman correlation analysis, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis H test were used in the analyses.

Results

As in many countries, strong support for patriotic policies was also observed among young people in Turkey. The percentages of those who agreed with the questions under "Patriotism/National Technological Development" (F1) support this situation. For example, 74% of the respondents stated that they support all domestic and national works. In addition, 65% believed that oil and gas exploration activities will be useful in reducing Turkey's dependence on foreign energy, 63% believed that steps taken in the defence industry of Turkey have been successful, and 63% supported the TOGG domestic automobile project. Furthermore, 62% of young people supported the establishment and operations of the Turkish Space Agency. Spearman correlation analysis revealed that the young people who trust public institutions are the strongest supporters of patriotic policies (r=0.454, n=805, p=000). It was also observed that young people with high religious devotion support patriotic policies more than secular young people (r=0.229, n=803, p=,000). The young people with a higher tendency to conform to society were seen to support patriotic/national/ technological development more than others (r=0.167, n=803, p=,000). It was determined that as interest in political issues increases, so does patriotic inclination (r=0.144, n=802, p=,000). However, no significant relationship was found between trust in the media and the search for autonomy from their families.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis Results

		F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
F1. Patriotism	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.008	.454**	.144**	.229**	.167**	0.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.811	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.067
F2. Autonomy from family	Correlation Coefficient	0.008	1.000	-.153**	.135**	-.324**	0.016	0.023
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.811		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.653	0.508
F3.Public_ institution_trust	Correlation Coefficient	.454**	-.153**	1.000	-.076*	.351**	.142**	.282**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.030	0.000	0.000	0.000
F4.Political_ interest	Correlation Coefficient	.144**	.135**	-.076*	1.000	-.079*	0.065	0.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.030		0.024	0.064	0.376
F5.Religious_ devotion	Correlation Coefficient	.229**	-.324**	.351**	-.079*	1.000	.414**	-.092**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.024		0.000	0.009
F6.Social conformity	Correlation Coefficient	.167**	0.016	.142**	0.065	.414**	1.000	-.114**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.653	0.000	0.064	0.000		0.001
F7.Media_Trust	Correlation Coefficient	0.065	0.023	.282**	0.031	-.092**	-.114**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.067	0.508	0.000	0.376	0.009	0.001	

While many young people in Turkey expressed strong support for patriotic policies, about 58% also indicated a desire to move to another country. The primary reasons why young people want to live in another country were "better living conditions" (32.6%), "more education opportunities" (27.7%), "higher wages" (21.5%), "a more democratic and freer environment" (12.7%), and "better social security conditions" (5.4%). Young people who do not want to move to another country (42%) exhibited a stronger patriotic tendency compared to others (r=0.145, n=721, p=0.000). The Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference between males and females (U=74507.5, z= -1.978, p=0.048), with males exhibiting stronger patriotic tendencies than females (median: 4 vs. 3.8).

The young people were asked about their social class affiliation. Subjectively, half of the young people (50.4%) stated that they belonged to the middle class, and the remainder were distributed among other classes in roughly equal proportions. Young people from the middle class were seen to be more supportive of patriotic

policies than those from other classes. The lowest support was observed among young people from the highest and lowest classes (H(4) = 11.895, p = 0.018).

Of the total respondents, 50.8% stated that they believed Turkey would be in a worse condition in the future, 16.8% believed that the situation would remain the same, while only 32.4% expected a better future for Turkey. The Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted to reveal the relationship between patriotic tendencies and expectations for the future. The results showed that the more optimistic young people were about the future of Turkey, the more patriotic they became. The lowest patriotic tendency was observed among those who expected Turkey to be worse off in the future (H(2) = 57.886, p = 0.00).

Alcohol consumption was reported by one-third of the young people (33%), and not by the remaining majority (69%). Relatively more religious/conservative young people were observed to support patriotic policies more than the less conservative young people (U=63840.5, z= -2.546, p=0.011).

Of the young people who responded to the survey, one-third (33.6%) said that they worked, while two-thirds (66.4%) stated that they did not. The majority of non-working individuals were students, and according to the Mann-Whitney U test, the non-working youth supported patriotic policies more (U=62684.5, z= -3.202, p=0.001). There were no significant differences in attitude towards patriotic policies based on age, education, marital status, or income.

The Search for Autonomy from the Family

Factor 2 represents the attitudes of young people towards being autonomous from their families. It was stated by 69% of the young people that they should be able to marry someone they love, even if their family disapproved. The rate of those who thought that an 18-year-old should move out of the family home was 61%. Nearly half (48%) of the respondents believed that a young person should be able to marry someone of a different religion even if their family disapproved, and inter-ethnic marriage, even if there was family opposition, was supported by more than half of the respondents.

According to the Spearman correlation analysis, as young people's search for autonomy from the family strengthens, their religious commitment decreases. In other words, there is a statistically significant, negative correlation (r=-0.324, n=809, p=0.000) between the search for autonomy from the family and religious commitment. There was also determined to be a statistically significant, negative correlation between the search for autonomy from the family and the desire to move

to another country (r=-0.162, n=727, p=0.000) and trust in government/institutions (r=-0.153, n=810, p=0.000). A positive correlation (r=0.135, n=808, p=0.000) was determined between interest in politics and the search for autonomy.

The results of the Kruskal Wallis Test revealed a significant difference in young people's tendencies towards autonomy from the family (H=13.257, p=0.010). The highest tendency towards autonomy was observed in the highest income group, while the lowest autonomy attitude was among young people from middle-income families. Similarly, university-educated young people had the highest level of autonomy attitude (H=6.381, p=0.041). Those who reported alcohol consumption had greater autonomy demands than those who did not (U=50608, z=-7.132, p=0.000). The results of the Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant distinction between the desire for autonomy and the desire to move to another country (U=52824.5, z=-3.887, p=0.000). Although males had a higher tendency towards autonomy than females, this difference was not statistically significant (p=0.053). No significant difference was determined in the autonomy attitude according to marital status, employment status, and subjective social class.

Trust in Government Institutions

Turkish young people, although sympathetic to the government's domestic/nationalist policies, were seen to have low levels of trust in both the government and its leaders. Only 25% of young people reported trust in the government, the trust rate for the President was 24%, and the trust rate for the Parliament was 36%. Trust in the police (50%) and the military (58%) was somewhat higher. However, these data indicate that the government has largely lost the support of young people. On the other hand, the opposition has also failed to gain the trust of young people. The trust rate for the main opposition party was much lower at 16%, and more than half of young people (51.4%) answered, "I do not support any political party".

Those who declared the most trust in the government were the young people who were both patriotic and religiously devoted (r=0.351, n=809, p=0.000). They also had a high level of trust in the media (r=0.282, n=804, p=0.000). Among conformists/ young people with high trust and a tendency to conform to society (r=0.142, n=809, p=0.000), trust in the government/institutions was seen to be somewhat higher. It was observed that as interest in politics increases, trust in the government/institutions also increases (r=0.269, n=727, p=0.000). However, trust in the government/institutions was lowest among young people from the lowest socioeconomic class, and highest among those from the middle class (H=43.770, p=0.000). Similarly, there was a significant differentiation between trust in institutions and the desire to go abroad

(U=44.288, z=-7.247, p=0.000). In other words, as trust in institutions decreases, the desire to move abroad increases. The data also revealed that young people who are unemployed have higher levels of trust in the government (U=65.030, z=-2.672, p=0.000). There was no significant relationship between variables such as gender, age, income, education, and trust in the government/institutions.

Political Interest

While 57% of young people in Turkey reported following political developments in the country, others were undecided or disagreed. Only 48% reported following political developments worldwide, and the percentage of those who discuss political issues with friends (38%) or family members (36%) was even lower. These results indicate that young people's political interest is not very high, but neither are they completely disinterested. As a result, half of the young people stated that they follow both domestic and international political developments.

As mentioned earlier, there was found to be a significant correlation between political interest and patriotism, autonomy, and trust in public institutions. Correlation analysis results showed a significant negative correlation between religious devotion and political interest (r=-0.079, n=807, p=0.024). In other words, young people who are highly religious and have high levels of trust in public institutions are less interested in political issues than those who do not share these characteristics.

The data obtained in this study showed that females have a lower level of political interest than males (U=66920, z=-4.509, p=0.000), and that political interest was lower in the under 18 years age group and increased after the age of 18 years (H=10.766, p=0.005). Political interest was observed to increase marginally as income level increased (H=9.863, p=0.043). The Kruskal-Wallis test showed that political interest increased steadily as the income level increased towards higher income groups (H=12.408, p=0.015). Political interest also varied significantly according to education level (H=17.274, p=0.000). The group with the highest political interest was seen to be university graduates, while the group with the lowest interest was those with primary education or below. Political interest also varied with the desire to emigrate (U=50976.5, z=-4.828, p=0.000), and was found to be higher in employed individuals compared to unemployed individuals (U=66248.5, z=-2.134, p=0.033).

Religious commitment

The survey results showed that 76% of respondents answered "yes" to the question of religious commitment, while the remaining respondents either answered "no" or were undecided. It was said to be important for to fulfill the obligations of their religion

by 70% of the respondents, and 65% stated that they are loyal to their traditions/customs. As previously stated, there was found to be a significant relationship between religiosity and patriotism, autonomy, trust in public institutions, and political interest. In addition, a significant positive correlation was determined between religious affiliation and social harmony/responsibility (r=0.414, n=810, p=0.000), and a negative correlation with trust in the media (r=-0.092, n=802, p=0.009).

Although the highest level of religious commitment was seen in the lowest income group, the lowest level of religious commitment was also seen in the lowest income group (H=9.882, p=0.042). Young people with a strong religious affiliation were more optimistic about the future of Turkey (H=8.322, p=0.016). Religious affiliation also varied significantly according to alcohol consumption, with a higher tendency towards emigrating to another country among those with weak religious affiliation. There was no significant difference in religious affiliation according to age, gender, education, marital status, employment status, or class membership.

Social Conformity and Trust in Media

The rate of adherence to social rules among young people was found to be quite high at 88%. Moreover, 86% of respondents stated that they have a strong sense of responsibility, and 82% believed that they have a high level of responsibility towards society. In other words, more than 80% of young people stated that they are responsible and adaptable to society.

In addition to the aforementioned findings, a negative correlation was found between social adaptation and trust in the media (r=-0.116, n=802, p=0.001). Interestingly, as the level of education increased, so the level of social adaptation also increased (H=22.217, p=0.000). Alcohol consumption was found to be lower among conformist youth. No significant relationship was found between social adaptation and gender, age, household income, social class, marital status, belief in the future, and employment status.

Trust levels are generally quite low in Turkey, and trust in the media is even lower. Trust in the media in Turkey was seen to be generally 13%, while the trust rate in artists was 14%, and trust in social media influencers was only 6%. It was observed that as trust in the media in Turkey increased, so there was a steady increase in the level of optimism about Turkey's future (H=18.715, p=0.000). However, no significant relationship was found between the level of trust in the media and gender, age, household income, social class, marital status, education, and employment status.

Conclusion and Discussion

Social Identity Theory, Political Socialization Theory, Modernization Theory, and Globalization Theory provide insights into understanding youth attitudes. As emphasized earlier, according to Social Identity Theory, individuals construct their own identity through comparisons with other groups (Sözen, 1991). The results of this study show a very high level of patriotism and support for local/national technologies. In other words, as a manifestation of commitment to national identity, pride in national achievements is very high among young people in Turkey. In addition, the positive correlation between trust in public institutions and religious affiliation and support for patriotic policies indicates that their social identity is shaped by these two important factors.

The results of this study also provide important insights into the political socialization processes of young people in Turkey. The increase in patriotic tendencies as political interest increases suggests that young people's political socialization processes are sensitive to both local and national issues. Young people's level of trust in public institutions has a significant impact on their political participation patterns and patriotic attitudes. The study results also showed that religious affiliation has a significant impact on young people's political attitudes. This is because young people from conservative families internalize conservative ideas during the socialization process, making it easier for them to adopt conservative policies. Those who go through a secular political socialization process are also more likely to support secular policies (or politicians).

Some social scientists have emphasized the dominant feature of nationalism in the political socialization process in Turkey. Accordingly, nationalism has been one of the most important defining ideologies of Turkish political culture. This is true for both the secular left and the right. Although it is not possible to speak of a completely homogeneous structure, it has been observed that the political tendencies of young people overlap to a large extent with those of their parents. It has also been observed that the basic paradigm of the general education system in Turkey, which operates on the basis of the nation-state understanding of politics, has a significant impact on students' world of meaning, and that school and national education is an important means of political socialization (Akın, 2009). The findings of this study are largely consistent with Akın's research, and young people give great support to domestic/national technologies with nationalist motives.

However, the results of this study also show that the political socialization processes of young people are also shaped under the influence of globalization. Globalization and technological developments have changed the ways in which

young people obtain political information. Social media and digital platforms offer young people the opportunity to obtain information from multiple sources and to express themselves. This may lead some young people to move away from traditional forms of political participation and adopt new forms of political expression and participation, such as digital activism.

In addition, modernization theory identifies the process by which societies transition from traditional to modern structures and the effects of this process on the values, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals (Inglehart, 1997). The research findings show that young people adopt the typical characteristics of modernization processes, such as support for national technologies and the search for autonomy from the family. However, the high willingness of young people to move abroad is also associated with low trust in public institutions, awareness of different country experiences, and uncertainties caused by modernization. The results of this study reveal the contradictory effects of globalization, with young people showing a high willingness to move abroad despite their patriotic motives to support national achievements. On the one hand, young people want to take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization, but at the same time they want to preserve their sense of national identity and loyalty.

The findings of this study align with the "zeitgeist" that has been rising in many countries after the 2008 financial crisis (Colantone & Stanig, 2019; Rodrik, 2017; Inglehart & Norris, 2017). With the impact of accelerating global migration and shrinking markets, patriotic tendencies have strengthened and emphasis on local/national production has increased. The data show that the majority of young people in Turkey support local and national production. As Turkey is a country where nationalism tendencies are strong alongside patriotism, the emphasis on local/national production by young people raised in the current political culture is an expected situation.

Moreover, the rising populism trend and increasing distrust globally have created a significant social demand for developing local production in many countries, including Turkey. The government's emphasis on local/national discourse may also have been effective in increasing these rates. Support for local and national production was found to be higher among young people with high levels of religiosity and trust in the government. For example, the introduction of TOGG, as the first domestic car production line, has created great excitement, particularly among the conservative segment of society. For the majority of young people, local/national production is a guarantee of the country's independence and security. It is also a source of national pride for those who have suffered during the lengthy EU membership process.

One interesting finding of the research is that while young people in Turkey support patriotic policies, they also mostly express a desire to move abroad if given the opportunity. It is possible to say that young people tend to be more liberal and globalization-oriented in their individual future preferences while showing a more security-oriented and nationalist approach in their evaluations within the framework of group identity. The desire to move abroad was seen to be more common among secular youth. Although it has been observed that the desire of well-educated secular youth to migrate has increased due to dissatisfaction with political rhetoric and some preferential practices (especially nepotism), the responses given in the survey also showed that the pursuit of higher salaries, better living conditions, and educational opportunities have an impact on this trend. Indeed, the issue of justice, which was highlighted throughout the research, appears to be a need within a social context rather than a judicial context.

Turkey is a country with an unequal distribution of income. However, there is a subjective perception that most people belong to the middle class when asked which class they belong to. In this research, the middle-class answer represents a kind of "approved citizen" and was preferred by the majority.

The results of this study showed that the young people in the middle classes showed more interest in supporting local/national production, and the least support for patriotic policies came from the lowest and highest classes. As young people become more optimistic about the future of the country due to the influence of various motivating factors, their patriotic tendencies also increase.

The data showed that despite young people in Turkey having a sympathetic attitude towards local/nationalistic policies, their trust in the government and public institutions was low. Trust in the government was stated by 25%, in the president by 24%, and in the Grand National Assembly by 36%. These data indicate that the government has lost the support of young people to a significant extent. However, the opposition has also failed to gain the trust of young people, with trust in the main opposition party stated by only 16%. In particular, the level of trust in the government and public institutions was quite low among secular young people. It was also seen that as trust in public institutions decreases, young people's desire to move abroad increases.

Trust is the foundation of all relationships that individuals establish with each other (Can, 2019). As Fukuyama (2005) emphasized, the importance of trust in terms of social capital is once again highlighted. As the level of trust decreases in a country, cooperation decreases, and transaction costs increase. At the same time, polarization increases in the country and solidarity weakens. Therefore, the trust

of individuals in each other and institutions is of great importance for the peace and development of the country. Turkey has historically had low levels of trust, which has been indicated by the findings of the World Values Survey within at least the last 30 years. Therefore, conspiracy theories have been quite popular in Turkey (Sayın & Bozkurt, 2021; Bozkurt, 2018). Factors such as delays in establishing legal/rational authority, social polarization, lack of transparency in public administration, and economic and political instability are among the factors that affect the low level of trust in Turkey.

According to the findings of this study, half of the young people stated that they follow both domestic and international political developments. Conservative young people with high religious and patriotic tendencies showed less interest in politics. Due to polarization in the country, groups with low trust in the conservative government are gaining interest in politics. According to the findings of this study, young people's interest in politics is partially higher than the findings of the "Political Preferences Survey Report" (NDI, 2021). In accordance with academic literature, political participation in terms of political interest is largely declining (Putnam, 2007).

International academic research has shown that women are less interested in politics than men (Bennett & Bennett, 1989; Atkeson, 2003). The findings of this study also show that women have lower political interest, similar to the academic literature A low level of education is another factor that reduces political interest. Although political interest may not be a problem when it is limited to following political developments only, when political interest includes issues such as participating in protests, and signing politically-oriented statements, political participation can be very costly in societies with a delay in the functioning of legal/rational authority in the Weberian sense. Especially, groups with a low education level may act more cautiously because they are less informed about the risks of political participation.

The claim that young people in Turkey are becoming deist or abandoning religion is frequently discussed, especially among "anxious conservatives." While international academic literature supports the hypothesis of secularization that religious commitment is decreasing, some researchers have opposed this view (Inglehart, 2020; Inglehart, 2021; Swatos & Christiano, 1999; Berger, 1999).

According to the findings of this study, three out of every four young people who participated in the survey defined themselves as religious and two out of every three young people defined themselves as attached to their traditions. These rates can be interpreted as a disappointment for groups with high religious commitment. However, for an observer taking the experience of Western Europe into consideration, it can be said that we are dealing with a quite conservative youth.

The digital transformation and abundance of information in today's world are changing the way religious people interpret their religions and diversifying their religious views, even though the basic principles of religions remain the same. This is especially true for young people who are searching for their identity (Faimau, 2007; Yeniyol & Karakaya, 2022). It has also been found that increasing income has an effect on secularization among young people.

More than 80% of the young people responded "I agree" to questions related to social responsibility and compliance. However, these answers cannot always be interpreted as responsible behavior by young people because people tend to justify their own behavior. As the level of education increases, the percentage of people who respond "I agree" to questions related to social responsibility/compliance also increases.

Turkey is a country with a high rate of social media usage (Kepios, 2022), and this rate is even higher among young people. As stated previously, Turkey is a low-trust society; trust levels are even lower regarding the media, artists, or social media phenomena. For example, only 6% of the respondents trust social media influencers and 14% trust the media, and the remainder did not trust or were undecided. The already low level of trust in society has decreased further due to the social media-spread infodemic (inaccurate information). Initially, there was an expectation that information technologies (and the Internet) would break the monopoly of great powers over information, disseminate information to large masses, and liberate societies (Bozkurt, 2000). However, digital technologies (especially social media) have become an area where fake news spreads more quickly. This has further reduced the low level of trust among young people.

This study will provide a rich source of information for policymakers and future researchers who want to understand young people's socio-political attitudes, rather than testing a few hypotheses. Similar studies conducted in the future will be useful to be able to understand changes over time.

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