Stabilization of Passive Interaction with Political Culture: A Typological Study of the Undergraduate Students of the Selçuk University

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Abstract: *Political culture can be considered a significant and decisive component of societies. The political culture of any society is formed based on its cultural values within the context of existing social, economic, and political conditions. This aspect of culture is crucial in helping us understand historical complexities and make political predictions. This study aims to identify the prevalent political culture among undergraduate students in the Faculty of Literature and Economics at Selçuk University. The researchers conducted this study using the third-generation grounded theory method and drawing on Almond and Verba's political culture theory concepts. After conducting face-to-face interviews with 17 students, considering gender diversity, field of study, and political outlook, and extracting 43 subcategories and main categories, they concluded that Turkey's existing cultural and political challenges pave the way for political and economic transformations. Moreover, the government's inefficacy, which participants described as authoritarian and undemocratic, in managing financial issues and political challenges has raised the issue of structural reforms to prevent the gap between the government and the people from widening further. This gap is characterized by declining political trust, reluctance to participate in political processes, and a sense of passivity toward the political system.*

Introduction

Political culture is based on the intersection of politics and culture, and more specifically, it encompasses the influences of existing culture, beliefs, and values within the cultural framework of societies on politics. The study of the interconnection between politics and culture, and the impact of culture on politics, is an ancient endeavor tracing back to Plato and Aristotle. The discussion of "citizens' virtues" in the works of Montesquieu and Aristotle is precisely in line with illustrating the influences of culture on politics, a topic later continued by Tocqueville in American society. Gabriel Almond defines political culture as "the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations toward politics among the members of a system" (Hasanifar & Zarbi, 2023: 55).

The emergence of political culture in political and social science literature is indebted to the behavioral research of scholars such as Gabriel Almond, Sidney Verba, and their colleagues. These studies aimed to open a new level of analysis in the study of human political behavior in political and social relations by focusing on political attitudes, beliefs, and values, and their influence on political behavior (Alavian et al., 2023: 10). The term "political culture" in its modern sense was first used in 1956 by Gabriel Almond in political science. He preferred this term over "national character"

because it allowed him to utilize the conceptual frameworks common in anthropology, sociology, and psychology (Zarei, 2009: 18).

This concept, which arises from the combination of the two components of culture and politics, can be succinctly defined as a society's set of attitudes and beliefs towards its political system. Therefore, to understand a society's political culture, separate studies are required. In this process, it is essential to identify approaches, examine and analyze research methods, and outline the appropriate patterns and frameworks for that society.

Patterns of attitudes and behaviors in political culture are learned individually through political socialization processes. The assumption, both among general observers and political scientists, is that aside from general behavioral patterns, specific patterns also exist at various levels of society, or more precisely, within particular subsystems of the political system. Ultimately, political culture determines what is permissible to be considered a political issue (Lauber, 1996).

Political culture generally develops over the political and social lifespan of society and is influenced by various factors such as climatic and geographical conditions, the structure of the political and social system, historical circumstances, belief systems, customs, the economic system, and more. It is then institutionalized through a continuous process of political socialization and passed from one generation to the next (Kzaemi, 2009: 23).

Students, as the future elites of society, play a crucial role in shaping policies and society. By acquiring information and knowledge related to political culture, they can directly participate in political and social decision-making processes and exert greater influence. Therefore, research and studies that examine the importance and impact of political culture on students' lives are of significant importance.

Recent studies indicate that students familiar with political culture generally exhibit higher levels of political participation and activity, and they engage more actively in social decision-making processes. Moreover, awareness of political culture helps students make better-informed political choices and understand the political and social dimensions of their decisions more comprehensively (Dalton & Klingemann, 2007).

The analysis of the state of political culture in societies, especially within universities, is of great importance because it plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' attitudes, values, and behavioral patterns. Turkey, as a country with a complex history and culture, possesses a multi-layered and diverse political culture influenced by cultural, historical, social, and economic factors. Similarly, in Turkish universities, political culture, as an essential aspect of the student experience, is influenced by various factors including religious, cultural, political, and economic influences. This political culture has extensive effects on the attitudes, beliefs, and political behaviors of students, and it can provide a better understanding of political trends and phenomena in Turkish society (Özbudun, 2016).

Given the importance of political culture in societies and universities, more studies and research are needed to enhance understanding and knowledge of this issue. In this article, we explore the typology and examine the factors influencing the formation of the political culture of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Literature and Economics at Selçuk University in Turkey. By utilizing available data from scientific research, we aim to provide an accurate and scholarly analysis of the political culture within these two faculties. Additionally, this study aims to investigate the political culture of students and its effects on their decision-making, behaviors, and political attitudes.

Theoretical Framework

Political culture is typically measured at the individual level, and many argue that this is the appropriate level for analysis. The classical theory of political culture essentially addresses the issue of political participation. The theory of political culture is presented as a methodological theoretical framework for studying the relationship between citizens and the state (politics). The idea of this approach is to define both civic attitudes and politics as predictive systems, as they can be considered communication systems from the perspective of Luhmann's systems theory (Sokolov, 2018). Other authors claim that culture is inherently a social-level construct defined as the central

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cultural orientation within a nation, and therefore, a set of individual responses serves as indicators of political culture at the societal level (Welzel et al., 2021).

Two fundamental perspectives can be identified for a better understanding of trends in political culture research:

The first perspective emerges as a slow process toward identifying a fundamental concept. This can align with the attitude found in classical political culture theory. It may also be a less complex concept that provides a common (ontological) ground for studying the relationship between citizens and the state, a relationship fundamental to both. Over the past two decades, this perspective has been affirmed with the development of classical political culture theory toward modernization and human development theory (Inglehart and others, 2003; Welch, 2013), which identifies value as the fundamental concept in studying the relationship between citizens and the state and explaining their deeply interrelated dynamics. This view suggests that the ontological explanation of classical political culture theory should result from identifying a common conceptual background for both citizens and the state. Here, one might expect that other common conceptual backgrounds, such as emotions, are considered (Heaney, 2019).

The second perspective emerges as a rapid process toward identifying a fundamental process or set of mechanisms that can explain the relationship between the complex dynamics of citizens and the state as essential components of a more complex whole. This can encompass a set of social and political processes and mechanisms studied and examined by classical sociology, political theory, social and political psychology, and their interdisciplinary combinations with fields like economics or anthropology (Voinea, 2020)

Almond and Verba's political culture theory is heavily influenced by the works of Talcott Parsons. This explains the focus on the pivotal role of norms, values, and beliefs permitted in their theory concerning the relationship between citizens and the state. The founders observed the cultural dimension from a psychological perspective, based on how citizens internalize the "political system" (as a whole system and its parts) through "cognitions, feelings, and evaluations." Therefore, the term "political culture" refers to specific political orientations: attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward one's role within the system. A nation's political culture is the specific distribution of orientations toward political objects among the members of a nation (Almond and Verba, 1963: 12-13).

This theory introduces "culture" into the fundamental equation of democratic political dynamics by linking citizens and the state in a complex, two-way relationship. To this end, the theory employs two fundamental concepts: open politics and civic culture (Almond and Verba, 1963:7). While the concept of "open politics" integrates elements from political economy and democracy theories, the definition of "civic culture" is based on the concept of attitude (Allport, 1935), describing a wide range of citizens' "mental orientations" toward society, government, politics, political power, and the state.

The conceptual and methodological roots of classical political culture theory must be carefully sought in the early developments of social and political research:

1.	Political culture about social context and cognitive structure (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Berelson et al., 1954; Campbell et al., 1960; Campbell, 1963).
2.	Political culture about the type of political regime (democracy) and the structure (institutional, organizational) and functioning of the government (Ellis, 1997; Elazar, 1970).
3.	Political culture to democracy, political power, legitimacy, and trust, particularly in the literature of former communist societies and new democracies in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain: (Mishler & Pollack, 2003), (Mishler & Rose, 2001), (Rose et al., 1998), (Rose, Mishler, Haerpfer, 1998), (Klingemann, H.-D., Fuchs, D., Zielonka, 1995).

Almond and Verba define political culture based on two axes. The first is the type of individual orientation toward the political system, which is: 1) cognitive orientation; 2) affective orientation; and 3) evaluative orientation. The second axis is the object of orientation, which includes: 1) governing persons; 2) governmental policies; and 3) governmental structures (Alavian and others, 2023: 15).

Almond and Verba describe three types of orientations—cognitive, affective, and evaluative—through which one can grasp the patterns of political culture in a society:

1. Cognitive Orientation: This pertains to people's knowledge and beliefs about the political system, reflecting their understanding of the rules, roles, and institutions. It encompasses all the knowledge that individuals in a society have about the political system.

2. Affective Orientation: This relates to people's feelings toward the political system, its rules, its roles, and the data it produces. It includes individuals' emotional responses to the elements of the political system.

3. Evaluative Orientation: This consists of people's judgments about political objectives, formed from cognitive, affective, and evaluative criteria. It involves individuals' assessments of the performance of the political system and its various parts (Qawam, 2009: 73).

Scholars and researchers have identified various types of political cultures, including those of Gabriel Almond (parochial, subject, participatory), Walter Rosenbaum (civic, non-religious, ideological, homogeneous, fragmented), Daniel Elazar (individualistic, moralistic, traditionalistic), Mahmoud Sariolghalam (tribal), and Samih Farsoun and Mehrdad Mashayekhi (Islamist, libertarian, and communitarian) (Sultanalketabi, 2001).

It is important to note that the political culture of any society is shaped by factors that, throughout the country's political life, have influenced its beliefs about government, politics, power, and political behavior. The determinants that play a crucial role in shaping the political culture of any nation include the demographic context of the country, its history and background, geographical and strategic position, the type of government and governance style, and the official religion and sect of the country.

Almond and Verba classify political culture based on three types of orientations—cognitive, affective, and evaluative—towards four aspects of the political system: the system as a whole, inputs, outputs, and oneself as a political actor. These orientations shape the patterns of political culture in societies. The four aspects of political life include the political system as a whole or the political regime, inputs, outputs, and oneself as a political actor. Based on these orientations, Almond and Verba identify the following patterns of political culture:

1) limited (closed) Political Culture: In this type of culture, individuals' orientations toward political goals are weak. People are aware that they do not influence the formation and alteration of political goals. They lack a proper understanding of political institutions and feel no attachment to related institutions. Although individuals may have roles in their ethnic or tribal decisions, they cannot implement these roles at the broader level of national policies, and national interests are not their priority.

2) Passive Political Culture: In this form of political culture, individuals have a suitable understanding and awareness of the country's political system but do not actively participate in it. They may feel interested in or discontented with the current political conditions, but due to the absence of genuine democracy or the weakness of structures, individuals cannot have a proper political function in this realm (Karimi et al., 2006)

3) Participant Political Culture: In this type of political culture, all classes of society play a fundamental role in the country's politics and government. They actively participate in political activities with high awareness and understanding (Naqibzadeh, 1999: 72).

Almond and Verba's modeling of political culture is classified in the following table:

Table. 1 - Types of political culture

Types of political culture	The system as a whole	within the data	Outputs	As a political actor
limited	0	0	0	0
Passive	1	0	1	0
Participant	1	1	1	1

Research Background

In the study "Political Culture, Modern State, and the Democratization of Democracy," Durdu (2018) discusses the concept of political culture within the framework of the modern nation-state democracy. The research indicates that political culture acts as a micro-map of political life (what

people think, how they behave, etc.) and serves as a useful guide in revealing the relationship between people and the political system.

Özdemir (2018), in his study "Evaluation of Government Systems within the Framework of Turkey's Political Culture," examines the role of political culture in the formation of governmental systems within the context of Turkey's political culture. The study asserts that factors related to political culture, such as political structure and education, are influential in shaping governmental systems.

In the study "The Impact of Political Culture on Political Participation in Turkey and Sweden," Akarçay (2016) investigates the influence of political culture on political participation using examples from Turkey and Sweden. He focuses on cultural elements that negatively affect political participation in both countries (corporatist culture in Sweden, and monist culture in Turkey) and explores the reasons behind these effects.

Mousavi and Norouzinejad (2015), in their research "Transformation in Turkey's Political Culture and the Dominance of Moderate Islamism Discourse," explore the reasons for the success of moderate Islamist discourse over other discourses in Turkey's social landscape, where Westernization and secularism have been the major foundations of social, political, and cultural transformations for nearly a century.

In the study "Political Culture, University, and Academic Freedom," Gökbel and Nervra (2014) analyze the relationship between universities and academic freedom within the context of political culture, drawing on relevant literature. The authors argue that academic freedom is best experienced in societies with a well-developed participatory and democratic political culture.

Gökçe, Akgün, and Afacan (2001), in their study "Political Culture and Democratic Values in Konya," examine the relationship between political culture and democratic values specifically in the city of Konya. The authors note that the people of Konya are tolerant and supportive of democratic principles, although they occasionally exhibit conservative attitudes.

Görmez (1999) discusses the relationship between political structure and political culture in Turkey. He argues that there is a close relationship between political behavior and the political structure and culture. Görmez also addresses the relationship between political culture and political participation.

Research Method

Grounded theory is one of the qualitative research strategies widely utilized across various fields of social sciences. This approach is employed for studying, elucidating, and developing theories about social processes based on the perspectives of individuals who have experienced social issues or phenomena under study. It is particularly useful when limited information is available about the phenomenon under study (Glaser & Straus, 1967; Strauss 1987; Birks & Mills 2012).

In this method, concepts are collected based on data, identified, and extracted, and then extensively compared and analyzed with other concepts. Based on this, similar elements are grouped, and the most abstract group forms a category. Subsequently, concepts and categories are continuously compared with new data until theoretical saturation is reached, and the concepts align with the data (Frost et al. 2010). Traditional qualitative procedures, including data collection, decomposition, analysis, coding, and data note-taking, are all derived from grounded theory (Charmaz 2017a). Indeed, the grounded theory researcher seeks to create a theory in the examination and study of individuals engaged in similar processes or interactions (Strauss & Corbin 2011).

The method employed to identify individuals in this research involved purposive and judgmental sampling. After establishing the necessary framework for conducting interviews and identifying the desired individuals, the data for this study were collected through semi-structured interviews consisting of 15 questions, typically lasting between 60 to 100 minutes, conducted between January and May 2024. In this study, theoretical saturation was considered as the endpoint for the sample size and data collection. The sample of this research reached theoretical saturation after interviewing 17 individuals. Considering the theoretical sampling method, the researchers exercised utmost care and sensitivity in selecting the first few interviewees. Additionally, efforts

were made to ensure that these individuals had a reasonable level of political and general knowledge relevant to the main research topic. With preliminary inquiry and research, an attempt was made to interview people who have significant knowledge of the country's political conditions to start sampling. Then, according to the answers received from them and their analysis, we tried to continue the process of sampling and selecting people based on their field of study, gender, income, political attitude, and other considered factors. After analyzing these interviews and understanding the concepts that could be extracted, the next participants were chosen accordingly. During the process of conducting and analyzing the interviews, the researchers noticed the accumulation and completion of information from various participants, until it became apparent that from the 19th interview onwards, no substantial new information was being added to the previous findings, and the information was being repeated consistently.

In this study, due to the sensitivity of the social context under investigation and the aim to obtain deep and genuine insights from qualitative research, and to discover a conceptual model of this process based on the participants' perspectives, the grounded theory methodology was used. For selecting participants, theoretical and maximum diversity sampling methods (gender, academic discipline, political orientation) were utilized. Accordingly, students with diverse genders, academic backgrounds, and political orientations were chosen, providing rich and abundant information to create a conceptual model for researchers.

In this research method, through an iterative process, concepts were gradually extracted from codes, then from concepts, categories were identified, and from categories, a conceptual model was developed. Thus, for data analysis, based on the Strauss and Corbin analysis method, three stages of coding were conducted: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

In the coding phase, the researchers used MAXQDA 2024 software for categorizing the data. Based on the textual and audio data provided by the software, the extracted codes were classified into three stages: initial, secondary, and main categories. Then, using the "retrieved segments" tool in the software, the accuracy of the coding and the categorization of the concepts, according to the definition provided for each, was reviewed and finalized. In this process, the coded concepts were categorized into five groups: causal conditions, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies, and consequences, and were prepared for textual analysis with the help of participant quotations.

During the open coding stage of this research, the interview texts were read multiple times, and more than 145 concepts were extracted from meaningful sentences. Concepts were synthesized into 30 sub-categories and 13 main and more abstract categories in the axial coding. Finally, a final core category of "Stabilization of passive interaction with political culture" was extracted, which comprehensively encapsulates all main categories and provides a narrative analysis of the data.

After analyzing the data, follow-up contacts were made with some participants to present the interview text and analysis for verification to ensure reliability. Additionally, the researcher referred back to the methodological assumptions, the main research questions, and the data throughout the data collection and analysis stages, comparing the construction of categories and paradigmatic models with raw data to ensure the validity of the research findings.

In this study, triangulation, respondent validation, and analytical comparisons were employed as strategies to enhance trustworthiness and credibility based on the grounded theory approach by Strauss and Corbin. For validation purposes, triangulation involved the use of coder triangulation, involving researchers and social experts, ensuring agreement among different coders and researchers regarding the research findings. Suggestions and feedback from experts after the presentation of research findings were all directed towards affirming the research findings. In the respondent validation approach, after data analysis, follow-up contacts were made with some of the participants, and the interview transcripts and analyses were presented to them for verification to ensure accurate and comprehensive summaries of the discussions and to highlight participants' emphasized opinions and points in the data analysis.

Table 2: Characteristics of the participants

Code	Age	Gender	Field	Academic Year	Income	Political Attitude	Place Of Birth	Nationality
1	24	F	Sociology	4	8000	Communist	Konya	Turk
2	23	F	Sociology	4	2000	Moderate	Konya	Turk
3	22	F	Sociology	4	4000	Moderate	Konya	Kurt
4	22	F	Sociology	4	2000	Moderate	Konya	Turk
5	23	M	Political Science	4	2000	Zfer Party	Kocaeli	Turk
6	21	M	History	3	-	Political Islam	Kahramanmarash	Turk
7	22	M	History	4	2000	Nationalist	Sanliurfa	Turk
8	21	F	Political Science	3	1900	Conservative Right	Yozgat	Turk
9	25	M	Political Science	4	4000	Nationalist	Eğerli	Turk
10	24	M	Political Science	4	-	Nationalist	Adana	Turk
11	24	M	History	4	2500	Conservative Right	Eskishehir	Turk
12	22	M	History	3	5000	Pan Turk	Konya	Turk
13	20	F	International Communication	2	-	Nationalist	Denizli	Turk
14	23	M	Philosophy	3	2000	Secular Left	Sparta	Turk
15	22	F	Arabic Literature	4	2000	Communist	Mardin	Mihlemi
16	23	F	Business Management	3	5000	Secular Left	Van	Turk
17	24	M	International Communication	4	-	Nationalist	Azerbaijan	Turk

Findings

In this study, the central and core category consistently derived from the data, to which all other main categories are connected, is " Stabilization of passive interaction with political culture" The central phenomenon of this research explains the reasons and processes through which a passive, subordinate, or limited political culture has developed among undergraduate students of the Faculty of Literature and Economics at Selçuk University in Konya.

Additionally, since the central phenomenon is composed of the main categories "Political and Economic Changes Centered on Cultural and Political Challenges," "Inefficiency of Authoritarian and Non-Democratic Governments," "Marginalization of Political Institutions," "Social and Political Reforms," and "Decline in Trust and Political Participation Following the Establishment of Passive Political Culture," it has been named " Stabilization of passive interaction with political culture".

Contextual Conditions: Political and Economic Transformations Focused on Cultural and Political Challenges

Over the past two decades, Turkey has undergone significant transformations within both society and government, characterized by a shift towards authoritarianism under the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and its political Islamic governance, which stands in contradiction to Turkey's secular constitution. This shift has led to both domestic and international challenges, notably severe economic issues and high inflation. The government's inadequate crisis management following the 2023 earthquake, alongside conflicts during the 2023 presidential election and the upcoming local elections in March 2024, has raised questions regarding the government's legitimacy. Moreover, intensified intra-party and group conflicts, along with ethnic tensions, have substantially contributed to ongoing crises.

Conflict and Struggle: Features of Turkey's Religious and Ethnic Political Culture

Turkey's political culture is strongly influenced by religious and ethnic values, often leading to conflict and struggle. As Participant 8 notes,

"The Turkish people enjoy conflict. They are a people inclined towards confrontation. In the past 20 years, certain political ideas have been built around specific stereotyped identities… Conservatism as a religious practice aligns with our political thinking."

Participant 14 adds,

"While some of our people adopt the desert culture of the Arabs… others adopt Western culture… Essentially, we conflict with our own culture."

Economic Issues and Shifts in Public Attitude

Turkey's recent economic stagnation and significant events have created deep divides among the public, especially among the youth, pushing them increasingly towards partisan and group ideologies, secularism, and anti-Islamic sentiments. As Participant 1 explains,

"With the government's approval, large corporations were granted tax amnesties… We have become a Turkey where the powerful grow stronger, and the oppressed and the poor become even poorer."

Participant 2 states,

"I believe public trust in the government has collapsed, and economic issues have weakened the public's confidence."

Causal Conditions: Inefficiency of the Authoritarian and Non-Democratic Government

While Turkey's constitution emphasizes democratic principles, the authoritarian political system led by the AKP has weakened public belief in the democratic nature of this system. The single-party rule has led to systematic corruption, monopolization of resources, and cronyism. This section explains the loss of effectiveness of an authoritarian, leader-centered, and anti-democratic government.

Ineffectiveness of an Authoritarian Government in Managing Political Issues

The Turkish government's approach to dealing with various challenges has led to public dissatisfaction. As Participant 4 states,

"Political power makes decisions based on its doctrine… I know that Syrians will lead to many political, economic, and military crises in the coming years. Our government cannot manage this."

Participant 7 adds,

"The government's efforts have never been sufficient, especially concerning economic issues and particularly the earthquake."

Unjust Performance in the Distribution of Economic Resources and Privileges

Monopolization by government officials due to corruption has become a significant source of public dissatisfaction.

Participant 12 remarks,

"You shouldn't give politicians too much money… Don't give a Porsche to a member of parliament, don't give them luxury cars… What can they do without these?"

Participant 10 adds,

"With gas and diesel prices so high, what are farmers supposed to do? And if you can raise the price of bread, why not raise the price of books too?"

Governance in Turkey by an Anti-Democratic and Leader-Centered Government

The long-standing rule of the AKP, led by Erdoğan, has led to the abandonment of democratic and secular ideals and deepened internal party challenges.

Participant 5 comments,

"We have a flawed democracy in Turkey… In such an ignorant society, democracy cannot function properly."

Participant 6 states,

"I am one of those who prefer a parliamentary system… In a modern political system, the people should determine the political order."

Intervening Conditions: Marginalization of Political Institutions

One of the main arguments for labeling the Turkish government as non-democratic is the complete inactivity of political institutions. Government authoritarianism has led to the sidelining of these political institutions from the policymaking process. Particularly over the past twenty years, Turkey's political landscape has shifted towards single-party dominance, with the ruling party's authority growing increasingly. This situation has led the Turkish people, especially the younger generation, to believe that democracy in the country is weakening.
Participant 14 states,

"When I look at the political factions, they have no authority to make decisions in the government. They are just playing alone. Their presence or absence does not matter."
Participant 8 mentions,

"I don't know exactly which party it was, but a parliament member, even a female member, held two dolls in her hands and said: Today we are discussing the budget in parliament. Her speech was completely sarcastic. During the budget speech, MPs asked whether they were there to watch a show or solve economic problems. The budget discussion is taking place in parliament, but instead of the budget, they talk about completely different things."

This marginalization has resulted in political institutions being ineffective in representing the people or influencing government policies, thus contributing to a broader perception of a weakened democracy in Turkey.

Strategies: Social and Political Reforms

Dissatisfaction with government performance has particularly led to a decrease in political trust and participation among young people, with calls for structural reforms at both societal and governmental levels.

Supporting the Independent Activities of Parties and Social Movements

Participants highlight the necessity of independent social movements, despite rejecting the independence of political parties. Participant 16 states,

"I fully support social movements, especially student and labor movements."
Participant 7 adds,

"I see social movements as the best way for citizens to convey their messages or objections to the government."

Gender Perspectives on the Presence of Women in Politics and Government Positions

While male participants generally reject the necessity of women's presence in politics, female participants emphasize its importance. Participant 10 states,

"I don't really think women are suitable for government positions… I don't believe a woman can sustain herself on the battlefield of politics." Participant 15 adds,

"Women have been given many rights; now they can perform many jobs and are not excluded from society."

Dissatisfaction with the Political System's Performance

The government's performance has led to widespread dissatisfaction. Participant 1 states,

"I think authoritarianism is very problematic… the presidential system strengthens despotism."
Participant 9 adds,

"There is absolute power in Turkey… there is no democracy."

Consequences: Decline of trust and political participation resulting in the consolidation of a passive political culture

During the interviews conducted in the vicinity of the municipal elections in Turkey, a significant portion of the participants expressed their reluctance to participate in the upcoming elections. The withdrawal of the public from the electoral scene, often accompanied by penalties imposed by the government, is one of the first signs of the emergence of an inactive culture among the people. In a democratic governance system, the prerequisites for government by the people include choosing representatives and participating in elections to vote for the desired representative. When this democratic tradition becomes rare in a society, the bell tolls for the passive acquiescence of the

people who are the owners of the government, leading to self-imposed government and neglect of the nation.

Reluctance to Participate in Elections

Disillusionment with the effectiveness of elections has led to a decline in the willingness to participate. Participant 8 states,

"I don't think I'll participate in elections again. Democracy is usually just theater for me."

Participant 3 remarks,

"I only voted in the 2023 presidential elections and didn't vote in the second round."

Noticeable Decline in Political Trust

Lack of confidence in the government's effectiveness has led to a decrease in political trust. Participant 2 states,

"Our trust was shaken, especially in the earthquake incident… I see very little trust."

Participant 4 adds,

"Instead of trying to bring everyone together, they have become someone who only speaks to certain groups… This has completely eroded trust in the government."

A Sense of Passivity Toward the Country's Political Institutions

A passive political culture has become institutionalized, especially among young people. Participant 1 comments,

"With our shift to a presidential system, I question the existence of members of parliament."

Participant 9 remarks,

"Parliament has no functional role… This kind of passivity naturally spreads among the public and even leads to negative attitudes toward the government."

Research Paradigm Approach
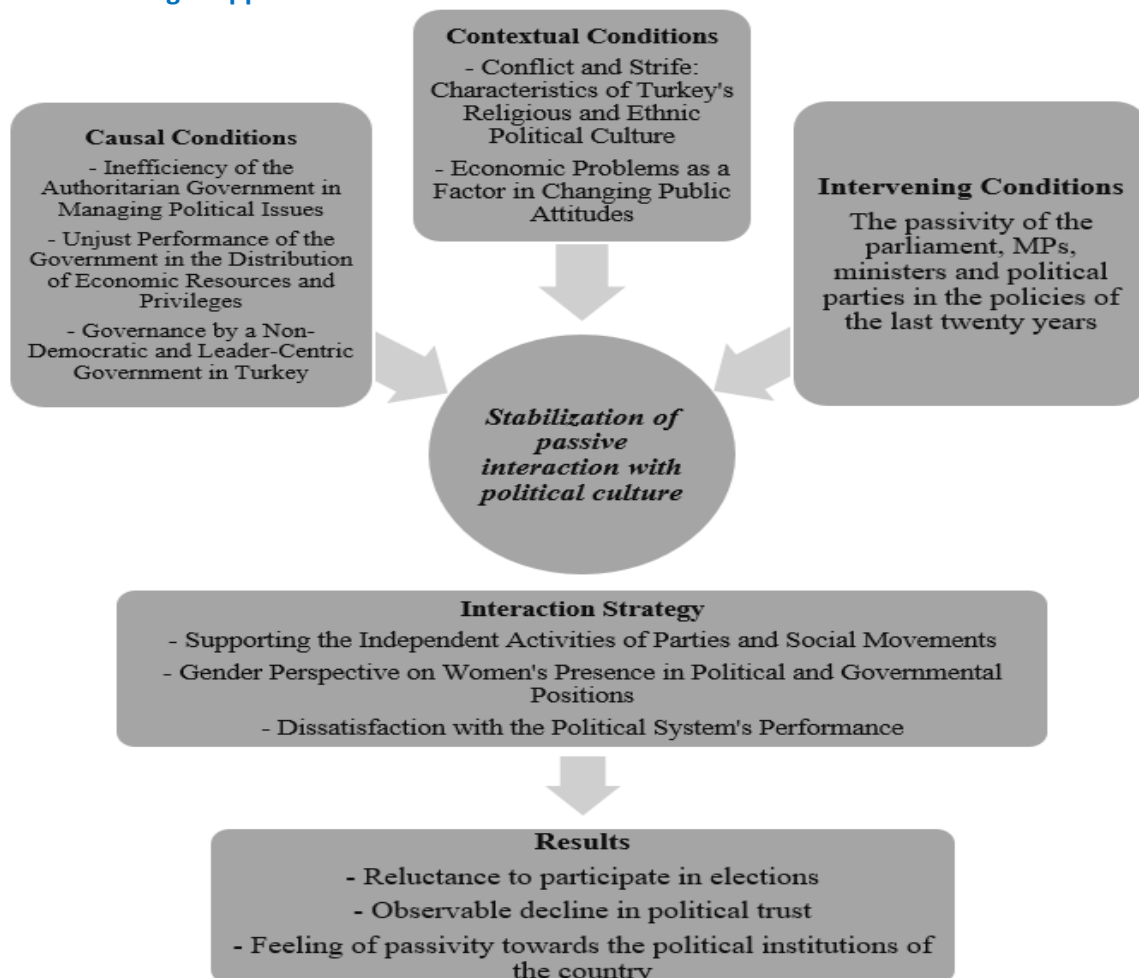
Picture 1. The paradigmatic model with the core category of Stabilization of passive interaction with political culture

Discussion

The lack of studies in the field of political culture was one of the key points that increased the researchers' motivation. Existing studies on political culture in Turkey are limited to a series of structural and outdated research, so initiating a typological study of political culture can open a new avenue for research. Gökçe (2001) and his colleagues' reference to democratic values as one of the elements shaping the political culture in the city of Konya lacks a deep perspective and a comprehensive introduction to the details of the prevalent political culture in this city. Similarly, Akarcay's comparative perspective (2016) is limited to cultural details concerning political culture. On the other hand, the macrostructural approach of Görmez (1999), Mousavi (2015), and Özdemir (2018) has also not been able to describe and introduce the prevailing political culture in Turkey.

The innovation of this research lies in presenting the type of political culture prevalent among students, which can largely represent the political culture in society. Fundamentally, a typological study of political culture paves the way for predicting and understanding political actors, particularly in critical historical moments.

In the present discussion, we focus on the political apathy of citizens who have lost some of their faith in the political system. This political apathy manifests through non-participation in elections or disbelief in the effectiveness of political participation. However, what is more significant is the growth of a passive political culture among the younger generation. The rise in political distrust and lack of confidence in political institutions is precisely the moment when a passive political culture begins to form. In Almond and Verba's tripartite classification of political culture, they identify passive political culture as common among societies and groups that, despite their awareness of the political situation and sufficient knowledge of political institutions, prefer to exhibit passive and neutral behavior. This type of political culture fundamentally differs from the other two types.

In the first type, where active citizen participation is recorded as participatory political culture, we observe simultaneous political awareness, political trust, and political participation. In contrast, in the third type—parochial political culture—there is no political awareness or political trust, and a platform for political participation may not even exist. However, in passive political culture, citizens' political awareness does not lead to political participation. In such situations, political apathy is the best scenario we can imagine, as this political apathy could turn into disobedience or resistance in times of crisis.

This condition is somewhat observable in Turkish society today, with evidence of hidden resistance among the younger generation and students. While non-participation in politics and elections can, in itself, be seen as an act of resistance or civil disobedience—which has been referenced multiple times in this study—the examination of elements and methods of hidden or overt resistance among Turkish citizens opened up a new line of research for the authors based on the findings of this study. This research topic could be a recommendation for future studies by researchers.

Conclusion

Understanding the nature of the prevailing political culture in any society undoubtedly plays a crucial role in predicting the political future of that society and recognizing the deeply rooted cultural elements within it. To gauge the level of belief and trust of the people in the political system, laws, and government officials, it is inevitable that we study their political culture. If we intend to examine the perspective of nations on their history and evaluate the significant aspects of each nation's history, we must also refer to the political culture of that nation. Since culture inherently finds its way into individuals' and society's lives through internalization and institutionalization and gives direction to them, it is self-evident that understanding the cultural elements of societies helps us to identify the prevailing values in that society that lead to the formation, internalization, and institutionalization of such cultures and also to predict the relationship between the government and the people based on the prevalent culture in that society. Therefore, the study of political culture and attitudes is of great importance to researchers and policymakers.

The scientific model designed in this research, based on the grounded theory approach of Strauss and Corbin and grounded in the political culture theory of Almond and Verba, has addressed the typology of the prevailing political culture in the faculties of literature, economics, and administrative sciences at Selcuk University. This scientific research, relying on the statements of the participants, proves that the authoritarian and individual-centric political system in Turkey, which has shown inappropriate performance in managing political and economic issues and has behaved unfairly in distributing economic resources, has intensified partisan, political, ethnic, and religious divides in Turkey and has reduced the trust and political participation of the people, especially the youth. In such a situation, where there is little hope for the law enforcers in this country and the contradictory nature of the political culture prevents national convergence, political passivity grows among the people, which can be one of the biggest obstacles to the development and growth of any country. In this situation, there is neither a force to moderate the government nor a will for national solidarity. According to the participants, the entrenched political culture in this country, influenced by religious and racial values, has created conflict and contradictions in the public and social spheres. On the other hand, the intersection of thoughts about the government, which is sometimes perceived as benevolent, sometimes authoritarian, individual-centric, and undemocratic, has practically marginalized political institutions and sidelined them from the political arena, leading to structural reforms in the political sphere being proposed as the first solution and strategy. Ultimately, this narrative clearly illustrates that the decline in trust and political participation of the people, which is the mainstay of a democratic system, and the drift towards a passive political culture, are the consequences and results of governmental performance that has overlooked the demands and desires of the nation, especially the youth.

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