ARE WE BECOMING MORE DISTANT? : EXPLORING THE NATURE OF SOCIAL POLARIZATION ALONG ETHNIC LINES IN THE CITY OF IZMIR

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ARE WE BECOMING MORE DISTANT? : EXPLORING THE NATURE OF
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IZMIR

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ABSTRACT

ARE WE BECOMING MORE DISTANT? : EXPLORING THE NATURE OF SOCIAL POLARIZATION ALONG ETHNIC LINES IN THE CITY OF IZMIR

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Program of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, M.A. Thesis, 2011

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This study aims to contribute to the narrowly researched dimension of Turkey's Kurdish issue, which includes its reflections on the societal level and is analyzed a social-psychological framework. More precisely, it intends to offer a snapshot of the level of social polarization between the Turks and the Kurds and seeks to unveil the present nature of in-group - out-group attitudes along the lines of ethnic background. The city of Izmir is chosen as the context of the study due to the fact that it has received a remarkable number of Kurdish migrants from the southeast in the last few decades. The findings are presented in two sections. The main objective of the first section is to illuminate the differences in the way Turks and Kurds conceptualize the Kurdish conflict and identify its root causes, as well as to display their varying levels of social and political tolerance, social distance and prejudice in a comparative manner. While the Kurdish minority displays significantly higher levels of social tolerance and lower levels of preferred social distance, the correlation analyses made in the second section suggest that there is a strongly negative correlation between perceiving the Kurdish issue as a terrorism problem and social and political tolerance for the Turkish sample. Moreover, a stronger in-group identity and nationalist attitudes predict higher prejudice levels for both sample groups and lower social tolerance for the Turkish sample.

Keywords: Kurdish conflict, social polarization, in-group / out-group attitudes, social distance, social and political tolerance, survey method.

ÖZET

GİTTİKÇE DAHA YABANCILAŞIYOR MUYUZ? : İZMİR'DE ETNİK KÖKENLER TEMELİNDE TOPLUMSAL KUTUPLAŞMANIN FARKLI BOYUTLARI

Ekin Ok

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Danışman: Doç. Dr. Ayşe Betül Çelik

Bu çalışma, sosyal psikoloji literatüründen yararlanarak Kürt Sorunu'nun üzerinde geniş bir literatür bulunmayan toplumsal alandaki yansımasını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmanın ana hedefi, toplumda etnik köken bağlamında ortaya çıkan gruplaşmaları ve bireylerin farklı etnik kökenden olanlara karşı tutumlarını inceleyerek Türkler ve Kürtler arasındaki toplumsal kutuplaşmaya ışık tutmaktır. Anket çalışmasının yeri olarak, özellikle son 20 yılda Güneydoğu bölgesinden Kürt kökenli vatandaşların yoğun bir şekilde göç ettiği bir şehir olan İzmir seçilmiştir. Sonuçlar, iki kısımda sunulmaktadır. İlk bölümün amacı, Türkler ve Kürtlerin Kürt Sorunu'nu tanımlarının ve esas nedenleri konusundaki algılarının farklılıklarını ortaya koymak, ve iki grubun farklı düzeydeki toplumsal ve siyasal hoşgörülerini, tercih ettikleri toplumsal mesafeyi ve önyargılarını karşılaştırmalı olarak göstermektir. İkinci kısımda yapılan korelasyon analizi sonucunda, Türk denekler için Kürt sorununun aslen bir terör problemi olduğu algısı ile bireylerin toplumsal ve siyasal hoşgörü düzeyleri arasında zıt yönlü bir ilişki olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bunun yanısıra, bireylerin kendilerini etnik grupları ile özdeşleştirme düzeyi ve milliyetçi tutumları ile farklı etnik gruplara karşı önyargı düzeyleri arasında her iki denek grubu için de pozitif bir korelasyon olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kürt sorunu, toplumsal kutuplaşma, iç-grup / dış-grup tutumları, toplumsal mesafe, siyasal ve toplumsal hoşgörü, anket yöntemi.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

"ALTINOVA'DA ETNİK GERİLİM BÜYÜYOR" *"ETHNIC TENSION IS GROWING IN ALTINOVA"*

*"*Balıkesir'in Altınova Beldesi'nde iki kişinin ölümüyle sonuçlanan etnik gerilim devam ediyor. İki kişinin öldüğü olayların ardından cenaze töreninde Kürt kökenli vatandaşların işyerlerine saldırı düzenlendi."

The ethnic tensions that resulted in the death of two people in Balikesir-Altınova are continuing. There have been attacks on the workplaces of Kurdish citizens after the funeral services of the 2 people that lost their lives in the incidents.

(*RADİKAL*, October 2, 2008*)*

"DÖRTYOL'DA TEHLİKELİ TIRMANIŞ" *"DANGEROUS ESCALATION IN DÖRTYOL"*

"Etnik çatışmayı kışkırtacak önyargılar açıkça dile getiriliyor. Yıllardır iç içe yaşanan Hatay'da gruplar çatıştı.*"*

The prejudices to provoke an ethnic conflict are overtly being articulated. Groups are in conflict in Hatay where they had been living with one another for years.

(*HÜRRİYET*, July 27, 2010*)*

"BAYRAMİÇ'TE KOKOREÇ KAVGASINDAN ETNİK GERİLİM ÇIKTI" **"IN BAYRAMİÇ, ETHNIC TENSIONS EMANATED FROM A FIGHT OVER KOKOREÇ"**

"Çanakkale'nin Bayramiç ilçesinde düğünde çıkan kokoreç kavgasından Türk-Kürt gerginliği çıktı. Yüzlerce kişi sokaklara döküldü*"*

Turkish-Kurdish tensions emanated from a small fight over Kokoreç in a wedding in Çanakkale-Bayramiç. Hundreds of people poured into the streets.

(*RADİKAL*, August 5, 2009*)*

"ALTINOVA'DA SIKIYÖNETİM" **"MARTIAL LAW-LIKE MEASURES TAKEN IN ALTINOVA"**

"Doğu kökenli vatandaşlarla yerli halk arasındaki gerginlik sürüyor. Belde giriş ve çıkışları kontrol atına alındı!*"*

The tensions between the locals and the easterners are not alleviating. Entries to the town are controlled.

(*HABERTÜRK*, October 2, 2008*)*

In modern societies, group differentiation remains to be an endemic phenomenon (Young, 1990) and it is not striking to witness the existence of diverse social groups that differ in values, life styles and/or mentalities in almost every contemporary society. However, when these differences of opinions transform into being antagonistic to each other, mutual

intolerance develops between these groups and the will to live together declines or disappears. Such alterations in group-level perceptions in a society lead to a dangerous direction: social polarization. (Ağırdır, 2008). Especially if there is an ongoing conflict in the background, it is often hard for individual members to remain neutral. (Rubin, et al., 1994) Hence, as the conflict gradually starts to be perceived as an intractable one, the community members tend to join one side or the other. Rubin & Pruitt (1994) call this phenomenon 'community polarization'. Social (community) polarization is one of the components in the cycle of conflict escalation, which is produced by earlier escalation as stated above. Moreover, its particular danger stems from the fact that it also contributes to further escalation via the deterioration of the relationships between two groups and via the disappearance of neutral third parties, who would otherwise urge moderation. (Coleman, 1957; Rubin et al., 1994)

Keeping these basic conceptualizations in mind, let us now return to the news excerpts mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. Irrespective of the contextual background of these incidents, what they all have in common is that they all point out to the presence of powerful identification along ethnic lines in a society. This identification of individuals inevitably brings along group formations along ethnic lines. Moreover, the news excerpts also report examples of intergroup conflict between these ethnic groups. All of these features indicate an existence of the phenomenon of social (community) polarization along ethnic lines. When we turn our attention to the social context of these incidents, we realize that there are several other commonalities. First of all, they all happened very recently, having taken place in the last three years. Secondly, they are all incidents that happened in the western provinces of Turkey, which had been popular destinations for recently migrated Kurdish people from the eastern parts of the country. When we scrutinize the reasons for this recent migration wave from the East to the West, we come across to an ongoing armed conflict that has been continuing for almost the past three decades. But more dangerously, while this conflict had been predominantly on the battlefield until now; these news display that the conflict has started to spread to the community level, as seen by the ostensible in-group – out-group formations along ethnic lines among the ordinary citizens. This conflict, popularly known as "Kurdish issue" or "Kurdish conflict" is in the background of these incidents that recently unfolded in the mass media.

When one attempts to shed light onto the features of this social context, it becomes clear that the Kurdish issue in Turkey is a deep-rooted and prolonged affair, and has been

called as "the soft underbelly of Turkey". (Muftuler-Bac, 1999, p.105) Although there had been several small-scale and transient Kurdish insurgencies against the Turkish state since the early years of its founding, "the year 1984 marked a new start for the contemporary emergence of the Kurdish problem on the Turkish political agenda". (Beriker, 1997, p. 439) When the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) initiated its violent campaign for Kurdish separatism and launched its first attacks in 1984 with the objective of establishing an independent Kurdish state, the armed conflict between the Turkish state forces and the PKK guerillas has been going on, predominantly in the southeastern region of the country.

In spite of its long history, it is hardly feasible to claim that an agreed-upon definition exists about the nature of the issue. Considering its protracted duration, the inclusion of different actors and issues, and the changing discourses and approaches to these issues over time, "it has become an impossible task to describe the Kurdish issue of Turkey in one word, or to reduce its scope to a single dimension." (KONDA, 2008, p 28.) It is multidimensional, with multiple parties, including multiple issues and several divergent perspectives. Although since the beginning of the conflict almost all of the Turkish governments viewed and treated the problem strictly as a terrorism issue, nowadays it is more commonly accepted by the political elite, as well as the general public, that the underlying cultural identity demands, socio-economic inequalities between the regions and the social-psychological nature of intergroup relations constitute a significant role in the continuation of the conflict.

Whether it is a matter of oppression and denial of the rights of Kurdish minority by the state, or an issue of secessionist terrorist movement, or a socio-economic backwardness problem of the southeast region, it can be asserted with more confidence that the Kurdish conflict is one of the most critical internal crises the Turkish Republic is facing since its establishment in 1923. It is estimated that since the late 1980s, the Turkish state has laid out $ 6 - $ 9 billion dollars per year to deal with this conflict. (Kasaba, 2001) Financial costs aside, between 1992 and 1997 alone, over 3.000 villages in the southeast provinces have been evacuated, and from 1984 to 2001, more than 30.000 people have been killed. ("Turkey's Kurds", 1998; Kasaba, 2001) It is beyond question that the number of human losses has increased since then, as one comes across the news of skirmishes between the army and the PKK almost on a daily basis.

While the armed conflict is relentlessly going on between the state's armed forces and the PKK especially in the southeast region of Turkey, the Turks and Kurds are continuing to

live side by side throughout the country. People of Kurdish ethnicity constitute approximately 15-20 per cent of Turkey's population (Kirişci & Winrow, 1997; Fuller, 1999, CIA World Factbook, 2008); and the security concerns, accompanied by the deteriorated living conditions and the lack of economic opportunities caused by the continuous conflict in the region resulted in the large-scale migration of mostly Kurdish people to the western parts of the country. It is anticipated that considering the continuous violence and un-remedied unemployment problem in the region, the number of Kurdish citizens in the western metropolitans of Turkey is likely to increase in the near future. (KONDA, 2008)

As a consequence of the abovementioned migration of Kurdish people, albeit the increased contact and interaction opportunities between the Turks and Kurds especially in the metropolitan cities, it is claimed by Yavuz and Özcan (2006, p.103) that "today, Turkey is more polarized along ethnic lines than a decade ago." Saraçoğlu (2009, p. 641) also supports this argument by pointing out to the recent "open ethnic confrontations in some Turkish towns in Western Turkey"[1] and "manifestations of an anti-Kurdish discourse in popular media and the internet". Similarly, Yeğen (2006) states that Kurds are no longer perceived as a loyal and assimilable Muslim community, but instead they have been regarded as the 'primary Other' of the Turkish nation. All of these authors draw attention to a relatively new dimension of the "Kurdish Issue" on the societal level and perceive this recent tendency toward an anti-Kurdish discourse in Turkish society as an indicator of the changing nature of the conflict. They suggest that the Kurdish problem has shifted from the military sphere to the social and political spheres, and it is no longer only the Turkish state that is confronting the separatist Kurdish guerillas, but the conflict has been transforming into a confrontation between the Turks and Kurds, as well. (Yavuz & Ozcan, 2006)

It is worth paying attention to the fact that this new dimension of the Kurdish conflict on the societal level and the new perception of "Kurds" as a distinct separate group have gained visibility at a time when several unprecedented political and legal reforms about the cultural and political rights of the Kurds were initiated. It can be claimed that until recently, the official discourse of the Turkish state was to 'play the blind man' toward the Kurds and

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[1] See "*Milliyet*, October 2, 2008" and "*Radikal*, November 26, 2009" for the coverage of the small-scale incidents between the locals and the Kurdish migrants in Altınova and Bayramic that transformed into protests and physical assaults against the Kurds.

their existence as a distinct ethnic minority group within Turkey. "The expression of ethnic identity has been one of the great taboos in modern Turkish history" (Lesser, 1999, p. 215); and "although the Kurds in modern Turkey were not the object of ethnic discrimination in other senses" (Fuller, 1999, p. 227), they were nevertheless denied of any public identity of Kurdishness. The challenge Turkey faces with regard to the acceptance of a distinct Kurdish identity stems from the official description of Turkish identity and how it forms a base for the unitary character of the state. With the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, "… all cultural groups, such as the Kurds, who were Muslims, were considered Turks, and any view that challenged this definition of Turkishness was perceived as a threat to the indivisible unity of the Turkish state." (Muftuler-Bac, 1999, p. 106) In other words, from the perspective of the official discourse of the state, "the Kurds in Turkey were never a 'minority' with certain rights; they were 'Turks' with full rights." (Fuller, 1999, p.227) Therefore, when the PKK started to launch its attacks in the late 1980s, although it succeeded in bringing the Kurdish issue back into the limelight of public discourse in Turkey (Romano, 2006), it was predominantly defined as an issue of terrorism, and was responded accordingly by a counteroffensive of the Turkish military. Similarly, Ensarioğlu & Kurban (2011) claim that for many years, the Kurdish issue was evaluated as a problem between the state and a certain portion of the Kurds, and because the general society started to face this problem via funerals of the soldiers that arrived to their towns, it was perceived as a terrorism and security problem.

Taking these explanations into consideration, it is possible to say that in general, the Kurdish question had not extended beyond being a problem between the state and the PKK, and the relations between common Kurds and Turks in daily life were not particularly impaired because of the armed conflict. In other words, in the eyes of most people, a differentiation existed between the PKK and the Kurdish community of Turkey as a whole. Ensarioğlu & Kurban (2011) argue that the Kurdish conflict was not really a societal conflict between the Turks and the Kurds. Hence, the recently rising tensions between the ordinary citizens and the accompanying identification / 'otherification' along the discourse of ethnic origins is especially alarming, because while "originally the Kurdish issue was perceived as a problem embedded in the axis of state-individual relations and a terror problem that evolved out of it, today it is increasingly becoming an internal crisis of the whole society." (KONDA, 2008, p. 32)

1.1 Aim & Significance of the Study

The dangers of this recent alteration in attitudes mentioned above and its potential results toward an escalation of the conflict on the social sphere were the main motivation of the author to carry out this present study. To say it broadly, this study strives for shedding light onto a socio-psychological outcome of the Kurdish question by analyzing its reflections on the attitudes of the individuals. It attempts to explore the diverging views of both Turkish and Kurdish people about the root causes and descriptions of the issue, and the related concepts of nationalism and support for minority rights. In addition, it also seeks to unveil the current level of in-group – out-group formations along the lines of ethnic background and to reveal individuals' attitudes toward the members belonging to the out-group.

Over the years that the Kurdish conflict has been going on, it has received considerable attention from the academia, and there have been numerous articles written on the subject. But mostly, it has been done so by analyzing the issue from a political perspective, focusing on the political developments, democratization, human rights, and external factors, such as the influence of Turkey's European Union candidacy or the impact of the war in Iraq. (see, for ex. Müftüler-Baç, 1998; Tocci, 2007; Çelik & Rumelili, 2006; Tank, 2005; Somer, 2005) This present study differs from those in the sense that it approaches the issue from a social-psychological perspective and analyzes the intergroup relations on a societal level. Exploring the intensity of social polarization between ordinary Turks and Kurds toward each other in the presence of an ongoing conflict is a novel topic that has not been studied extensively in the context of Turkey's Kurdish issue.

One unique contribution of this study will be its inclusion of both the Kurdish and Turkish citizens as its sample groups. "Strategies and interventions designed to improve intergroup relations need to consider the perspectives and motives of both the higher status (i.e., majority) group and the lower status (i.e., minority) group to understand their relations." (Dovidio et al., 2008, p.227) It is anticipated that in order to provide a complete picture of social polarization, it is not sufficient simply to examine whether the majority group holds negative attitudes and prejudices toward minorities; the views of the minority toward the majority is also needed for a comprehensive analysis. In the light of these explanations, this study, which is a descriptive one, employs the use of survey method and intends to:

(1) Offer a snapshot of the present state of social polarization between the Turks and the Kurds in the two neighborhoods of Izmir, which is a city that "…has received Kurdish migrants at an unprecedented rate in the last 20 years." *(Saraçoğlu, 2009, abstract)* .These two neighborhoods, named Mavişehir and Kadifekale differ largely from each other not only in terms of socio-economic and socio-cultural levels, but more importantly in terms of their population composition. Both of these neighborhoods have quite homogenous populations in terms of ethnic background, Mavişehir being inhabited by mostly Turks and Kadifekale by Kurds. These two factors are important, because they minimize the likelihood of contact in daily life between the two groups, which would have been a helpful factor for establishing positive relationships and reduce mutual prejudices and stereotypes

(2) Display the intensity of the level of in-group – out-group formations between the two groups along the lines of ethnic origin and expose the social distance between the individuals with regard to their subjective attitudes and feelings for the members of the out-group and their will to come into interaction with them in daily life.

(3) Reveal their different perceptions about the nature of the Kurdish conflict and their prospects for its resolution

(4) Analyze whether any correlations exist between the variables of perceived level of in-group – out-group formations, intensity of prejudices and stereotypes, social and political tolerance, preferred social distance, and certain demographic characteristics such as age, gender or education; and compare these values between the two populations.

Hence, all things considered, this study will attempt to answer the question of *"What is the nature of social polarization between the Turks and Kurds in a metropolitan city in the western part of Turkey, which has been a destination for a considerable number of Kurdish migrants; and what factors may help to explain the level of individual perceptions of the out-group?"* The results of this study will make an important contribution to the substantial literature on social polarization during an ongoing social conflict. It is hoped that the results will also provide a unique supplementation to the existing studies on the public opinions of Turkish society and the current level of ethnic polarization by revealing the perceptions of Turkish and Kurdish citizens residing in Izmir.

To summarize, this present study is an attempt to analyze the Kurdish conflict of Turkey from a social-psychological perspective, and explore its effects on the community level by focusing on the changing relations and perceptions between the Turks and Kurds. Hence, it hopes to create an understanding of the conflict's impact within the framework of intergroup relations, and investigate changing societal beliefs, ingroup – outgroup attitudes, prejudice and stereotypes, social distance, social tolerance, and as a result of these, social polarization between the two groups. In Chapter 2, I will review these concepts from a social psychological angle, mention the theories that explain their emergence in conflict situations and emphasize their potentially risky results for the well-being of the society as a whole. When doing this, I will also refer to the literature on conflict escalation and conflict perpetuation from the conflict analysis and resolution field. In Chapter 3, I will present a brief history of the Kurdish conflict in Turkey and the recent developments, as well as introducing certain demographical characteristics of the Kurdish population of Turkey. I will also deliberate on the migration wave from the eastern parts of Turkey to the western cities and the socio-economic and socio-psychological results of this migration. Chapter 4 is the methodology section, in which I will explicate the method of data collection and data analysis, and further discuss the significance of the two neighborhoods I chose to conduct my surveys in as the hosts of my sample populations. In the fifth chapter, the findings will be presented and a discussion of them will be provided in a manner that articulates the potential dangers of further polarization, discusses possible mechanisms for improving the intergroup relations and highlights the areas for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Conflict between social groups is pervasive. (Chambers & Melnyk, 2006).Intergroup tension and conflict are universal and occur at virtually every level of collective organization, from small groups in the workplace to racial, ethnic, and cultural divides within and between nations. (Dovidio, et al., 2008) It is no doubt that "intergroup conflict is one of the greatest problems facing the world today" (Cohen & Insko, 2008, p.87), and ethnic conflicts, as a category of intergroup conflicts, have been the most destabilizing force in the post-Cold-War world. (Huntington, 1993; Ross & Rothman, 1999) Not surprisingly, there have been numerous proposed arguments from various disciplines as to why intergroup conflicts, and specifically ethnic conflicts, are omnipresent and whether they are unavoidable.

Social psychology offers some of the most robust answers that would shed light onto some of the possible mechanisms to explain the occurrence of intergroup conflicts at various levels around the world. This chapter will focus on the social-psychological explanations of intergroup conflict, and it will iterate the theories that attempt to clarify the formation of in-group – out-group attitudes and how they may lead to the emergence or escalation of intergroup conflicts. It will also cover the two other aspects of intergroup conflicts that are common between the parties; namely 'prejudice and stereotypes' and 'social polarization', and discuss their importance for the deteriorating attitudes of the parties toward each other and the perpetuation of conflict.

Before analyzing the mechanisms and consequences of intergroup conflict, a special emphasis will be given to the various definitions and discussions of ethnicity, ethnic groups, ethnic identification and mobilization as they are the central concepts for explaining ethnic conflict. Hence, the chapter starts with a brief introduction of some basic definitional issues in an effort to clarify some of the common causes and dynamics of ethnic conflict. Next, it will discuss how societal relations and perceptions are affected in cases of intractable ethnic conflicts.

All in all, the purpose of this chapter is to offer a theoretical background by combining the literature on ethnic conflict with the social-psychological theories of intergroup relations.

In doing so, its eventual aim is to create an understanding of how and why the attitudes and perceptions of the individuals and groups change during an ongoing conflict, and draw attention to the importance of societal relations when analyzing the escalation and perpetuation of social conflicts.

2.1 Ethnicity, Ethnic Groups, Ethnic Mobilization and Ethnic Conflict: Definitions & Causes

2.1.1 Definition of Ethnic Conflict & Approaches to Ethnicity

After the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, ethnically-driven conflicts have become a major threat for regional and global peace, and studies on ethnicity and ethnic conflicts occupied an important position in world politics. (Yılmaz, 2010; Çelik, 2010) Ethnic conflicts can be analyzed within the domain of various fields from sociology to political science to geography to social psychology. One of the definitions of 'ethnic conflict' is as follows: "[Ethnic conflict] is a dispute about important political, economic, social, cultural or territorial issues between two or more ethnic communities." (Brown, 2010, p.93) In this somewhat obvious explanation, there is a term that demands further description: What constitutes an 'ethnic community'? The modern definition of an ethnic community (or similarly, an ethnic group) is "a named human population with a myth of common ancestry, shared memories, and cultural elements; a link with a historic territory or homeland; and a measure of solidarity." (Smith, 1987, p.21-22; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983; Seidner, 1982; Brown, 1993, 2010) In his seminal work, Horowitz (1985) has defined an ethnic community as "an ascriptive group that is based on perceived common origin, skin color, appearance, religion, language or some combination thereof." (Bayar, 2009, p.1640) Likewise, Gurr's (1994, p.83) definition consists of "people whose identity is based on shared traits such as religion, culture, common history, place of residence and race".

Similarly, ethnicity can also be studied in a wide range of academic fields from international relations to social psychology as an identity issue, but there are three widely-agreed upon approaches to the academic study of it, namely the "primordialist", the "instrumentalist" and the "constructivist" approach. As to mention them shortly, according to the primordialist view, the idea of ethnicity is based on kinship and biological heritage; and

hence, ethnic ties are externally given, even coercive social bonds. (Geertz, 1967), where cultural traits, such as language, religion, and ethnicity are cultural signs that reflect this biological affinity. Therefore, primordialism assumes that one's membership in a given ethnicity and ethnic identity is fixed from the beginning. In the instrumentalist approach, ethnicity is viewed as an instrumental identity organized in order to reach particular political, economic or social ends. (Cornell & Hartman, 1998) On this account, "the main goals of a group are assumed to be material and political gains; and cultural identity is invoked only as a means to attain those goals." (Gurr, 1994, p.78) As an alternative approach, in a broader sense, constructivism proposes that ethnicity is constructed and reconstructed as individual identifications change. (Chandra, 2001; Bayar, 2009, p.1639) Two principal propositions of the constructivist view of ethnicity are that individuals have multiple, rather than single, ethnic identities; and that the identity with which they choose to identify at a particular time may change. (Chandra, 2001)

In a revised version of the primordialist approach, van Evera claimed that "ethnic identities are socially constructed since they are not stamped onto our genes"; however, the idea of a 'fixed identity' should not be abandoned, as "ethnic identities, while constructed, are hard to reconstruct once they form, and the conditions needed for reconstruction are quite rare especially in modern societies and among ethnic groups in conflict." (van Evera, 2001, p.20; Bayar, 2004) In a similar fashion that interconnects the three abovementioned approaches, it has also been suggested that ethnicity is an ascribed status, which is situationally activated; and an individual chooses among his or her ascriptively determined identification choices in his or her "primordial toolbox" (Bayar, 2004, p.1647) to make salient depending on the strategic utility attached to that particular identity. (Barth, 1969; Young, 1976; Nagel & Olzak, 1982)

Eriksen (1992) proposes another integrative definition of ethnicity, which will be taken as a reference point for the present study. According to his definition, ethnicity means "the systematic and sustained reproduction of basic classificatory differences between groups, whose members thereby define themselves as being culturally distinctive from the members of other groups." (Eriksen, 1994, p.314) Ethnicity, in this sense, is thus created and maintained through the ongoing reproduction of socially relevant contrasts, and it is therefore logical to refer to ethnicity in terms of a relationship between two groups. This conceptualization is also in line with the social-psychological view of ethnicity, which

analyzes how individuals develop their identity definitions as a result of cognitive, perceptual and motivational processes, and explores their prejudices, stereotypic images and behaviors toward one's own group (which will be defined as the "in-group" from here further on), and the other groups (the out-group). (Cordell & Wolff, 2010)

2.1.2 Ethnic Mobilization

The mere existence of multiple ethnic groups in a society does not automatically elicit ethnic conflict. Peaceful co-existence among different ethnic communities in a society is possible and is present in many parts of the world. As İçduygu et al. (1999) point out, it is widely accepted in the academia that the interrelation between patterned social inequality and heightened ethnic salience is the source of much conflict, tension and discrimination within a society. Ethnic mobilization is the process that prompts increasing awareness of ethnicity among individuals and leads to an increase in the salience of ethnic identities, and eventually paves the way for social polarization along ethnic lines. Drury (1994) claims that what is required for ethnic groups to mobilize is "the development of a dramatic and heightened sense of identity and group consciousness usually in response to a set of events or situations, which are perceived by the group to be of special significance to its concerns and indeed to its very existence". (Drury, 1994, p.15)

Gurr (1994) also names two comparable factors that contribute to ethnic mobilization, which are ethnic group identity and discrimination. His conceptualization of "discrimination" emphasizes the 'relativity' of the concept. He defines it as the imposed disadvantages and socially derived inequalities in a particular group members' material well-being or political access in comparison with other social groups. (Gurr, 1994, p.83) Some indicators of the economic discrimination he suggests include low income, poor housing and high infant mortality rates of a certain group compared to others, and limited group access to education, while political indicators comprise systematic policies and laws that limit the participation of a group in politics or disable access to political office.

When such situational variables are present, İçduygu et al. (1999) suggest that an environment characterized by insecurity and political instability is produced, and this environment is conducive for ethnic markers to gain importance. Moreover, they claim that ethnic revival is not a direct and unavoidable result of a poor socio-economic environment,

but an outcome that is also propelled by non-material insecurity, which encompasses psychological insecurities caused by the suppression of mother language, denial of culture and group identity, and an accompanying feeling of social alienation.

Gurr (1994) explains the linkage between discrimination, ethnic mobilization and aggression by referring to the frustration-aggression theory. According to this, when people with a shared ethnic identity perceive that they are discriminated against, they often feel resentful, angry and frustrated. "For people who are motivated to action, the greater the discrimination they [or their group] experience, the more likely they are to organize for action against the sources of discrimination." (Gurr, 1994, p.83) Hence, the more strongly a person identifies with an ethnic group that is discriminated against, the more likely he or she is to be motivated into action.

2.1.3 Causes of Ethnic Conflicts

Having mentioned the driving forces behind the occurrence of ethnic mobilization in societies, we can now turn to some of the fundamental explanations put forward to interpret the emergence of ethnic conflicts from a political science and conflict analysis perspective. The causes of ethnic conflicts are usually explained at three main levels of analysis: the systemic level, the domestic level and the perceptual level. Systemic explanations take security as a crucial variable, and they focus on the security concerns of the ethnic groups and the nature of the security systems in which they operate. (Brown, 2010) The first prerequisite is a fundamentally obvious one, which claims that two or more ethnic groups must reside in close proximity. This condition is met in most states today, as Welsh (1993) claims that "of the approximately 180 states that exist today, fewer than 20 are ethnically homogenous in the sense that minorities account for less than 5 percent of the population." The second precondition is the weakness of national, regional and/or international authorities to keep groups from fighting and to ensure the security of individual groups. (Brown, 2010) When states lose their ability to arbitrate between groups or provide credible guarantees of protection for groups, the eruption of violent ethnic conflict is facilitated. (Lake & Rothchild, 1996) An interesting proposition is that the fear of a weakening state in the future may also be an issue of concern. In other words, "…even though the state may appear strong today, concerns that it may not remain so tomorrow may be sufficient to ignite fears of physical insecurity and a cycle of ethnic violence." (Lake & Rothchild, 1996, p.44)

When we proceed to the domestic level of analysis, the root of the problem is usually associated with a change of regime and the mismanagement or the inability of the political elite to address potential problems. "The euphoria experienced as the old regime passes from the scene might produce a moment of national unity, but this moment will not endure if underlying problems are neglected." (Brown, 2010, p.98) Hence, it is crucial to anticipate and deal with ethnic grievances and related issues early in the transition process in order to prevent or mitigate ethnic conflicts. Crocker et al. (1992) posits that at the root of ethnic problems lays the controversy between the states' sovereignty rights and the recognition demands of ethnic minority groups, and this causes an obstacle for the maintenance of a healthy communication channel between the parties. Especially in conflicts between the state and ethnic groups, the state -which is usually the stronger side in terms of resources and legitimacy- may refuse to acknowledge the representative of the ethnic minority group as a legitimate party, particularly if a secessionist discourse or violence is employed. (Crocker et al., 1992; Çelik, 2010) In addition to the demands of recognition and identity rights of the ethnic minorities, other tangible scarce resources such as territory, development allocations, jobs and security also lie at the heart of most ethnic conflicts in multi-ethnic societies, because most of the time, the competing groups are formed along ethnic identities. Moreover, in such societies, political parties are more often have a tendency to be organized along ethnic lines. Hence, party affiliations become a reflection of ethnic identity rather than political ideology. (Horowitz, 1985; Lake & Rothchild, 1996; Brown, 2010) Finally, as another factor on the domestic level, many countries do not have adequate constitutional safeguards for minority representation and rights, and thus, are unable to address important ethnic grievances. (Brown, 2010)

As a summary to the abovementioned analyses on the causes of ethnic mobilization and how they may lead to ethnic conflicts between the states and the ethnic minority groups, Gurr (1994, p.79) mentions three general propositions to elucidate the emergence of secessionist movements: (1) the existence of a separate ethno-national community or society; (2) territorial contiguity between the different groups; (3) actual or perceived disadvantages in comparison with the central government and the majority.

There are also perceptual factors that escalate or exacerbate ethnic conflicts, which include the reinforcement of ethnic identities by adverse mirror-image stereotypes and the perpetuation of histories of ethnic animosity and demonizing myths about the "other".

(Brown, 1987) More detail will be provided about the importance of perceptions with regard to intergroup relations in social conflicts in the next section.

2.2 Ethnic Conflict & Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations

After having summarized the concepts related to the specific field of ethnic conflicts within the larger framework of intergroup conflict, we will now turn to the social psychology of intergroup relations. Social-psychological approaches to ethnic conflict hold inequality between groups as the core explanatory variable. The way individuals perceive their larger environment, locate themselves and other groups in it and form their individual and group identities accordingly provide a basis for the theories of social-psychological motivations that attempt to explain the emergence of ethnic conflicts. Where groups feel entitled to status or goods that they are objectively denied or feel that they are under threat, they will be prepared to use violence to attain what they claim to be rightfully theirs. (Cordell & Wolff, 2010, p.17)

In the next sections, we will discuss the well-known social-psychological theories of intergroup conflict, namely the **realistic group conflict theory** (Sherif et al., 1954), and the **social identity theory** (Tajfel, 1978, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Horowitz, 1985, 2000) to elucidate the formation of groups and explain polarization and conflict between them. But before analyzing these theories and their implications for intergroup relations during an ethnic conflict, let us first overview some of the fundamental notions such as group identification, in-group – out-group formations, social categorization, prejudice and stereotypes, that constitute the building stones of these theories. Following this, I will review the phenomenon of social polarization during intergroup conflicts, which is the main focus of this study.

2.2.1 Social Categorization, Group Identification and In-Group – Out-Group Formations

Social categorization forms an essential basis for human perception, cognition, and functioning. In the process of social categorization, people commonly classify themselves *into* one social category and *out of* others by making a distinction between the group containing the self (the in-group) and other groups (the out-groups.) (Dovidio et al., 2008, p.229) According to the universal social categorization principle of Sumner (1906), human social groups inevitably are organized into discrete in-group and out-group categories. This differentiation results in a sense of in-group identification (Tajfel, 1979), and has the potential

to have a crucial influence on the way people think, evaluate and behave toward the out-groups, because once people begin to identify themselves primarily in terms of their group membership, their orientations toward others become defined in terms of in-group / out-group membership. (Dovidio, et al., 2008) Subsequently, in-group positivity is enhanced by social comparison with the out-group, which Sumner (1906) names as "intergroup comparison principle." He suggests that by this principle, in-group attributes are regarded to be superior of those of out-groups. An extreme version of this is "ethnocentrism", which is the belief about "the superiority of one's own group and having a corresponding disdain for all other groups." (Myers, 2008, p.302) It causes a strong tendency to favor the in-group over the out-group and to derogate the out-group. (Brewer, 1979, 1986; Fisher, 1990, Tajfel, 1970)

As it can be derived from the explanations above, the mere classification of people into in-groups and out-groups is sufficient to initiate bias. (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987, Dovidio et al., 2008, p.43) People like better, think more highly of, and discriminate in favor of other people with whom they are classed, regardless of the basis for the classification.   (Brewer, 1979; Tajfel et al., 1971, Rubin et al., 1994 – p.17) The next phase is when the relationship between in-group and out-group develops into be characterized by antagonism, conflict and mutual disdain, which is known as the "out-group hostility principle". (Brewer, 2001) However, as some authors point out, in-group membership does not always have to lead to perceptions of in-group superiority and transform itself to out-group hostility. (Coser, 1956) It is argued that patriotism, attachment to the nation or national pride is distinct from negative feelings toward out-group. In other words, in-group pride and out-group respect can coexist. What is enunciated is that, it is the larger context that influences both the strength of in-group attachment and attitudes and behaviors toward out-groups, which can range from the absence of positive feelings to prejudices, stereotypes to discrimination and aggression. (Allport, 1954; Coser, 1956; Olzak 1992). While it is valid that negative beliefs about the out-groups are rooted in identification with, and favorable evaluations of one's in-group in contrast to an "other" (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Dixon & Ergin, 2010); the form of negative beliefs about a group is shaped by the context in which confrontations take place. (Cornell & Hartmann, 2007) The presence (or absence) of an ongoing conflict, the existence of legal and social norms and customs that tolerate (or disapprove) hostile group competition, the (in)equality between the statuses of the groups, in short, the conditions of contact between the groups can be included among the factors that help shape this context where intergroup relations are to take place. For instance,

urbanization has been suggested as a factor that promotes ethnic mobilization by enhancing existing differences and creating reinforced ethnic identities. (Du Toit & Safa, 1973; Sassen-Koob, 1979). Many urban immigrants initially become aware of their ethnicity only upon contact with outgroup members. (Kasfir, 1979; Nagel & Olzak, 1992). Such contact often occurs for the first time in the urban setting, making ethnicity a salient factor in urban social relations, and because the contact between the locals and migrants occur often under unfavorable and unequal conditions, the formation of in-group and out-groups usually brings along negative attitudes and derogatory stereotypes against each other.[2] In addition, Teichman & Bar-Tal (2007) assume that in the context of an intractable conflict, an increased in-group preference and out-group derogation should be evident.[3] Hence, it can be claimed that if there is an ongoing ethnic conflict in the background, this 'larger context' may very well promote the abovementioned negative attitudes and behaviors among the polarizing groups against each other., The possible mechanisms of this process will be discussed in the section titled "social polarization in intergroup conflict."

2.2.2 Prejudice and Stereotypes

Prejudice is an attitude, a preconceived negative judgment of a group and its individual members. (Myers, 2008). In terms of psychological processes, the effects of social categorization and group identification form a foundation for prejudice between groups. (Dovidio et al., 2008, p.228) In other words, it can be defined as "negative beliefs, emotions or behavioral intentions regarding another person based on that person's membership in a social group." (Aboud, 1988; Brown, 1995) The negative evaluations that mark prejudice often are supported by negative beliefs, called stereotypes. To stereotype is to generalize. (Myers, 2008, p.302) When a person is stereotyped and reacted to not as an individual but as a member of some group, the general characteristics of the group are automatically attributed to the individual.

The ascription of negative stereotypes to members of out-groups and in fact, to the group as a whole, is one form of change in attitudes that can be witnessed commonly between the parties in social conflicts. A set of traits is attributed to all members of the particular

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[2] In fact, this situation is very pertinent to the social context in this present study. The urbanization and the unfavorable contact conditions between the Kurdish migrants and the rest of İzmir's population are one of the factors for the exclusion of the Kurds through stereotypes and stigmas. (Saraçoğlu, 2009)

[3] In addition to urbanization, an ongoing conflict in the background of intergroup relations is also relevant for the social relations between the Turks and the Kurds in Turkey. The effects of urbanization and the conflict on the inter-ethnic relations will be discussed in Chapter 3.

group, and individuals belonging to this group are assumed to be similar to each other – which is referred to as the *out-group homogeneity principle*. (Brewer, 2001; Hewstone & Cairns, 2001, p.324) Treating the out-group in this way makes them more predictable and can be used to justify discriminatory behavior, and can help group members to differentiate the in-group positively from the out-group. (Linville, 1998; Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994, Hewstone & Cairns, p.326) Unequal status is one of the social sources that breed prejudice. (Myers, 2008) Sidanius & Pratto (1999) argue that people often adopt cultural stereotypes and justifying ideologies for the existing group inequalities. Once the inequalities exist, prejudice helps justify the economic and social superiority of those who have wealth and power. A group that enjoys social and economic superiority will often use prejudicial beliefs to justify its privileged position.

An "enemy image" is defined as a specific form of a negative stereotype. (Oppenheimer, 2006). According to Staub (1992), enemy images play an important role in the maintenance and reinforcement of hostility and antagonism between sections of the population. On the basis of such images, people tend to act more aggressively toward the other group. Such behavior then provokes a hostile response that is interpreted to confirm the initial stereotype and so on. (Oppenheimer, 2006). For instance, the use of jokes and derogatory labels in reference to other groups influences people's attitudes about those groups. (Rohan & Zanna, 1996).

Some studies point to the relation between the demographic features and the tendency of people to hold prejudices. Crepaz (2008) has underlined the fact that individuals with less education show higher chauvinism and prejudice against immigrants in Europe. Similarly, Hello, Scheepers, and Sleegers (2006) have indicated that more educated young adults tend to keep less distance from immigrants, because they perceive less threat from the latter group. (Bayar, 2004, p.1652)

Regardless of it being a universal and unavoidable phenomenon or not, Van Dijk (2000) proposes that categorizing people as in- or out-group is not usually value-free, but is very often loaded with ideologically based applications of norms and values. A common strategy observed among in-group members is "to equate the other community with some negative personality traits, stereotypes and prejudices". (Van Dijk, 2000, p.133) This process is crucial because intergroup hate can be either the result of long-term, and deep-seated prejudices or the result of in-group – out-group rivalry. (Olzak & Nagel, 1986)

2.2.3 Social Polarization in Intergroup Conflict

After having mentioned the changes that occur in the perceptions and attitudes of the individuals and the supporting social-psychological theories, let us now analyze the dynamics of social relations during an ongoing conflict that seems to be intractable. Kriesberg (1993) and Bar-Tal (1998) suggest that intractable conflicts are characterized by seven features: (1) they persist for a long time, at least a generation; (2) they are violent, involving killings of military personnel and civilians; (3) the parties involved perceive their conflict as irreconcilable; (4) various sectors of participating parties have vested economic, military and ideological interests in the continuation of the conflict; (5) the conflicts are perceived as zero sum in nature; (6) the issues in the conflicts concern basic needs [both tangible and non-tangible] which are perceived as essential for the parties' survival, and (7) the conflict occupies a central place on the agenda of the involved parties. (Bar-Tal, 2003, p.78)

In protracted social conflicts, parties are gradually locked into their positions, and become unable to address each other's core concerns and negotiate an end to the conflict. Such conflicts are also characterized by "long-standing, seemingly insoluble tensions that fluctuate in intensity over extended periods of time". (Rothman, 1992, p.39) The longevity of the conflict is important because it is related with the evolvement of collective memories about the conflict and causes an alteration in societal beliefs. Societal beliefs are defined as "cognitions shared by a society's members on subjects and issues that are of special concern to the particular society" and they serve as "the cognitive and affective foundations of the conflict by providing explanations and justifications for its continuation." (Bar-Tal, 2003, p.85-91) Societal beliefs are crucial because they have a strong influence on how intergroup relations change during a conflict. Bar-Tal (2000, 2003) claims that when physical violence continues for a long time, it contributes to the formation, dissemination and maintenance of four categories of societal beliefs, which are:

(1) Societal beliefs about the conflict, which include the causes for its occurrence, the interpretation of major events that shaped the conflict, the reasons for its perpetuation and the possible ways for its resolution. These beliefs are usually selective and far away from being neutral, formed in order to enable the society's members to view themselves as fair, righteous and moral. (Bar-Tal, 1990)

(2) Beliefs about the delegitimacy of the opponent, which rationalizes and legitimizes committing violent acts against them

(3) Beliefs about the group's own victimization, so as to energize society members "to avenge and punish the opponent" (Bar-Tal, 2003, p.87)

(4) Beliefs of patriotism which consists of the glorification of making sacrifices for the greater cause [the group] and emphasizes commitment, loyalty and pride.

Bar-Tal (2003) suggests that there is a direct correlation between the evolution of these beliefs and the intensity and duration of the conflict. When violence fails to cease for decades, it becomes a determinative factor for intergroup relations in a society, especially if it includes the loss of civilians. It expands the scope and changes the nature of the conflict by making "these beliefs become embedded in the societal repertoire." (Bar-Tal, 2003, p.87) The long duration of the conflict not only implies that the attempts to resolve it have failed, but usually it also produces an accumulation of prejudice, mistrust, hatred and animosity between the conflicting parties and all those affected by the conflict due to its changing nature and expanding scope. Therefore, it is especially crucial to understand the underlying psychological changes in groups and perceptions and attitudes of individuals during a protracted conflict.

Pruitt, Rubin and Kim (1997) draw attention to two important psychosocial changes in the group level during a contentious conflict. First is "**group polarization**". It means that once groups are formed, individual group members become more extreme in their hostile attitudes and perceptions toward the "other" group. (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969) In the context of social conflict, this means that all psychological changes such as hostility and distrust are magnified when groups are involved. The second change is "***community (social) polarization***", which is the main topic of inquiry in the present study. Polarization is described as "the process that causes people who had been staying impartial to take sides in a conflict." [4] During a protracted social conflict, it is often hard for ordinary community members to remain neutral, and they tend to join one side or the other. As implied, community polarization is produced by earlier escalation and contributes to further escalation for the following reasons:

1) Because of polarization, community becomes divided into two opposing camps. The bonds within each camp (within the in-group) become stronger, while those between camps deteriorate. (Coleman, 1957) This dispels the possibility of

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[4] The University of Colorado Conflict Research Consortium, 2003

crosscutting group memberships and further limits the perception of having commonalities between group members. Because of the disappearance of alternative group memberships, an individual turns out to be evaluated by others only in terms of the particular group's characteristics, which in turn leads to the occurrence of prejudiced attitudes and stereotypes. It also results in the disappearance of neutral third parties, who would otherwise urge moderation.

2) Polarization also leads to a reduction in the loyalty to the community as a whole, and hence a reduction in the felt responsibility to be tolerant toward other community members that are affiliated with the "other" group. (Coleman, 1957; Rubin et al., 1997, p.110)

Hence, polarization causes the parties in a conflict to move toward extreme positions, becoming more and more antagonistic to each other, as well as transforming the way they define themselves in terms of their opposition to an "other", who eventually becomes a common enemy. Paul Olczak and Dean Pruitt (1995) view polarization as the second of the four stages of conflict escalation. In the first stage, during which conflict is not significantly escalated, perceptions of the opponent are moderately accurate (not stereotyped) and a healthy communication is likely to exist between the parties. However, when conflicts advance to the second stage, which is polarization, "trust and respect are threatened, and distorted perceptions and simplified stereotypes emerge." (Olczak and Pruitt, 1995, p.81). In this stage, enemy images are formed, even to the point which the dehumanization phenomenon may occur. The dehumanization process has the potential to be quite dangerous for the well-being of a society as a whole, because it may result in the de-legitimization of the necessity of fair treatment and lead to the destruction phase of conflict, during which the goal of the parties becomes destroying each other.

The polarization of society is further magnified by the collective memories. Lake& Rothchild (1996, p.55) claim that "political memories and myths, although they may be rooted in actual events, can lead groups to form distorted images of others over time and see them as more hostile and aggressive than they really are." Chambers & Melnyk (2006) also point out to the existing research on intergroup perceptions and attitudes which shows that partisans frequently misperceive the attitudes of their rivals and believe that there is more disagreement between their own opinions and those of their rivals than exists in reality. (see Keltner & Robinson, 1997; Robinson & Friedman, 1995; Robinson, Keltner, Ward & Ross,

1995, Thompson 1995) Moreover, "individuals often overstate the goodness of their own group while simultaneously vilifying others, interpret the demands of others as outrageous while seeing their own as moderate and reasonable, view the other as inherently untrustworthy while believing themselves to be reliable" and so on. (Lake & Rothchild, 1996, p.55) Thus, it is possible to suggest that when community polarization exists, individuals are more likely to misperceive the opinions, intentions and actions of those in the other group, which can be hazardous for the society by causing further polarization since a healthy communication will not be likely to exist between individuals belonging to different groups.

2.2.4 Social-Psychological Theories of Intergroup Conflict

2.2.4.1 Realistic Group Conflict Theory

Realistic group conflict theory has the assumption that the perception of a real competition between two groups for scarce resources is the root cause of intergroup conflict. (Brewer, 1979; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Sherif, 1966, Hewstone & Cairns, 2001) The famous Robber's Cave experiment of Sherif et al. (1961) showed that when young boys in a summer camp were randomly assigned to two groups that were put into a conflict situation, they developed distinct group identities and easily stereotyped their opponents. Based on this, Sherif et al. (1961) suggest that real or perceived conflicting goals results in hostility between groups because they generate intergroup competition that has a zero-sum nature, and this leads each group to develop negative stereotypes about and enmity towards the other group(s). (Cordell & Wolff, 2010) One of the most important contributions this theory makes to understand adverse intergroup relations is that it demonstrates the way individuals automatically develop negative stereotypes for the out-group even in experiments that define random groups without any real conflict of interest. (MacDonald, 2001; Bayar, 2004) This realization of the potency of social categorization led to Tajfel's later work on social identity. (Hewstone & Cairns, 2001, p.321)

2.2.4.2 Social Identity Theory

According to the social identity theory, (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), individuals divide their social world into distinct social categories such as gender, class, ethnicity, geographic location…etc. and they define themselves and others to a large extent in terms of their social group memberships, depending on the value and emotional significance they attach to those memberships. The foremost assumption of the

theory is that people strive for a positive social identity, which is achieved by making favorable social comparisons between one's own group (the in-group) and other social groups (the out-groups) to establish a positively valued psychological uniqueness and superiority for the in-group vis-à-vis the out-group. (Dovidio et al., 2008, Cordell & Wolff, 2010)

When linking social identity theory with changing intergroup relations during a conflict, the concept of 'depersonalization' enters the picture. Hewstone & Cairns (2001) explain that during conflict, group memberships become salient, and this leads to the depersonalization of the individual in the group. It is important to underline that this is not a loss of identity, but "a shift from personal to social identity", during which a concern with the in-group takes over from a concern with the self. (Hewstone & Cairns, 2001, p.324) Brewer (1997) has also proposed an in-group – out-group diagram, consisting of three basic principles that are likely to operate when in-group – out-group categorization becomes salient. These are: **(1) the intergroup accentuation principle**, which refers to the assimilation within the category boundaries and contrast between categories and all members of the in-group are seen as more similar to the self than members of the out-group; **(2) the in-group favoritism principle**, which refers to the selective generalization of positive affect, trust and liking to the fellow in-group members, but not to the out-group members; and **(3) the social competition principle**, which denotes the fact that intergroup social comparison is typically perceived in terms of competition rather than mere comparison with the out-group. (Hewstone & Cairns, 2001, p.324-325.)

2.2.5 Majority-Minority Relations in Intergroup Conflict

In this section of the chapter, we investigate how majority and minority group perspectives might differ and the potential implications of these perspectives on intergroup relations. Based on the explanations above, Cordell & Wolff (2010) claim that it is more difficult for individuals who are members of a minority group to achieve a positive social identity, because in almost every society, minorities have an inferior status on many socio-economic aspects when compared to the majority

2.2.5.1 Social Tolerance & Social Distance

There are two related concepts about the majority-minority relations in societies, which are used in this study to explain the more general notion of social polarization, namely: social tolerance and social distance. Both of these concepts are essentially rely on the same theoretical foundations, which are social categorization, social identity theory and in-group –

out-group perceptions. Social tolerance and social distance stem from the premise that the social categorization of the individuals into in-groups and out-groups has a substantial influence on their worldviews and shape the group relations in daily life interactions both cognitively and affectively. (Weldon, 2006)

When we conceptualize these two concepts within the framework of ethnic majority-minority relations, the following definitions are adopted in the scope of this study. Tolerance can be defined in two levels, namely, political tolerance and social tolerance. While political tolerance denotes to the acquisition of cultural identity rights to the minorities, such as freedom of speech and association, by the existing laws of the state, social tolerance refers to the feelings toward the expression of the rights granted by political tolerance. In other words, social tolerance is "an actual willingness to accept ethnic difference and feelings toward the minority's right to express their cultural difference in the public sphere and the acceptance of this by the majority in daily life." (Weldon, 2006, p.335) According to the framework provided by Berry on the adaptation strategies of the minorities, it can be hypothesized that the more an individual belonging to the majority group supports an assimilationist policy, the less social tolerance he/she is likely to have.

In relation with social tolerance, Bogardus (1947, p.306) conceptualizes social distance as "the feeling reactions of persons toward other persons belonging to the out-groups", and argues that it empirically measures "people's willingness to participate in social contacts of varying degrees of closeness with individual members of diverse social groups." In polarized societies, there is a tendency to refrain from having contact with the members of the out-group, which would imply a higher preferred social distance between the members of the conflicting parties. It may also be logical to assume that if minority groups seek separatism or marginalization according to Berry's framework stated above, then their preferred social distance would also be high, since maintenance of positive relations with the majority or the positive identification with the larger society are not considered to be important goals. Both social distance and social tolerance in a society are affected to a large extent by the existence of contact opportunities and contact conditions between the members of the majority and minority. In the next section, we will present the contact theory (Allport, 1950, 1954) and discuss under what conditions it may influence the social tolerance and social distance of the individuals in a society.

2.2.6 Intergroup Contact and Ethnic Conflict

Intergroup contact has long been proposed as an effective strategy for building healthy intergroup relations. Since the time it was first introduced by Gordon Allport in 1954; it "has received extensive empirical attention in the intervening years" (Dovidio et al., 2003, p.7) from scholars in the field of social psychology and has served as the reference point for many studies. (Amir, 1969; Brewer & Kramer, 1985; Cook, 1985; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Miller, 2002; Dovidio et al. 2003) Although it has been revised and criticized throughout the following years, it is still regarded as a popular strategy for reducing intergroup bias and conflict, mainly via reduced intergroup prejudice.

In its original version, Allport (1954, 1958) claimed that in order for contact to lead to more positive intergroup relations and attitudes, four conditions must be present. These four prerequisites are: **(1) Equal status** *(see Brewer & Kramer, 1985; Moody, 2001)*; **(2) Intergroup cooperation** *(see Blanchard, Weigel & Cook, 1975)*; **(3) common or superordinate goals** that are especially relevant when combined with cooperative interaction *(see Gaertner et al., 1999)*; and **(4) supportive authorities, norms and customs** *(see Landis, Hope & Day, 1984)*. Hence, the members of the two groups should hold equal status within the contact situation regardless of their actual status in the wider social context, and they need to cooperate with each other in order to attain a shared goal. The contact situation should also be encouraged and supported by relevant authorities, customs and social norms. Later, another condition was added for positive intergroup contact, which is "an opportunity for personal acquaintance and friendship" (Pettigrew, 1998)

Although this formulation "has received support across a variety of societies, situations and groups" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000, p. 94), it is rightly claimed that in natural life settings, it is quite unlikely that most cases and their situational factors can meet all of the specified conditions. (Pettigrew, 1986; Stephan, 1987) And without the actualization of these conditions, bringing members of different groups together is just as likely to produce negative interaction and confirm existing negative stereotypes. (Wright & Bougie, 2007)

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, firstly various approaches to ethnicity and several definitions of ethnic groups and ethnic conflict were presented. In this discussion, ethnic mobilization was identified as a process that paved the way for the eruption of ethnic conflict in multi-ethnic

societies. A growing sense of ethnicity and increasing awareness of and importance given to ethnic backgrounds among individuals lead to the formation of groups along ethnic lines, and these groups become mobilized in case of perceived or real discrimination within a society. Hence, the salience of ethnic group identities, which are usually developed in response to the existence or perception of threat to the identity and / or rights of the group, is the source of ethnic mobilization. (Drury, 1994; Gurr, 1994) Based on these explanations, it can be claimed that patterned social inequality and heightened ethnic salience are the factors that provide a solid ground for ethnic conflict in societies.

In the second section of the chapter, a social-psychological perspective was adopted to investigate the nature of intergroup conflict. After having described the social categorization theory and in-group – out-group formations, and how they alter the perceptions and behaviors of individuals toward the members of the out-groups, two theories, social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and realistic group conflict theory (Sherif et al. 1961, Sherif, 1966), were put forward to explain why there is a bias in perceptions and behaviors between in-groups and out-groups.

Next, the dynamics of social relations in intractable conflicts were introduced, and a special emphasis was given to how societal beliefs change during an ongoing social conflict. We explained that there is usually an immense difference in the ways the conflicting parties identify the reasons for the occurrence and perpetuation of the conflict and interpret major events throughout its duration. Societal beliefs are also important because they serve as the cognitive and affective foundations of the conflict and have a strong influence on how groups' perception of each other and of themselves changes, in the sense that individual members of one group define themselves in opposition to the 'other' and delegitimizes this particular 'other', while victimizes one's own group.

Subsequently, other crucial psychosocial changes that occur in the group level during a conflict were presented, such as group polarization and social polarization. Polarization was identified as the second stage in Olczak & Pruitt's (1995) conflict escalation model, during which parties develop distorted perceptions, prejudiced attitudes and simplified stereotypes of each other, and intergroup trust and respect decreases. Moreover, when groups are polarized, individuals identify, evaluate and act toward others only in terms of their particular group membership, which is named 'depersonalization'. (Hewstone & Cairns, 2001)

Next, in order to explore the level of social polarization in a society from a perspective based on majority-minority relations, two related concepts used in this study were introduced. These were social tolerance and social distance. While the former one regards to the willingness to accept the existence of ethnic differences and to tolerate the expression of these cultural differences in public and political sphere, the latter one refers to people's eagerness to participate in social contacts and form social bonds with individual members of diverse social groups. In polarized societies, it can be expected that the social tolerance of group members toward the other group would be low, while social distance would be high. Lastly, contact theory (Allport, 1954) was mentioned as a strategy for building healthy intergroup relations by alleviating existing negative prejudices and stereotypes and increasing perceived similarity by members of different groups. However, it was noted that there are certain conditions for the contact situation to lead to more positive intergroup relations and attitudes, and when they are absent, the contact between people from different groups is likely to produce negative interaction and confirm existing negative stereotypes. (Pettigrew, 1986; Wright & Bougie, 2007)

CHAPTER 3: TURKEY'S KURDISH ISSUE & KURDS IN TURKEY

This chapter will attempt to provide a general overview of the Kurdish conflict with the aim of informing the reader about the social context and conditions that proved to be conducive to the development of group formations along ethnic lines and polarization between them. It will start with a brief chronology of the conflict since the time it started in 1984 and discuss the social and political circumstances that led to its emergence. Then, it will continue until its current situation, by touching upon the important turning points throughout this time, such as the 1980 military coup and the following declaration of "State of Emergency " rule in the eastern provinces, Turkey's EU candidacy status (1999), the capture of the PKK leader, Abdullah Öcalan, the Iraq War of 2003, the so-called 'Kurdish opening' and the political and cultural reforms passed under the AKP government, and finally the recent confrontations in the Western provinces between the Turkish and Kurdish populations. Also, an issue of importance is the migration wave from the eastern and southeastern provinces to the western cities that took place in the form of both voluntary migration and the displacements mandated by the government; which are largely caused by the ongoing conflict in the area and the accompanying security concerns and lack of economic opportunities in the region. The aim of this chapter is not to offer a historical analysis, but rather examine the events that induced an alteration of discourses and perceptions; as it is assumed that they play an influential role in the current state of intergroup relations between the Turks and the Kurds.

In the second section, certain demographical information about the Kurdish population of Turkey will be provided, along with the several opinion surveys that were conducted with them about their lifestyles, values, perceptions of the Kurdish conflict and potential peacebuilding mechanisms. This material is valuable, because it helps to explain the estrangement of the two groups from each other not only spatially, which limits the likelihood of daily contact, but also psychologically. Hence, it will also provide a basis for the later discussion on social polarization and social distance between the Turks and the Kurds.

Last section will review the recent studies that point out to the social-relational dimension of the Kurdish conflict and how they are reflected in the group formations in the society along ethnic lines. It will cover the changing discourses among the public, and discuss

the growing ethnic nationalist mobilization on both sides parallel to the events described in the previous sections of this chapter. The recently occurring adverse encounters between the ordinary Turkish and Kurdish citizens, which come to surface mostly in the western provinces, and the significance of these incidents in terms of signaling polarization of the society will be mentioned.

3.1 The Social Context: The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey

The Kurdish issue of Turkey is a long-term simmering problem; and its origins go back to the early years of the Republic, which was founded in 1923. The question of "Kurdish independence" was irrelevant until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, because the Kurds, as a Muslim people within the empire, had full legal status along with all other Muslim groups. (Fuller , 1999, p. 225) According to the first constitution of modern Turkey, which is dated 1924; all citizens are defined as 'Turkish'. With the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, "… all cultural groups, who were Muslims, (such as the Kurds) were considered Turks, and any view that challenged this definition of Turkishness was perceived as a threat to the indivisible unity of the Turkish state." (Muftuler-Bac, 1999, p. 106) Consequently, it is possible to claim that the Turkish identity and Turkish culture were the essential blocks to build the new republic on, and any other identities (including Kurdish) needed to be incorporated to the overarching theme of "Turkish citizenship". Based on this, it can be said that the existence of a separate Kurdish identity and culture was perceived as a challenge to these fundamental premises. Hence, "the new republic…did not permit the expression of Kurdish identity and language within its borders. (İcduygu, Romano & Sirkeci, 1999, p.993) Taking all of these explanations into account, it becomes apparent that the challenge Turkey faces with regard to the acceptance of a distinct Kurdish identity stemmed from the official description of Turkish identity, and how it formed a base for the unitary character of the state.

During the early years of the republic, there had been several Kurdish uprisings against the state, the most prominent one being the "Sheikh Said Rebellion" in 1925. It is thought to have occurred as a reaction to the envisioned land reform of the Turkish government (Borovali, 1987), as part of its centralizing policies; but it also contained a religious substance within it. (Van Bruinessen, 1997). Kirişçi and Winrow (1999, p. 104) claim that religion was an important characteristic of Kurdishness at a time when the reforms of the Turkish government were seen to be undermining Islam, although it is claimed by Kadioglu (1996) that the anti-religious themes of the Republican reforms contributed to the

widening of the gap between the center and the periphery of the Turkish society as a whole (as opposed to being exclusive to the Kurdish people), since they were internalized only by the intelligentsia. In any case, there were several other Kurdish insurgencies that originated from the same cause of reacting "against the attempted forceful assimilation of the Kurdish population by the dominant Turkish ethnic core" between the years of 1925 and 1938 (Kirişçi & Winrow, 1999, p.195); but they were sporadic and transient in nature, and were suppressed by the Turkish forces. By 1939, the government had seized complete control over the Kurdish populated areas in Turkey. (Van Bruinessen, 1992)

According to some authors, Turkey's recent history of military coups between the years 1960 – 1980 and the severe measures taken by the military governments following them have played a role in the intensification of a separatist Kurdish nationalism (Barkey & Fuller, 1997, Dixon & Ergin, 2010) Following the military coup of 1960, the military government replaced the Kurdish names of various towns and provinces (especially those that are located in the southeast region) with Turkish names, Kurdish dialects were banned, and it became illegal to give "Kurdish" names to children. (McDowall, 2004; van Bruissen, 1992; Uslu, 2007; Ergin & Dixon, 2010) These laws and actions have been perceived as acts of a forced assimilation policy. (Kirişçi, 2000; İcduygu, et.al., 1999; Yeğen, 2004, 2007) In the 1970s, as Ergüder (1980) notes, the impact of ethnicity on voting behavior in Turkey was increasing. As a reflection of this fact and the growing influence of the socialist / leftist agenda throughout Europe; İmset (1992) reports that there were at least 12 active Kurdish separatist groups in Turkey with Marxist-Leninist sympathies. During the same decade, it is also claimed that the Kurdish nationalist movement became quite influential even in the villages. (van Bruinessen, 2000) These developments are relevant, because they seemed to create a more resilient sense of oneness and unity among the Kurds, and by the end of the 1970s, the activities of the Kurdish nationalist groups had an effect on "changing the self-perception of a considerable section of the Kurds. People who had long called themselves Turks started re-defining themselves as Kurds." (van Bruinessen, 1989, p.621)

As a result of the oppressive measures of the state and the rising ethno-political consciousness, PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) was founded in 1978, and it became the most significant Kurdish movement in Turkey's history. After the 1980 military coup, "the harsh reaction against manifestations of Kurdishness" (Kirişçi & Winrow, 1997, p. 111) was also reflected in the constitution of 1982, which was designed particularly for the concerns about

threats to the unitary character of the state, and it banned any expression of political and cultural pluralism by including articles emphasizing "the prohibition of any other language than Turkish to be used in the expression and dissemination of thought". (Article 26) Such measures enacted after military interventions of 1960, 1971 and 1980 are suggested to have increased separatist Kurdish nationalism (Barkey & Fuller, 1997, Dixon & Ergin, 2010), and the emergence of the PKK is regarded as a consequence of the politicization and unification of Kurds on an ethnic nationalist basis. (İçduygu et.al., 1999)

Hence, although there had been several Kurdish uprisings against the state since its establishment in 1923, "the conflict became distinctly 'Kurdish' after 1984 with the emergence of the PKK as a separatist group within Turkey." (Çelik, 2010, p. 153) The year 1984 marked a new start for the contemporary emergence of the Kurdish problem on the Turkish political agenda. (Beriker, 1997) PKK was founded with the aim of "setting up a democratic and united Kurdistan in southeastern Turkey to be governed along Marxist-Leninist lines" (Çağaptay, 2007, p.2) by monopolizing the Kurdish nationalist struggle, and they launched their first attack against a police station in the southeast in 1984. The state's response to the attacks of the PKK, which targeted civilians as well as military personnel, was to refer to the use of military tactics. The tensions in the region intensified when the state declared "the state of emergency rule" *(Olağanüstü Hal, known as OHAL in Turkish)* in thirteen of the heavily Kurdish-populated cities in 1987, which gave extraordinary rights to the appointed governors, such as the right to expel citizens from the region, restrict ownership and freedom rights, freedom of the press and expression. (Çelik, 2010) Another problematic precaution was the establishment of the "village guard system" and arming the villagers in the southeast with the aim of creating an additional local anti-PKK force. The conflict between the state's army and the PKK guerillas escalated and reached its peak throughout the 1990s, and the highest number of deaths and casualties, as well as various kinds of human rights violations occurred in these years.

Another critical year for the course of the conflict was 1999, which brought two important turning points. The first one was the capture of the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan, after which the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire in 2000, and a period of 'negative peace' (Çelik, 2010) had started. The second event was Turkey's recognition by the European Union as a candidate country. It is largely assented that Turkey's EU candidacy expanded the scope of the Kurdish issue to human and cultural rights. As a prerequisite for EU membership,

Turkey must fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria (1993), which include respect and appreciation for minority rigths. (Dixon & Ergin, 2010, p. 1329) Çelik (2010) suggests that since the acceptance of Turkey's EU candidacy, the EU has become an important third party to the Kurdish conflict in terms of putting pressure on the government to implement democratic reforms and improve human rights record regarding the situation of the minorities. In the exhilarating atmosphere of the possibility of EU membership, the Turkish government has taken steps to recognize the other dimensions of the conflict and some political and cultural reforms were carried out. In 2002, the state of emergency rule was removed, which had been in effect in the eastern and southeastern regions of Turkey since 1987. In the same year, the establishment of private Kurdish language schools was also legalized. In 2004, broadcasting in Kurdish became permitted and in 2009, the government launched a TV channel (TRT-6) dedicated to broadcasting in Kurdish.

In addition to the acceptance of Turkey's EU candidacy, the U.S.-led war in Iraq (2003) can also be considered a significant turning point in terms of carrying the relations between the Turks and the Kurds into the global arena and hence, internationalizing the conflict. (Dixon & Ergin, 2010) The possibility of the establishment of an independent Kurdish regime in northern Iraq was severely opposed by the Turks and the Turkish government with the fear that it would encourage separatist tendencies among the Kurds in Turkey. (Tank, 2005; KONDA, 2006; Uslu, 2007; Dixon & Ergin, 2010)

Along with the tense atmosphere created by the probability of an autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq, the EU's insistence on "solving the Kurdish issue through democratization of Turkey, as opposed to referring to it as a Kurdish question, failed to bring about effective mechanisms." (Çelik, 2010, p. 157) At the same time, the negative peace period that had started with the PKK's ceasefire in 2000 was culminated, and although the PKK had somewhat replaced their separatist claims with demands on political autonomy and cultural rights, the conflict soon re-escalated in 2004.

The ongoing conflict for the past 25 years has often been regarded as the most serious internal problem the Turkish Republic has faced since its establishment, and this claim can be validated by the following dreadful numbers. It is estimated that since the late 1980s, the Turkish state has laid out $ 6 - $ 9 billion dollars to deal with this conflict every year. (Kasaba, 2001) According to the official records released by the Turkish military for the 1984-2008 period, the conflict has resulted in the capture of 14,000 PKK members, and the

death of 32,000 PKK members, 6,482 soldiers and 5,560 civilians.(Hürriyet, September 16, 2008). Between 1992 and 1997 alone, over 3,000 Kurdish villages and hamlets in the southeast region have been evacuated ("Turkey's Kurds, 1998"; Kasaba, 2001; Kurban, et.al., 2008), and this has created more than a million internally displaced people, who are mostly Kurdish. (Dixon & Ergin, 2010) Moreover, the situation awaiting the IDPs in their new cities and towns in the western parts of Turkey was not promising, since they were in a disadvantaged position both economically (i.e. lacking material resources and facing unemployment, İçduygu & et.al., 1999; Saraçoğlu, 2010) and culturally (in the sense that they lacked the urban life experience or education and other qualifications to enable them work in formal jobs, Saraçoğlu, 2010, p.202), which lead to their marginalization by the "locals".

But before going further into the issue of migration, which will be the main topic of the second section of this chapter, let us go back to how the abovementioned developments in the political arena have played a role in altering the changing perceptions and discourses about the conflict.

3.1.1. The 'Perceptions' of the Kurdish Conflict in Turkey

As it can be seen from the brief chronology above, although "the roots of Turkey's Kurdish problem go back to the formation of the modern state" (Fuller, 1999), the solidification of Kurdish ethno-nationalism was a product of the 1980s and 1990s. (İçduygu *et al*., 1999) Since the beginning years of the Republic, the state has intentionally denied the existence of a separate Kurdish ethnicity and hindered ethnic self-consciousness. (Fuller, 1999, p.229) The process of building a sense of ethnic identity has always been perceived as a danger, because it was utterly contrary to the integrative and assimilative policies of the Republic.

In spite of its protracted history, it is hard to claim that an agreed-upon definition exists about the nature of the issue. The main difficulty lies in the fact that parties to the conflict define the nature of conflict differently. (Çelik, 2010)Throughout these years, various discourses have been adopted by different actors as to what constitutes the root causes of the problem. From one point of view, it can be evaluated as an issue of clashing definitions in which the acceptance of a distinct Kurdish identity threatens official Turkish identity. In accordance with the official state policy that seeks the integration and assimilation of any identities that may be an alternative to "Turkishness", the Kurds in modern Turkey were

denied any public identity of Kurdishness from the outset. However, they were not subjected to any other kinds of ethnic discrimination. Fuller (1999, p.227) brilliantly puts the situation of the Kurds in Turkey from the perspective of the official discourse as follows: "the Turkish Kurds were never a *minority* with certain rights; they were *Turks* with full rights." In a similar fashion, Müftüler-Baç (1999, p. 105) says that it is important to see the Kurdish conflict as a protracted social conflict with identity issues at the core. While the state does not distinguish the Kurds as a minority, the Kurds seek recognition for their distinct identity and demand cultural rights associated with it. Hence, in the eyes of the most of the Turkish people, the Kurds do have the same rights as them granted by the state; and yet they are still unsatisfied. From the perception of the Kurds, however, their rights that originate from their "Kurdishness" is being denied by the existing laws.

In terms of the demands of the Kurds about their cultural identity rights, Kirişçi and Winrow (1997) point out to the prevailing counter-view in the mid-1990s, which suggested that if cultural concessions were to be granted to the Kurds, this could be the beginning of Turkey's disintegration. It can be proposed that this view is still valid among certain segments of the society.

At the same time, the armed conflict between the PKK and the Turkish army forces had a significant effect on how the overall conflict was perceived in general. Assessing the impact of the PKK in the 1990s, Romano (2006, p. 159) admits the following: "If there is one thing that every observer of the conflict, be they Turkish generals, Kurdish peasants, or western academics, generally agree on, it is that the PKK succeeded in bringing the Kurdish issue back into the limelight of public discourse." Fuller (1999) agrees by claiming that the PKK was the foremost organization in Turkey that imbued a sense of Kurdish identity. This linkage is quite important because it contributed to the way the Kurdish issue was framed both in the official discourse of the state and in the eyes of the general public. Because the Kurdish issue has regained attention through the activities of the PKK, the issue was perceived as an act of terrorism. According to the dominant view, the Kurdish problem is defined as the problem of "separatist terror against the integrity of the Turkish state." This view, however, is not only simplistic but also problematic; not only because the Turkish state rejects to regard the PKK as a legitimate party, and hence refuses any negotiation to come to a solution; but also because labeling the issue solely as a "security problem caused by terrorism in the southeast region" automatically requires and legitimizes the sole response of a military solution. (İcduygu, et al., 1999; Fuller, 1999, p. 232)

The second major factor which eases Turkey's dismissal of any political or culture-based arguments is the traditional understanding that the Kurdish question is primarily a problem based on the economic issues or poverty. (Aydınlı, 2002, p.217) This is a widely supported view, considering that the areas that are predominantly inhabited by the Kurds are the least developed regions of Turkey according to the socio-economic indicators. For instance, one of the former Prime ministers, Bülent Ecevit, preferred to address only the economic aspect of the issue by broadly calling it as "the Southeastern Question", refraining to emphasize the ethnic or political component of it. In this line of thinking, eliminating poverty in the region would eventually eliminate the PKK, since the PKK's recruits mostly come from among unemployed with no economic alternatives, for whom the membership in the organization provides a sense of purpose. (Kasaba, 2001; Aydınlı, 2002)

In contrast, "most Kurds as well as the international community perceive the issue as an identity conflict, and a problem of representation." (Çelik, 2010, p. 156) The intensive emergence of the Kurdish issue in more recent times is seen as a by-product of Turkey's own process of democratization, and its lack of capability to address the demands that arise from it. Hence, the terrorism side of the issue stems from the fact that the Kurds' ability to express their ethnic identity has been restricted. The adherents to this view believe that the terrorism problem would diminish considerably once the political and cultural demands of the Kurdish people are met. (Kirişçi & Winrow, 1997, p. 122) But in this framework, the challenge arises from the question of "who should be taken as the political representative of the Kurdish population of Turkey". As mentioned before, the Kurdish issue has grabbed domestic and international attention and found its place at the top of Turkey's political agenda by means of the PKK. However, the PKK is regarded as a terrorist organization, and the state refused to recognize the PKK as a legitimate "other" (Çelik, 2010, p. 156), and numerous pro-Kurdish political parties that were formed one after another had been banned by the constitutional court because of their alleged links with the PKK. Hence, the conflicting parties (the state and the PKK) are "locked into their respective positions and are unable to address each other's core concerns and negotiate an end to the conflict." (Müftüler-Baç, 1999) The lack of an acceptable representative of the Kurds further contributes to the intransigence of the issue, and this leads us to the importance of making a differentiation between the PKK and the rest of the Kurdish community as a whole.

As stated in the previous section, the acceptance of Turkey's candidacy status to the EU was a factor that helped the adoption of a more identity-based approach that frames the Kurdish issue in terms of cultural and political rights. The laws that granted cultural rights to ethnic Kurds in the Republic's history for the first time were regarded as "unprecedented steps forward for Turkey in the direction of the normalization of the Kurdish conflict via demilitarization and liberal democracy." (Somer, 2004, p.236) Within this framework, the Kurdish issue has been focused on as a matter of cultural rights and political representation in the reports of the European Commission on Turkey's progress toward accession. (Koçak, 2010) According to Aydınlı (2002), an assessment that is gaining wide support in Turkey is the view that Europe is using the EU membership as a carrot in order to facilitate finding political solutions to the Kurdish issue of Turkey. "This identification of the politicization of the Kurdish question with full membership in the EU" was further consolidated in people's minds after the famous speech of Mesut Yılmaz, who was the leader of one of the coalition parties when Turkey's candidacy status had been accepted. (Aydinli, 2002, p.219) He had stated that "the road to the EU goes through Diyarbakır" (*Radikal, 1999, 2002*), which is the largest city in the southeast Anatolia where Kurdish people constitute the majority of the population, and is commonly referred to as one of the hotbeds of Kurdish political activities. However, "although the possibility of EU membership has served as a carrot for the Turkish state to introduce reforms (e.g. broadcasting in Kurdish), it has not produced mechanisms to change the perceptions and attitudes" (Çelik, 2010, p. 157), not only about the nature of the conflict, but also of the parties toward each other . In spite of Turkey's increased chances for EU membership, Turkey's traditional mistrust in Europe's 'real intentions' over the Kurdish issue continues. For instance, in a 2000 report released by the Turkish army, the congruence between the demands of the PKK and those of the several European countries was publicized, and they were named as supporters of the PKK's politicization tactics. [5] This report should not be disclaimed as being the discourse of a marginalized perception or understanding, since a large portion of Turkish public opinion seems inclined to share these concerns (Aydınlı, 2002, p. 219) and regard the Kurdish conflict as a plot in the hidden agenda of the international community to damage Turkey's indivisible unity and independence.

In recent years, public opinion in Turkey has become increasingly skeptical about the reasons and motivations that are asserted by the Turkish and Kurdish sources for the persistence of the Kurdish conflict. (Kasaba, 2001) A rising number of people from across the

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[5] The report names Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, Germany, and France as making the same demands as the PKK. *Cumhuriyet*, 1 December 2000

social and political spectrum have come to believe that this conflict has become intractable. One of the factors suggested to explain the intractability of the conflict is as follows: "The Kurdish question is difficult to resolve simply because no government has yet recognized it for what it is." (Ahmad, 1999, p. 218) Ağırdır (2008) claims that in the 1983-2002 period, there had been 14 governments or coalition governments since the first elections in 1983 after the military coup, and none of them devised a solution plan that differentiated the Kurdish issue from a mere terrorism problem, and bequeathed it to the military as the only responder. Müftüler-Baç (1999) supports this claim by acknowledging that various Turkish governments were inclined to treat the problem as strictly one of terrorism and paid little attention to its underlying social and identity dynamics.

On the other hand, when we evaluate the time since 2002, while there was a period of hopeful change in the beginning under the AKP government, it can be claimed that this optimism was rather ephemeral, as it became apparent that they did not have a stable resolution strategy, either. Although the prime minister Erdoğan emphasized the existence of a "Kurdish issue", and suggested "Türkiyelilik" (being from Turkey) as a superordinate identity that unified Turks and Kurds, he later returned his focus to state security in his discourses and resorted to military measures since 2007, which dampened any optimism of a democratic resolution. (Çelik, 2010) The reasons Yavuz and Ozcan (2006) put forward to explain AKP's incapability to implement a coherent policy to address the Kurdish problem adequately are as follows: (1) the differences in the definition of the Kurdish question propounded by AKP and by the Kurdish actors, especially the pro-Kurdish parties; (2) the conflict between the state institutions and AKP over the different conceptualizations of the Kurdish issue and the foundations of the Turkish Republic; (3) AKP's concern of a split in the party over the Kurdish issue and loss of support in the conservative provinces in Anatolia; (4) the possibility of a major confrontation with the military over the Kurdish issue.

In the light of these explanations, it would not be wrong to propose that the conspicuous lack of leadership in the country and a preference for populism among both Kurdish and Turkish politicians (Kirişçi & Winrow, 1997), in short, the presumable mismanagement of the political elite, have only exacerbated the situation, while the violence has remained unabated and the deteriorating living conditions in the southeast region failed to improve.

Hence, in order to avoid the reductionist approaches which either treat the issue narrowly as separatism and terrorism, or focus only on its political-ethnic dimension, or perceive it solely as a result of socio-economic underdevelopment of the region, İçduygu et al. (1999) emphasize the multidimensional context of the Kurdish conflict and suggest that one should concentrate on "the political mobilization of ethnic identities under the pressure of socio-economic insecurity" Because only in this insecure environment, "politicized ethnic groups could manage to politicize the identity of all possible ethnic group members and then mobilize them", from which the terrorism problem emerges. (İçduygu, et.al., 1999, p.992-995) In their conceptualization, the insecure environment is produced by both material factors, such as the unequal distribution of tangible resources such as access to income, education, health and wealth across regions, and also by non-material factors that have psychological roots. Suppression of mother-language, lack of secure living conditions, and as a result of these, social exclusion constitute this realm. As a cumulative result of the imbalances in the distribution of material resources and the lack of a secure living environment in the southeastern region, Turkey has been experiencing a massive migration movement. As another by-product of the Kurdish conflict, both voluntary and mandatory forms of migration have occurred from the eastern provinces to the western metropoles in the last few decades, which has created further problems in terms of intergroup relations between the Turks and the Kurds. This situation will be explained in the next section.

3.2 Demographical Information on Kurds

While the conflict between the state's armed forces and the PKK is going on predominantly in the southeast region of Turkey, the Turks and the Kurds are continuing to live side by side throughout the country. Estimates indicate that people of Kurdish ethnicity constitute between 14 to 20 percent of Turkey's 70 million-population in the 2000s. (Koc, Hanioğlu, and Cavlin, 2008; KONDA, 2006; CIA World Factbook, 2008; Dixon & Ergin, 2010) The areas traditionally inhabited by the Kurdish people have been the least developed regions of Turkey. "The eastern and southeastern regions where most Kurds currently live today have the lowest scores for several socio-economic indicators." (Kirişci & Winrow, 1997, p. 122) For instance, when compared with the country-wide averages, one can see that a significant deficiency exists in terms of the average level of education among Kurds. According to the KONDA report dated April 2008, which was based on a nationally representative sample, the average year of schooling among Kurds is 6.1 years, while it is 7.4

years for Turks. A quarter of Kurdish males and 70 percent of Kurdish females have not completed elementary education (Gündüz-Hoşgör & Smits, 2002). Moreover, these statistics become particularly striking if one considers the situation of the previous generation, and especially of the women. When asked about the level of education the parents have received, the average year of schooling drops to 1.3 years for Kurdish mothers and 3.2 years for Kurdish fathers. The ratio of Kurds whose mothers are illiterate is 67.7 %. (KONDA, 2008)

Another indicator that displays the disadvantageous position of the Kurdish population in terms of socio-economic development is the employment level. In 2008, the net unemployment rate in Turkey was 10.3 % (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2008), while this rate was as high as 29.6 % among Kurds for the same year. (KONDA, 2008) A related figure is given on the poverty level. In 2008, the ratio of the Kurds living below the poverty line (i.e. household income being less than 700TL) was 52 %. (KONDA, 2008) Another interesting finding that is supposedly related to the unfavorable position of the Kurds in the societal transformation and modernization process is the number of household members. According to the April 2008 KONDA data, the average number of household members in Kurds is 6.1, while this number falls to 4.3 on average for Turkish families.

The socio-economic disparity among regions and the disadvantageous circumstances of the predominantly Kurdish-inhabited areas may provide strong evidence for the argument that the underdevelopment in the southeast region is one of the root causes of the Kurdish issue. As mentioned previously, feelings of hopelessness and both material and psychological deprivation may be a factor that strengthens the support for the PKK among the civilians in the region. Hence, while the socio-economic backwardness in the region may play a role in the perpetuation of the conflict, it also leads to another social problem. The security concerns, deteriorating living conditions, and the lack of economic opportunities caused by the continuous conflict in the region also resulted in the large-scale migration of mostly Kurdish people to the western parts of the country. Next section will elaborate on the phenomenon of internal migration from the east to the west; and give more detail about the reasons and consequences of it.

3.3 Internal Migration in Turkey

Today, there are immense differences in social and economic standards and opportunities between the traditionally Kurdish-majority regions of Eastern and Southeastern

Anatolia, and other parts of Turkey, where the population is mainly Turkish. As stated by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP 2007), "human development levels in the southeastern Anatolia region lag behind national levels, while the incidence of human poverty is much higher and there is continued migration out of the region. The region faces development challenges in terms of income level, educational opportunities, gender equality and socio-economic opportunities and facilities." The unemployment, fertility and illiteracy rates are much higher in the predominantly Kurdish eastern and southeastern portions of Turkey compared to the rest of the country, and nearly double of those rates in western Turkey. (İçduygu, Romano & Sirkeci, 1999; KONDA 2006, Dixon & Ergin, 2010) In the mid-1990s, the western region's per capita gross national product was US $2000 and that of the Kurdish region was US $700. (İçduygu, et.al., 1999; Sezgin, 2005)

In addition, another factor that shows the discrepancy in socio-economic levels across regions is the average number of people per medical doctor. According to the data given by the Ministry of Health in 2002[6] , the average population per doctor across Turkey is 4708, while this number goes up to 7304 for the Southeastern region, where Kurds constitute more than two thirds of the population.

3.3.1. Reasons

Especially since the 1950s, many people have migrated from the less developed regions of Turkey to urban and industrial centers in the western parts of the country to benefit from the growing economic opportunities created by expanding industries. (Kirişci & Winrow, 1997; Kasaba, 2001) Kurdish people constituted a considerable portion of this migration wave. Between 1965 and 1990, the percentage of Kurds in Marmara region and specifically in Istanbul increased from 1.2 % to 6.1 %. (Kasaba, 2001, p. 169) It is estimated that there are over 1.8 million Kurds living in Istanbul (KONDA, 2008), making it the urban center with the highest concentration of Kurds in the world. While this voluntary form of migration between 1950s and 1980s based mostly on economic reasons and urbanization, after 1980s, there were some changes about the main reasons. With the intensification of the armed conflict between the PKK and the army in the region, increasing insecurity resulted in the significant increase in migration. A study by Ayata (1994), which was based on a survey of 887 people originally from 5 cities in the southeastern region, reported that while socio-

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[6] Retrieved from http://www.saglik.gov.tr/TR/belge/1-2960/temel-saglik-hizmetleri-genel-mudurlugu-calisma-yilligi-.html on May 15, 2011.

economic factors were present; certain political and security considerations also were responsible for migration. Similarly, in a report prepared by a special commission in the Parliament in 1998 identified three primary reasons for the migration[7]. People were leaving their villages because of: (1) the collapse of animal husbandry and agriculture due to the ban on the use of pastures and because of the environment of clashes and military operations; (2) PKK's eviction of villagers who agreed to become village guards; (3) eviction of villagers by the security forces who rejected to become village guards and hence, who were thought to side with the PKK.

It is evident even from an official state report that the local civilian population was caught between the pressures of the PKK on one side and the suspicion of the security forces on the other, and was forced to abandon any neutral position. It should not be forgotten that throughout this decade the martial law under the state of emergency had been in effect in most of the southeastern provinces, which delimited a considerable number of basic human rights and freedoms. Hence, even without considering the economic deprivation in the region, "the psychological insecurity caused by the emergency rule, human rights violations, unending clashes between the PKK and the army, and village evacuations create a highly unsatisfactory status quo for Kurds in the east." (İçduygu et.al., 1999, p. 1003) However, in the 1990s, many Kurds were also mandatorily displaced by the state as a security precaution. This brings us to another reason for the dispersion of Kurds across the country.

3.3.2. Internal Displacement by the State

The forced displacement of rural communities led to another type of migration in Turkey and generated hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs). According to the definition provided by the United Nations[8], IDPs are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. This broad definition identifies many possible causes for the displacement, and the relevant one for Turkey's case is the conflict-induced displacement. In this category, people are obliged to move, irrespective of their active involvement in the conflict, out of their places of residence with the purpose of

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[7] Turkish Parliament (1998)
[8] UN, (2005a)

avoiding human rights violations or eliminating pressures by the conflicting parties. In Turkey, the majority of people who were displaced because of the armed conflict belong to this group.

In the 1990s, "an intensive wave of displacement occurred in various districts (for instance, Lice, Kulp, Cizre) and even province centers (for instance, Şırnak) of Southeastern Anatolia as a result of operations by security forces and armed clashes" (Ünalan, Çelik & Kurban, 2007, p.81), during the time when the state of emergency rule was in effect in the region. Although the official state sources report the evacuation of 905 villages and 2,523 hamlets, and the displacement and migration of approximately 380,000 people[9], a more recent study conducted by Hacettepe University upon the request of a government showed that the estimated number of IDPs ranges between 953, 680 and 1,201,000. (HÜNE, 2006; Ünalan, Çelik & Kurban, 2007, p.84)

In a recent fieldwork study (2005) conducted by the "TESEV Working and Monitoring Group on Internal Displacement in Turkey" in Diyarbakır, Batman, İstanbul and Hakkari, it is claimed that the majority of the interviewees reported the evacuation of their villages by the security forces without giving a specific reason or prior notice, or because of the villagers' refusal to become village guards. In the same report, it is mentioned that some of the interviewees also said that they were caught between the PKK members who visited their village to ask for food or harboring, and the security forces who asserted them not to help the PKK; and hence they left their villages because they feared for their safety. (Ünalan, Çelik & Kurban, 2007, pp.81-84)

Today, as a result of both voluntary and involuntary migration, Kurds are dispersed in all regions of Turkey, although big cities such as Istanbul, Izmir and Mersin have the largest populations of displaced Kurds. (Çelik, 2010) For instance, Kurdish people make up 14.8 % of Istanbul's population. (KONDA, 2008) In the next section, the consequences of internal migration and its impact on intergroup relations between the Turks and the Kurds will be evaluated.

3.3.3. Consequences of Internal Migration

It is obvious from the above-stated figures that the Kurdish citizens constitute the most deprived portion of the population in terms of education, wealth, and social security. (Ağırdır, 2008) Because of security concerns and lack of adequate infrastructure in the east and southeastern regions, they are discontented and restive in their traditionally inhabited areas.

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[9] Turkish Parliament, (1998)

The massive migration rate of the Kurds show that they are moving to the western parts of the country, hoping to live in better conditions both economically and socially. However, they are mostly confined to the slum areas in their new cities and although they live in an armed conflict-free environment, they face new problems caused by their inability to adapt to the social dynamics of the city life. Saraçoğlu (2009, 2010) argues that the neoliberal transformation of Turkish economy dragged the migrants into difficult socio-economic conditions in the post-migration process, too; entailing them to live in the spatially, as well as socio-economically, segregated migrant communities in the outskirts of their new cities.

The spatial dissociation of the Kurdish migrants who migrated to the Western metropoles especially since the 1990s has become evident as they tended to move to the discarded shanty neighborhoods. Because of the increase in the market prices of the available urban lands due to the neo-liberal economic policies in the 1990s, the newly migrated families could find shelter only by building their informal homes (gecekondus) or rent the previously built ones in these slums. (Kaygalak, 2001; Yükseker, 2007; Saraçoğlu, 2010) For example, when we look at the current situation in some of the cities that have received high number of migrants, in Mersin and Antalya, 72.2% of the Kurds, and in İzmir, 59.3 % of the Kurds live in the slum areas. (KONDA, 2008)

Another problem is that the cities have become overwhelmed with people who have swelled the ranks of the unemployed. (Kirişci &Winrow, 1997, p. 135) As suggested above, most of the migrants were coming from poor rural regions of the country, and a clear majority of them were deprived of the education and skills to find employment in the job market of the cities. They neither had the experience of urban living nor had other qualifications to enable them to be competitive job seekers in an urban economy. Regular formal jobs with social security benefits were not available for these newcomers, and hence, most of them were forced into selling their labor power in the informal market. One of the strategies the Kurdish people have adopted to cope with the unemployment problem in the cities is to find jobs in the informal sectors that the previously migrated Kurds were dominantly involved in. A typical example of this is the Kurdish stuffed mussel sellers *(midyecilik)* in Izmir, who are commonly from the city of Mardin in the southeast. (Saraçoğlu, 2010, p.81) Similar examples could be given based on the results of the present study. When the sample population of this study, who were also people living in Izmir, were asked about "*the first three words that come up to their minds in association with the Kurds"*, "bazaar sellers" *(pazarcılık)*, "car-park managers"

or "parking lot mafia" (*otoparkçılık* or *otopark mafyası*) were some of the common answers, in addition to the stuffed mussel-selling, which are all informal, unsecured and usually impermanent jobs. Thus, these difficult circumstances, in contrast to the previous migrant generation who enjoyed relatively easier social mobility, led the Kurdish migrants of the post-1980s period to be placed within the ranks of the urban poor, and hence end up in the shanty towns. (Karayiğit, 2005; HÜNE, 2006; Yükseker, 2007; Saraçoğlu, 2010)

This vicious cycle between unemployment, poverty and inability to adapt to the urban life is further fueled by other problems that the new migrants face in the post-migration period. Some of these are tangible problems such as language differences, access to education and health services, social security benefits, and other urban infrastructure deficiencies. Lack of education and proficiency in Turkish is a barrier in front of Kurds' socio-economic opportunities. (İçduygu, et.al, 1999) A 2002-report by Migrants' Association for Social Solidarity and Culture (*Göç-Der*), which is an NGO advocating on the rights and problems of the internally displaced people, states that more than 90 % of the IDPs do not have social security. According to the same report, 61 percent of female and 28.5 percent of male IDPs are illiterate; and out of those who were employed at the time of the survey, 83 percent of them had temporary jobs in the informal sectors. [10] There are also other non-tangible problems faced by the Kurdish migrants that engender feelings of psychological anxiety and insecurity, such as being perceived as potential criminals or terrorists, loneliness and alienation from the rest of the society, marginalization of their neighborhoods as "no-go-places"…etc. (İçduygu, et.al, 1999; Yükseker, 2007)

In combination, these stringent conditions and therewith the socio-economic gap between the Kurdish migrants and "the locals" has created another issue in the social life of Turkish metropolises, which Saraçoğlu (2008) names as the "ethnicization of migrants from Eastern Anatolia. He conceptualizes "ethnicization" as the process through which people living in these cities perceive and construct these migrants as a distinct and homogeneous ethnic group, and exclude them through stereotypes and stigmas. (Saraçoğlu, 2008, p.310) In other words, ethnicization denotes the recognition of the migrants in the urban life as "Kurdish", and the dissemination of this "Kurdishness" through some pejorative labels. In this study, these changing perceptions and attitudes toward Kurds and Kurdishness will be regarded as a social-relational consequence of the Kurdish conflict, which is exacerbated by

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[10] Report by "Göç Edenler Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Kültür Derneği", (2002); retrieved from Yükseker , 2007, p.153 – TESEV Publications.

the unfavorable contact conditions created by the internal migration. More detail concerning this argument will be in the next sections of this study.

To this point, it is discernable that this migration wave had adverse consequences in the short-term. Severe problems concerning education, health and employment opportunities of the newcomers, as well as polarizing perceptions and deteriorating relationships between the Kurdish migrants and "the locals" have emerged in the cities where there has been an inflow of migrants. In order to mention certain findings on the future prospects about the consequences of migration, according to the KONDA survey (2008), 46.4 % of the Kurds claimed that they would like to migrate from their current location if they could have the opportunity. Similarly, when asked about their perception of belongingness or about whether they consider themselves permanently settled in their current city, the lowest rate of feelings of belongingness is in Istanbul and in the Aegean Region. When we consider the continuing terror and violence, and unremitting unemployment problem in the region, as well as the positive net migration rate and the high fertility rate among the Kurds, it would be logical to assume that both the number of the Kurds and the ratio of them in the western metropolises will increase in near future.

In the following section, one of these western metropolises that have received a large number of Kurdish migrants, the city of Izmir will be introduced as it is also the location of the present study.

3.4 Izmir as a Case

Izmir is the third most populous city of Turkey after Istanbul and Ankara, located on the coast of Aegean Sea in the westernmost part of the country. It is an important economic center and the second-largest port city of Turkey after Istanbul. Besides its large population and economy, it also has a significant position on the ideological spectrum of Turkey, being currently known as one of the primary fortresses of the Republican People's Party (CHP). Its peculiar place in the Turkish multiparty political system can be seen from the election results of the past few decades.[11] There is significant differentiation between the party preferences of voters in Turkey as a whole and party preferences of voters in Izmir specifically for the period since 1983 until 2007. (Tosun & Tosun, 2008, p.259) Between the years 1983-2007, in four

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[11] For a detailed analysis of the voter preferences and election results of Izmir, see: **Tosun, G. & Tosun, T. (2008). "Voter Preferences in Izmir from the November 3, 2002 to the July 22, 2007 Elections: Has the Election Map Altered?"** *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 9 (2), pp. 247-295.

out of the six general elections, it was always a center-left wing party that came out of the ballot as the first party in Izmir, while "the right-wing bloc has had a steady hold over political power" throughout Turkey and "the electorate in general has displayed an overbearing support for right-wing parties in the Turkish party system" in the same period. (Tosun & Tosun, 2008, p.251) In the 2011 national elections, it was one of the only seven cities where CHP emerged out of the ballot as the first party. Extreme nationalist or conservative parties had never been able to receive wide support from the Izmir electorate; it was always the center-left or center-right parties that have been successful in the local and national elections. (Tosun & Tosun, 2008) The voter support in İzmir for the pro-Kurdish parties in 2002 and 2007 elections was 5.2 % for DEHAP in 2002 and 3.9% for DTP. It is important to note that the voter support for these parties was especially concentrated in certain quarters of the city in the Konak district.

In addition to its peculiar position in the political spectrum of Turkey, İzmir is also differentiated from other cities in Anatolia in terms of the relatively liberal life style of its population and the secular social and cultural life of the city. (Saraçoğlu, 2010). In fact, the expression 'infidel İzmir' (Gavur İzmir) is still a very well-known and widely used label in Today's Turkey, targeting the abovementioned characteristics of the İzmirli population and urban life in the city.

On another note, as it has been explained in the previous sections of this chapter, İzmir is one of the cities that have received a significant number of Kurdish migrants from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia in the last few decades. The emergence of socio-economically and spatially segregated migrant communities is a very relevant phenomenon for İzmir, too. Most of the migrants who came to the city were deprived of the education and skills necessary to be competitive in the job market. (Saraçoğlu, 2009). Limited economic opportunities and low standards of living brought an obvious spatial and socio-economic separation between the Kurdish migrants and the rest of the population in the city. Kadifekale, which is one of the neighborhoods sampled in this study, is one of the foremost examples of such isolated neighborhoods in İzmir and in fact, its population is made up of almost exclusively Kurdish people.

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Descriptive Research

The present study is an example of descriptive survey research. Descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events in order to answer questions about the opinions of people about a particular topic and then organizes, tabulates, depicts and presents the data collection. (Glass & Hopkins, 1984) More specifically, descriptive studies aim to find out "what is"; hence, observational and survey methods are frequently used to collect descriptive data. (Borg & Gall, 1989) Descriptive survey research uses formal instruments to study preferences, attitudes, practices or interests of a sample. (Jacobs, 2005) The present study falls under the category of a quantitative descriptive survey research in terms of its aim, which is to answer the question of "*What is the nature of social polarization along ethnic lines in the city of Izmir between the Turks and Kurds who live in isolated neighborhoods and have very infrequent contact with each other due to the divergence of their socio-economic levels?*", and in terms of its method of data collection, since it employs the use of surveys to accumulate data about the Turks' and the Kurds' perceptions of the Kurdish conflict, and their attitudes and prejudices about each other. This is not an explanatory research that seeks to discover a causal relationship between different variables by using inferential statistics. Rather, it strives to display the current level of polarization along the lines of ethnicity, which is nevertheless crucial not only because it is a novel topic that has not been studied extensively in the context of Kurdish conflict in Turkey, but also because it has potential to serve as a base for further research that intends to develop and/or test hypotheses.

4.2 Survey Method

As it has been mentioned above, this study employs the use of survey method. Survey methods involve gathering information about the current status of a specified characteristic of a particular group or collectivity, and then reporting a summary of the findings, which include data in quantitative form. (Thomas, 2003, p.40) It is a quantitative description, which 'entails surveys to obtain a common dataset on pre-selected variables, and descriptive statistics to summarize them'. (Sandelowski, 2000, p.336) Survey research is one of the most widely used methods of data gathering in social sciences and is regarded appropriate especially for research questions about self-reported beliefs, attitudes and opinions. Its main advantage lies in the fact that it allows the researcher to 'sample many respondents who answer the same

questions and measure many variables'. (Neuman, 2006, p.276) Most of the questions on the questionnaire used in this study are closed-ended, fixed response questions that are presented in a 5-choice model and evaluated on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. The fixed response question form has several advantages that are particularly relevant for the nature and context of the present study. These advantages are: (1) They are "easier and quicker for respondents to answer", which is important considering the high number of questions on the survey; (2)"respondents are more likely to answer about sensitive topics", which is an issue discussed in the subsequent paragraph; (3)"less articulate or less literate respondents are not at a disadvantage", which was especially the case for the individuals in the Kurdish neighborhood; and finally, (4)"the answers are easier to code, analyze and compare". (Neuman, 2006, p.287)

The questionnaire used in this study included 41 close-ended questions and 40 of them are evaluated on a Likert-scale from 1 to 5. The only question that had a different evaluation scale was about the different perceptions of the Kurdish Issue, and the respondents were requested to give scores from 0 to 2 for five different explanations of the conflict according to their perceived level of importance. There were also several demographical questions that asked the age, sex, education level, income level and ethnic background of the respondents. In addition, the survey included one open-ended question in the last section which was on prejudice and stereotyping. It asked the respondents to name the first three words that came up to their mind to characterize Kurds (Turks) or Kurdishness (Turkishness). The whole list of questions can be seen in Appendix A.

Receiving honest answers can be a problematic issue concerning the survey method especially if the questions ask personal opinions on a sensitive topic. Respondents may feel threatened about their presentation of the self, and feel uneasy, embarrassed or afraid to give truthful answers. (Neuman, 2006) Hence, they may underreport or overreport their attitudes and actions to be in accordance with social norms and generally accepted beliefs. People's tendency to present a positive image of their self and to conform to social norms is called the 'social desirability bias'. (Neuman, 2006, p.285) Additionally, in many contexts, political views are considered to be private issues. Due to self-presentation concerns related with social desirability bias, respondents may not want to admit their genuine beliefs or prejudices. Nevertheless, face-to-face survey is the chosen method, because it has the potential to obtain highest response rates and permit asking relatively longer questionnaires. (Neuman, 2006) In order to overcome the social desirability bias and increase the honesty of respondents'

answers, each respondent was assured of the anonymity of their names or addresses and the confidentiality of their answers in the beginning of the questionnaire. Moreover, in many of the cases in this study, the respondents requested to fill out the survey by themselves instead of the researcher reading aloud the questions and marking their answers on paper. In such situations, I accepted their requests and intervened only on certain questions that demanded further instructions and answered their clarification questions.

4.3 Sampling

In this study, the unit of analysis is individuals; however, it is important to note that the arguments made in the analysis section are based on the general responses of the two populations rather than individual insights, and what is presented is the aggregate averages of the individuals' answers based on 66 surveys conducted in each neighborhood to present the common perceptions and attitudes on the community level. The samples are drawn from two different neighborhoods in the city of Izmir, and they differ on a number of aspects. The rationale for picking the city of Izmir as the context of the city and the peculiarity of the two neighborhoods, namely Mavişehir and Kadifekale, will be explained in the next section; however, before discussing the features of the sample population in depth, we will now focus on the sampling procedure.

4.3.1. Sampling Procedure

In order to determine the number of individuals that needed to be surveyed, firstly the voter populations (aged 18 or over) in each neighborhood were obtained from the district civil registration offices (*İlçe Nüfus Müdürlüğü*) and locally elected neighborhood heads (*muhtar*). The sample size was then calculated by using the simple formula that depends on the preset levels of confidence interval and margin of error. Routio (2007) affirms that when the outcome of interest is only a single statistic of the population, such as its mean or a percentage, the confidence interval and margin of error happen to be practical measurement tools. In the present study, the analysis part consists of presenting the means and the percentages of the respondents' answers for each question on the questionnaire, and hence, using the measures of confidence interval and margin of error is suitable. The confidence interval is set to 90%, and margin of error to 0.1. In other words, the results of this research enable us to say that "*we are 90 percent certain that the views of the overall populations of*

Mavişehir and Kadifekale are no more than 10 percent different from what is found in this research." (Neuman, 2007)

In the next step of sampling, after identifying the neighborhoods and calculating the sample sizes, the number of apartments and flats (in Mavişehir) or houses (in Kadifekale) on each street was calculated. This information was again acquired from the neighborhood "muhtarlık"s. This is the sampling frame of this study. After this point, a form of simple random sampling, namely 'systematic sampling' was used to determine the flats, and one respondent from each house has been interviewed. No quotas were implemented in terms of age, gender and educational level due to the entailments of random sampling, and it was postulated that average age, gender, educational and income levels of the respondents reflect the general characteristics of the population and hence are more or less generalizable to the actual levels.

4.3.1.1 Sample Sizes

As it is obtained from the neighborhood 'muhtar' office, the population of Mavişehir is 13370, and the total number of registered voters for the 2010 referendum was 8562. When we set the confidence interval to 90% and margin of error to 0.1, then the needed sample size based on the number of voter population was 67.[12] Mavişehir is a gated community that is composed of 64 high-rise apartment blocks that are roughly identical in terms of price and the socio-economic levels of their residents, and there are 5326 households in total. Because the number of household members in each flat was inaccessible, the randomization procedure had to be carried out depending upon the number of households. Consequently, in order to reach to the sample size of 67, every 79th household out of 5326 on the sampling frame was chosen as the destination starting from the 33rd one. When the occupants of the selected flats were absent or refused to participate, one of their next-door neighbors was interviewed.

In the district widely known as Kadifekale, there are 6 adjacent neighborhoods, whose inhabitants have similar income and education levels and live in comparable life conditions. After having an interview with one of the 'muhtars' of these neighborhoods, two of them, the neighborhoods of Kadifekale and İmariye were chosen as the places of study where the sample was drawn from, due to the fact that these two neighborhoods are the most crowded ones and also are homogenously populated by Kurdish migrants. The population of

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[12] *(Frekans Research Field & Data Processing: Formulas. Retrieved from* http://www.frekans.com.tr/eng_formulas.html *on 25 October 2010.*

Kadifekale neighborhood is 7326 and that of İmariye neighborhood is 4358. The aggregate number of registered voters (which will be taken as the total number of adult population) in these two neighborhoods is 6684. The relatively low number of registered voters considering the overall population of the area can partially be explained by the high number of children and young adult population in these neighborhoods. According to a report prepared by İzmir Chamber of Commerce *(İzmir Ticaret Odası),* 25% of the population is composed of youngsters between the ages of 0-14, while this ratio is approximately 30% in İmariye. Another factor can be the fact that there are many adults who are not registered; however the number of registered voters is the only reliable data that can be obtained regarding the adult population in the area, and hence is taken as the basis when calculating the sample size. When the same level of confidence interval and margin of error used in Mavişehir are applied to the neighborhoods of Kadifekale and İmariye, the sample size needed equals to 67[13]. Although the local planning schemes of the two neighborhoods were obtained from the Konak municipality, several houses on some of the streets especially in the İmariye neighborhood were demolished as part of the "urban renewal project" that was going on in the area since 2007. Once again, the headmen (muhtar) of the neighborhood helped to reckon the number of remaining households on each street, which added up to 3068 in both neighborhoods. After generating the updated sampling frame and randomizing households, the visits to the houses were made in the company of the headmen (muhtar) of the neighborhoods, who were known by all of the residents. The headmen introduced the researcher to the respondents, which was extremely helpful for overcoming the trust issue and increased the response rate in these neighborhoods to a great extent.

4.4 Izmir as a Case Study: Overview of the Neighborhoods

This research is an example of a case study, in which the two neighborhoods in the city of Izmir are chosen as the cases. Flyvbjerg (2006) refers to a case study as the use of a descriptive research approach to acquire an in-depth analysis of a particular group or phenomenon. Walsham (1995) claims that the case study strategy is suited to research of the kind where the focus is on human interpretations and attributed meanings. The data of the present research are composed of the perceptions and attitudes of the residents of these neighborhoods about the root causes and potential solutions to the Kurdish issue, and about

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[13] *(Frekans Research Field & Data Processing: Formulas. Retrieved from* http://www.frekans.com.tr/eng_formulas.html *on 18 January 2011.*

each other. The data analysis section includes the results of the means of their answers in a comparative manner in order to describe the divergence of the societal beliefs about the conflict in these two very different sections of the society, and to display the social polarization between the two communities by looking at their will to interact in daily life and to form social bonds.

In the next sections, the rationale for selecting the two neighborhoods, namely Mavişehir and Kadifekale, as the sites of this study will be discussed, together with descriptions of their general characteristics and the sample populations that were drawn from them.

4.4.1. Mavişehir as a Case

One of the neighborhoods chosen for this study is Mavişehir. It is regarded as one of the most luxurious and upper-class neighborhoods in İzmir. It is a gated community that is relatively distant to the city center, and comprises multi-story housing estates and residences with its own private security services. The general socio-economic level of the Mavişehir residents is quite high compared to the rest of the city. A study conducted by Tosun & Tosun (2008) with the aim of exploring whether any correlation exists between the income levels and political party preferences of the people in İzmir, they found out that the square meter median value in Mavişehir was 2,400 TL in 2007, which was the highest in the city. In addition, they also reported that the ratio of CHP votes in Mavişehir in the 2007 national elections was also the highest in İzmir, equaling to 71.3 percent. (Tosun & Tosun, 2008, p.263) In the present study, the average income of the sample population turned out to be between 4501-6000 TL, and a clear majority of the respondents (52 out of 66) were either university graduates or had a higher degree.

Considering its spatially secluded location from the rest of the city and the presence of nearby shopping malls and recreation / entertainment centers, Saracoglu (2009) claims that the rich residents of Mavişehir can live on without having any interaction with the Kurdish population that reside in the slum areas of the city. In the early exploratory stages of his research, Saracoglu (2009) discloses that he thought it could be possible to witness an ethnicized form of an elitist anti-migrant discourse against the Kurdish migrants among the people living in Mavişehir, and thus, first chose this neighborhood as the first site of his interviews to analyze the sources of an anti-Kurdish discourse; however, only six of the thirty

two interviewees he had spoken with revealed an antagonist discourse against the Kurds. He explains the less intense negative sentiments among these 'upper-class' people by relating it with the absence of contact with the Kurdish migrants in their daily life due to the isolated life spaces of the two communities from each other. (Saraçoğlu, 2009, p.27) Despite this conclusion that he makes, Maviºehir is chosen as one of the sample neighborhoods of this study because of the exact same reason he uses to explain the absence of intense anti-Kurdish beliefs: the lack of opportunity of contact with the Kurdish population in the city due to the divergence of income levels and absence of intersecting living spaces between the two communities. Moreover, the number of Kurdish people living in Mavişehir is relatively low, in fact, only one of the respondents (out of 66) in this present study was of Kurdish ethnic origin. The second neighborhood, Kadifekale, is chosen for its opposite features in terms of the socio-economic levels and in terms of its somewhat homogenous Kurdish population. More will be said about this in the subsequent section.

4.4.2. Kadifekale as a Case

At the other end of the spectrum, the Kadifekale district is another example of a case of spatial disintegration and socio-economic seclusion in relation to the rest of the city. As it has been mentioned before, especially after the mid-1980s, the Kurdish people who voluntarily or involuntarily migrated to İzmir have concentrated in the peripheries of the city. Saraçoglu (2010) claims that being a shantytown that is very closely located to the city center, Kadifekale is one of the most striking examples of such spatial disintegration and socio-economic marginalization of the Kurdish migrants in the city of Izmir. Starting from the mid-1980s and accelerating in the 1990s with the eruption of the armed conflict in the heavily Kurdish-populated provinces in the east, migration gained pace. Being a popular destination for migrants, the low-income migrants have either built squatter houses at the city peripheries or started living in the deteriorating housing stock of the inner areas of Izmir. (Sönmez, 2007, p.327) During this time, there has been a large inflow of Kurdish migrants to Kadifekale especially from the province of Mardin. Indeed, it has been stated that Kadifekale has transformed into an exclusively Kurdish district (Saraçoğlu, 2010), and is widely regarded as "the little Mardin". In fact, 49 out of 66 individuals in the sample of this study were from Mardin.

In relation with the abovementioned situation of spatial disintegration of Kadifekale, the residents are also faced with social seclusion and social marginalization. This is connected

with the fact that the Kurdish migrants who came to the city especially after the 1980s could find employment only in informal and temporary jobs concentrating on certain economic sectors and they had to find their own unique subsistence strategies in the city. (Saraçoglu, 2010, pp.75-78) For instance, as of 2005, in Kadifekale, only 9% of the employable adults had a formal job, while almost half of the remaining people were unemployed and the other half was working in unstable and unsecured informal jobs with no social security. (Karayiğit, 2005; Saraçoğlu, 2008)   Moreover, with its squatter houses that accommodate large families with 10-15 members and with stuffed mussel-making rooms[14], Kadifekale is strikingly differentiated from the middle-class neighborhoods that surround it in terms of the daily life practices of its residents. (Saraçoğlu, 2010, p. 74)

Another factor that distinguishes the Kadifekale district from the rest of the city is the noteworthy ratio of young adults within its population and the significantly high rate of population growth. For instance, only 13% of Kadifekale's population, which approximately equals to 30.000, is above the age of 50; and the annual population growth rate is 10%. (Karayiğit, 2005, p.8) The low education level (which will be exemplified in the following section), lack of information on birth control and continuing migration from the east are the foremost factors that account for the high population increase rate.

Kadifekale is also an area where political activities related to the Kurdish cause and its political movement are concentrated, due to its almost homogenous Kurdish population and to the similar social, economic and psychological conditions the Kurdish migrants share, all of which provides a convenient opportunity for the reproduction and reinforcement of the Kurdish identity and Kurdishness, as Saraçoğlu (2010) argues. As a matter of fact, this argument is supported by the victory of the pro-Kurdish political parties and candidates in the both national and local elections, which is another factor that distinguishes the neighborhood from the rest of the city in terms of the differences of political identity and political preferences. As an example of this, in the 2002 national elections, the pro-Kurdish political party, namely the Democratic People's Party (DEHAP), which predominantly represented the Kurdish electorate, obtained 64.2 % of the vote in the İmariye neighborhood. (Tosun & Tosun, 2008) As a personal anecdote that would also suggest the presence of an active

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[14] Stuffed mussel-selling (*Midyecilik*) is a popular source of informal employment for many people in Kadifekale. In fact, I have witnessed many young boys with large trays and bags of mussels under their arm, going to the city center on the public buses that operate between Konak (downtown) and Kadifekale. As I have chatted with one of them, he informed me that his mother and his aunts prepare the stuffed mussels (midye dolma) in their house.

political life in support of the Kurdish cause in the neighborhood, while I was informing the respondents about the confidentiality of their names and answers, one of the participants comforted me by saying:

> *"Well, not to worry, BDP (Peace and Democracy Party – the currently present pro-Kurdish political party) comes here every week and asks us to sign petitions; therefore, we are not going to be afraid to give our names to you."*

When analyzing the relationship between spatial disintegration of Kadifekale and social exclusion of its residents from the rest of the city, Saraçoğlu (2010) proposes that a process of ethnicization takes place. Because the population of Kadifekale is composed almost exclusively of Kurdish migrants and their families, who live in significantly different conditions in terms of education and income levels, employment opportunities and lifestyles, this part of the city is perceived as a "stay-away zone" by the rest of the İzmirli people. Hence, an ethnicization of spatial disintegration takes place for Kadifekale district. (Saraçoğlu, 2010, p.5)

On another note, although it is not the subject of this study, it should be mentioned that the recent "Urban Renewal Project" that was initiated in 2006 by the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, which is still in effect, has led to a significant reduction in Kadifekale's population. Certain parts of the district were identified as a "disaster prone area" under the danger of landslide. The project encompasses the demolition of 1968 households in the six neighborhoods, and more than 1600 houses are demolished. The housing stocks in this area are expropriated and the people are given a choice to either move to the housing units built by *TOKİ*[15] in another part of the city or accept the expropriation money. This project has been met with criticism and protest by the people of Kadifekale and is prone to create a social conflict between the Kadifekale residents and the municipality, but it is beyond the scope of the present study.

4.5 Limitations of the Study

Before proceeding to the analysis section, let us first mention some of the methodological concerns about the research design and discuss certain limitations on the results that can be deduced from this study.

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[15] **TOKİ** is the abbreviation for the "Housing Development Administration of Turkey", which has the aim of sustaining the housing needs of the population by producing mass housing units for low-income groups. (Mutlu, 2009)

Sandelowski (2000) argues that one weakness of the quantitative descriptive studies is that because the researcher pre-selects the variables that will be studied, there is a limit on what can be learned about the individual meanings participants give to events, and individuals' specific reasonings cannot be interpreted by collecting data via surveys. While I agree that in quantitative descriptive studies such as this one , the researcher sets the horizons of the study by pre-determining the questions to be asked and the variables to be analyzed, there is a major advantage of employing the use of survey method that cannot be discarded: The use of surveys as a tool of gathering data in quantitative descriptive studies allows for making a comparatively large-N study and enables the researcher to ask numerous questions that could not have been possible in the case of an open-ended, in-depth interview structure. Because the focus of this research is to describe the changes in societal beliefs during an ongoing conflict and to study social polarization between the majority and the minority, it has a *social* focus that inherently benefits from the relatively large sample size in order to grasp a snapshot of the general views of the population in a more accurate manner.

When conducting a case study, a key concern to be aware of is generalizability. (Oliver, 2004, p.298) Generalizations cannot be applied to whole populations from case study findings, in this case, from polarization between the Turkish and Kurdish communities in İzmir to social polarization along ethnic lines in overall Turkey. The sample populations of this study are the inhabitants of two unique neighborhoods in only a single city of Turkey, and hence, it is true that the results cannot be generalized to Turkey's whole population. However, such a goal would be too ambitious considering the limited time scope of the study and the limited resources of the researcher. Nevertheless, the results of this study will make an important contribution to the literature on changing intergroup relations during an ongoing conflict, which has not been studied extensively in the context of Turkey's Kurdish issue. It is believed that the deteriorating relations and growing social distance as a result of increased ethnic awareness between the ordinary Turks and Kurds is becoming a burning question that demands attention, as it can be seen from the recent confrontations especially in the western provinces where Turks and Kurds live side by side.

Although I acknowledge that a longitudinal research design would have been a more informative way for revealing the changing trends in the perceptions of people over time, again due to the limited time scope, this research merely strives to present a snapshot of the current situation in a metropolitan city of Turkey, where there is a significant Kurdish migrant population. Despite its cross-sectional design, it can nevertheless be asserted that this study

will provide valuable data which can be used as a first step for further studies on a similar topic in the future. In addition, because this is a timely topic, this study can be replicated in other cities, which would allow making comparisons and provide the first step for testing hypotheses.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter is composed of two main sections with two different objectives. In the first section, a comparative analysis of the answers of the two sample groups to the questions on the views of Kurdish conflict and on various aspects of social polarization is presented. The main aim of this section is:

- to illuminate the differences in their perceptions about the root causes and basic understandings of the Kurdish conflict,

- to present their varying level of support for minority rights,

- to reveal the different levels of social tolerance of the majority and minority and display their preferred social distance from each other,

- to expose the intensity of their prejudices and stereotypes of each "other" (i.e. as Turks or Kurds).

The analyses are made on the group level and the results are composed of the average scores of the respondents in each sample group. The overall goal of this section is to offer a snapshot of the present state of social polarization between the Turks and the Kurds living in two different and to a large extent, ethnically homogenous neighborhoods of Izmir.

After displaying the perceptions of the Turks and the Kurds on the Kurdish conflict and minority rights, and their different level of social tolerance, social distance and prejudice, the second section focuses on the factors that may explain these differences. It aims to analyze whether any correlations exist between these variables and certain demographic characteristics such as age, sex, education and income levels. In other words, it intends to evaluate statistically the strength of the relations between the variables of support for minority rights, perceptions of the conflict, social distance, social tolerance, prejudice and demographics; and attempts to answer the questions such as "*Are socially tolerant people less prejudiced about Kurds (or Turks)?*" or "*Is there a relation between perceiving the Kurdish issue mainly as a terrorism problem and the level of social distance one prefers between Turks and Kurds?*". In order to find answers to such questions, correlational analyses were made for the responses of the participants in each neighborhood separately to demonstrate

which variables are in relation with each other, and to what degree, for each group. Next, another correlation analysis was applied on the conjoined data that included the answers of both sample groups to display the influence of ethnicity.

5.1 Demographical Information on the Sample Populations

Before proceeding to the analysis of the findings, let us first present the specific characteristics of the sample populations of this study. The determined sample size based on the indicated confidence interval (90%) and margin of error (0.1) was 67 for both neighborhoods. Although 134 individuals were surveyed in total (67 individuals from each neighborhood), two of these had to be omitted due to the following reason: Two of the respondents who had requested to fill out the survey on their own (rather than the researcher reading the questions to them and recording their answers) had ceased to complete the questionnaire. One of these individuals was from Mavişehir, and as it was later noticed in the data analysis phase of the study, he (or she) did not provide answers to the demographical questions. The other one from Kadifekale, as it turned out later, had skipped the questions on two pages of the questionnaire (adding up to 18 questions), so both of these individuals had to be taken out from the sample and their answers were removed from the data. Under this condition, the results are based on the answers of 66 respondents from each neighborhood.

5.1.1 Demographical Characteristics of Mavişehir Sample

The demographical questions asked in the questionnaire included the age, education level, income level, gender, birthplace and the common language spoken by family in the house during childhood. As it can be seen from Figure 5.1, almost half of the respondents in Mavişehir belonged to the age group 46-60, while the average age of the 66 individuals was 43.8. A clear majority of them were university graduates or had higher degrees. The distribution of education levels can be seen in Figure 5.2. None of the respondents were illiterate or had elementary school degree as their highest level of education completed, while 41 of them had finished university and another 13 of them had a higher graduate degree.
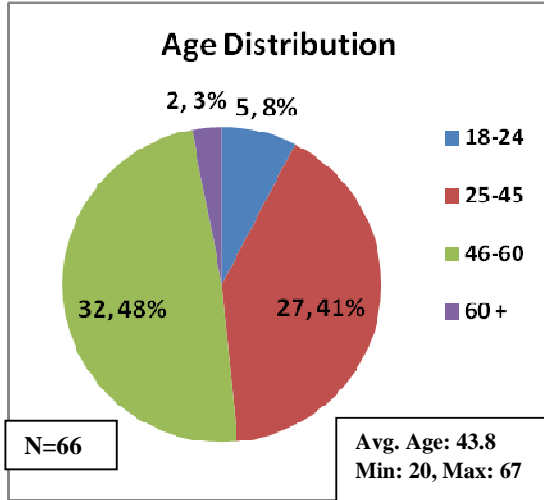
Figure 5.1 : Age Distribution in Mavişehir
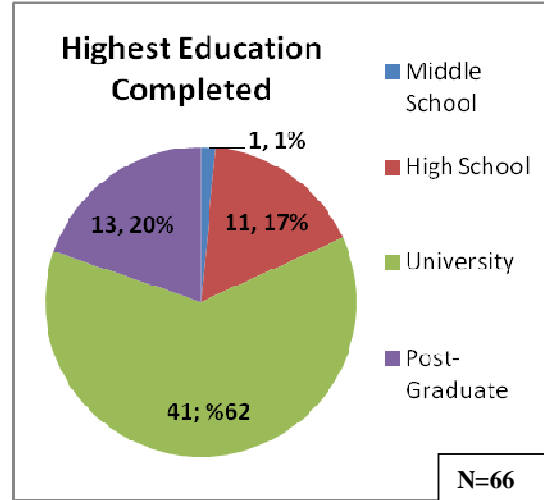
Figure 5.2: Education Level in Mavişehir

When we look at the income levels of the Mavişehir residents, we see that all of them have monthly incomes that are higher than 1000 TL, while 25 of them earned 6001 TL or more per month, constituting the most picked answer choice. Out of 66 individuals, 30 of them were males and 36 of them were females. Almost half of them were born in İzmir, and 12 of them were born in other cities in the Aegean Region. The information about these demographical characteristics of the sample can be observed in Figures 5.3 and 5.4.
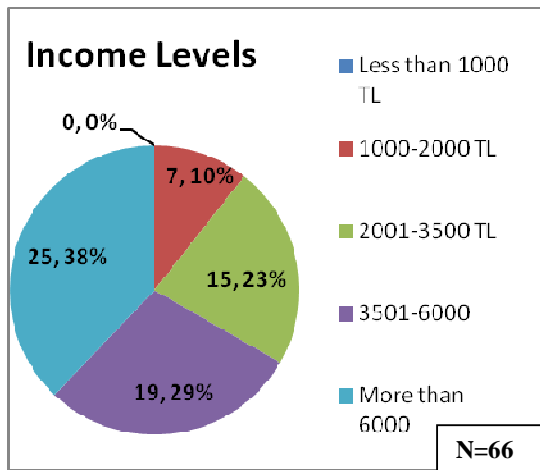
Figure 5.3: Income Level in Mavişehir
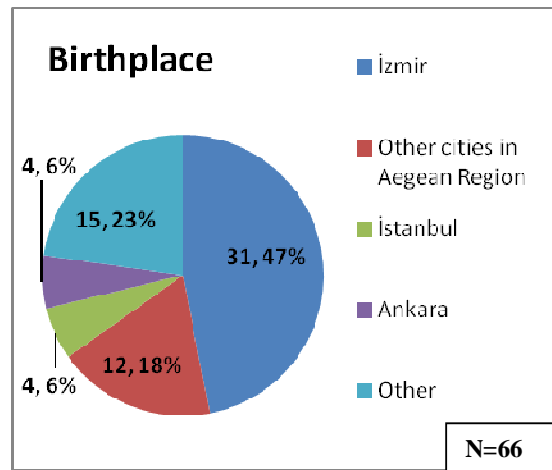
Figure 5.4: Birthplaces of Respondents in Mavişehir

As it can be seen from Figure 4, almost half of the residents of Mavişehir in the sample were born in İzmir, while a majority of them were from Aegean Region, including İzmir, Manisa, Denizli, Aydın and Balıkesir. Only two of the respondents were from the eastern parts of Turkey (1 Mardin and 1 Kahramanmaraş), but they were not of Kurdish origin. Only 1 individual out of 66 identified herself as a "half-Kurdish and half-Turkish", and

answered both "Turkish and Kurdish" to the question about the common language spoken by her parents at home during childhood.

5.1.2 Demographical Characteristics of Kadifekale Sample

In accordance with the demographical information provided in the report of İzmir Chamber of Commerce which points attention towards the majority of the young population in Kadifekale, the average age of the sample of this study is considerably younger than Mavişehir. 15 of the respondents belonged to the age group 18-24, while merely 17 out of 66 respondents were over the age of 45. The average age of the Kadifekale sample is 35, which is 9 years younger than the average age of the Mavişehir sample that was 43.8. The distribution of individuals according to age groups is presented in Figure 5.5.

Çelik (2006, p.981) enunciates that in big cities such as İzmir, "the social and economic gap between the Kurds and 'the others' became more obvious, with the former possessing fewer socioeconomic assets such as financial capital and education, and less access to social and economic resources." Kadifekale is a good example of such deficiency of resources and opportunities. For instance, neither Kadifekale neighborhood nor İmariye neighborhood has an elementary school or a healthcare center within their borders, while there is no high school in the overall district of Kadifekale. Moreover, in the neighborhoods of İmariye and Kadifekale, approximately 20% of the residents are illiterate, which is a ratio that is much higher than the average of that for İzmir in general, which is 3 percent. (Karayiğit, 2005)

When we compare the sample populations of this study, we also see a striking difference between the education levels of Kadifekale and Mavişehir residents, which is not at odds with the statistics provided above. Out of 66 people surveyed in Kadifekale, 5 of them have not had any school education, while 12 of them started elementary school, but have not finished it. Only 4 people are university graduates and 36 of them have either graduated from middle school or had some unfinished high school education. The distribution of percentages regarding the education levels of Kadifekale inhabitants can be seen below in Figure 5.6.
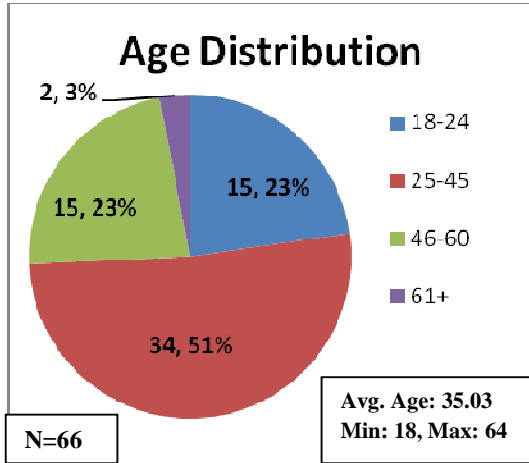
Figure 5.5: Age Distribution in Kadifekale
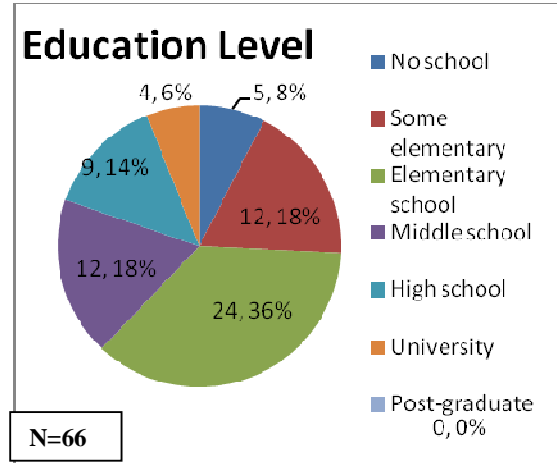
Figure 5.6: Education Level in Kadifekale

There is also a substantial gap between the average income levels of the two neighborhoods sampled in this study. In Kadifekale, the monthly average income of almost half of the respondents is between 501-800 TL, while none of the respondents in Mavişehir had a monthly income that was less than 1000 TL. A relatively equal distribution of participants exists in terms of gender: 37 of them are male and 29 of them are female.

When looked at the birthplaces of the respondents, one can see that the name *"little Mardin"* is quite appropriate for Kadifekale. Out of 66 respondents, 49 of them were born in Mardin[16] and 16 of them (which are usually young people) had İzmir as their places of birth. The information regarding the level of income and hometowns of the sample population in Kadifekale can be seen in Figures 5.7 and 5.8 respectively.

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[16] In fact, one of the respondents told that in 1994, almost half of their village - which he approximated to be around 150 people - in Kızıltepe, Mardin had migrated to Kadifekale altogether.
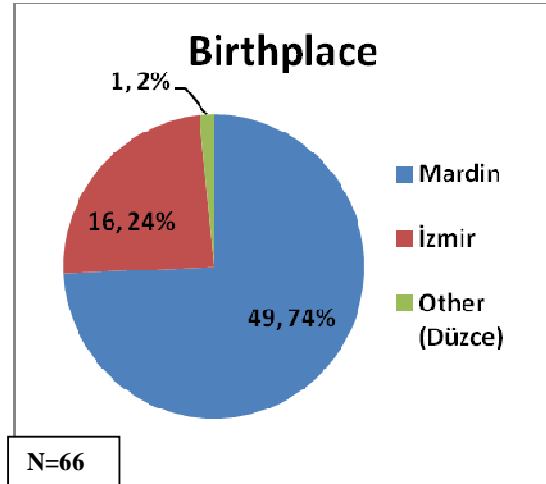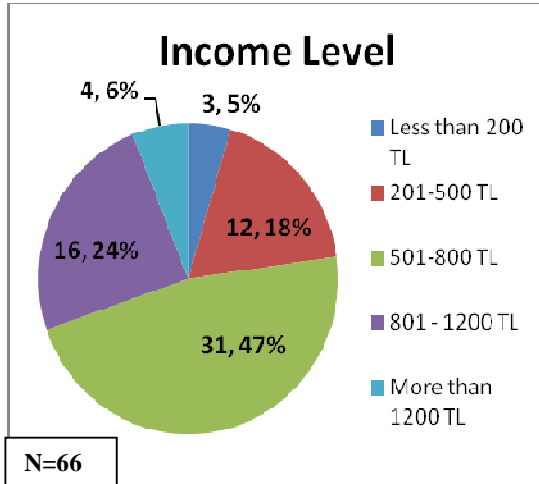
Figure 5.7: Income Level in Kadifekale   **Figure 5.8: Birthplaces of Respondents in Kadifekale**

It should be noted that all respondents in Kadifekale indicated that they were of Kurdish ethnic origin, and Kurdish (either Kurmanji or Zazaki) was included in the answers of all of the respondents to the question "What was the mutual language spoken by your family at home during your childhood?". Hence, within the scope of this study, they are all considered as "Kurds", and therefore, their answers are evaluated aggregately.

5.1.3 Comparison of Demographical Characteristics of Mavişehir and Kadifekale Samples

In order to provide an overview of the demographical characteristics, Table 5.1 presents this information regarding the sample populations of Mavişehir and Kadifekale in a comparative manner below.

	Mavişehir	Kadifekale
Sample Size	66	66
Average Age	43,8	35
Average Education	University graduate	Elementary School / Some Middle School
Average Income	3501-6000 TL	501-800 TL
Gender	Male=30, Female=36	Male=37, Female=29
Birthplace	31 İzmir, 5 Manisa, 4 İstanbul, 4 Ankara, 4 Denizli, 12 Other, 1 Abroad	49 Mardin, 16 İzmir, 1 Düzce

Table 1: Comparison of Demographical Characteristics

As it can be observed from the table above, the average age, education and income levels of the two sample groups are quite disparate. Hence, in the second section, while they will be taken into consideration in the correlation analyses made distinctively for each group, in the final analysis where the data is composed of the answers of both groups, any correlations with age, education or income should be ignored.

5.2 Comparative Analyses

5.2.1 Perceptions of the Kurdish Issue

As Bar-Tal (2003) suggests, one of the foremost topics that creates a difference of opinions among the parties during an intractable conflict is the reasons put forward for the emergence and perpetuation of the conflict. One of the questions in the survey aimed to find

out whether such a clash of opinions about the Kurdish issue existed between Turks and Kurds; and it was asked in the following format: ***"Please indicate the importance of each of the phrases I will read in terms of explaining the occurrence of the Kurdish Issue"***, and the respondents were requested to give scores from 0-2, indicating ***0=not important, 1=somewhat important,*** and ***2=very important***. They were also provided with an "other" choice, for which they could name an additional reason that they thought was an important component for the emergence of the Kurdish conflict. The fixed response clauses that were already given included:

a) *Socio-economic underdevelopment problem of the region,*
b) *An issue of secessionism & terrorism,*
c) *An identity conflict caused by the denial of cultural rights,*
d) *Insufficient level of democracy in Turkey,*
e) *A problem created by the manipulation of foreign powers,*
f) *Other (Please indicate)*

The results of this question are presented in Figure 5.9. The blue columns indicate the average scores that each explanation received from the Mavişehir residents and the green columns indicate those of Kadifekale residents.
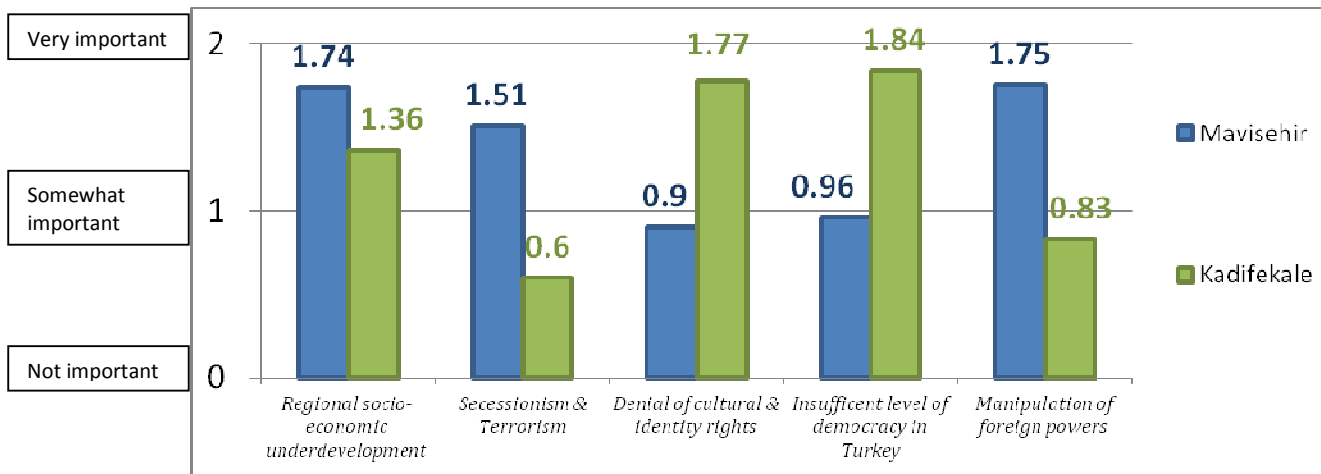
Figure 5.9: Perceptions of the 'Kurdish Issue'

When we look at the perceptions of the two communities about the root causes of the Kurdish conflict, we see an almost contrasting picture in the sense that the two most chosen answers by the Kurdish residents of Kadifekale were the two choices that received the lowest score in Mavişehir sample.

According to Kurdish respondents, the two explanations that received the highest score among the proposed understandings and root causes of the Kurdish issue are the denial of cultural rights by the state and the insufficient level of democracy in Turkey. On the other hand, these two explanations were the ones that received the lowest score among the Turkish respondents in Mavişehir. For them, the socio-economic underdevelopment of the Southeast region and the manipulation of foreign powers are the main reasons for the occurrence of the conflict. Figures 5.10 – 5.16 show the average scores and the distribution of answers given for each of the explanations. Also, among the other reasons that were suggested include "the incapability of the politicians and their self-interested approaches", "lack of education" and "unsuccessful assimilation policies" by three different Turkish individuals, and "ultra-nationalism", "refusal to negotiate with the PKK" and "intentional distortion of the recent history" suggested by three different Kurdish individuals.

a) **Kurdish Issue as a Problem of Socio-Economic Underdevelopment of the Southeast Region**
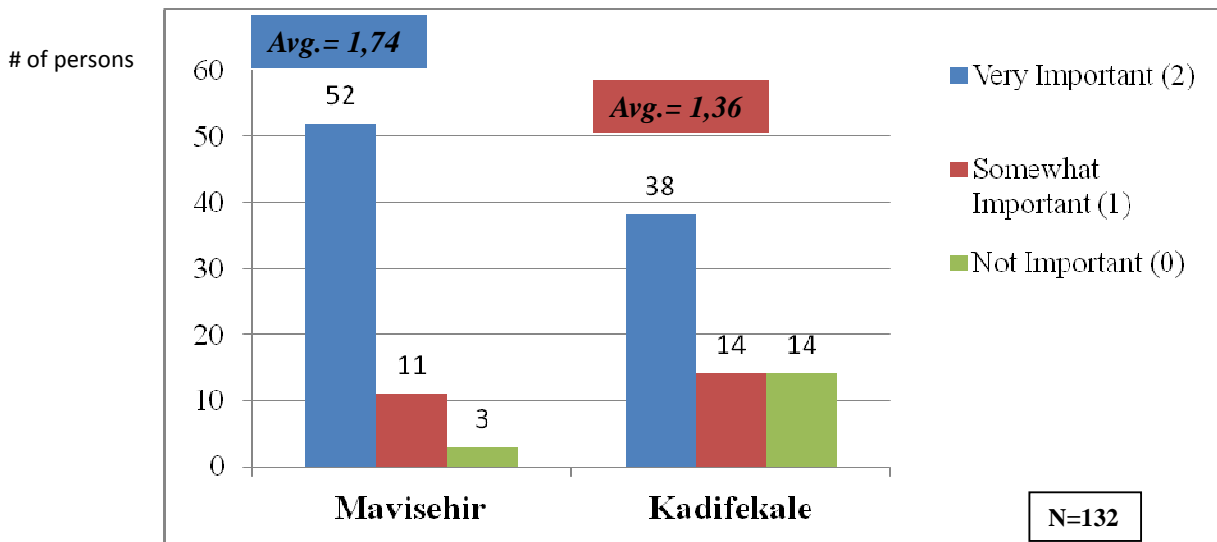
Figure 5.10: Kurdish Issue as a Regional Socio-Economic Underdevelopment Problem

As stated in the previous paragraph, socio-economic underdevelopment of the southeast region is perceived as one of the most important factors for the occurrence of Kurdish conflict by the Turks in Mavişehir. Out of 66 respondents, 52 of them claimed that this was a very important reason, while only 3 of them believed that this was not an essential factor. The average score it received from the Mavişehir residents was 1.74, while it was 1.36 for the Kadifekale residents. The socio-economic backwardness of the region received a

relatively high score from the Kurdish participants, as well. In addition to the Turkish respondents, more than half of the Kurdish participants also thought that this was a very important element.

The strong approval of this choice among the Turks living in İzmir is not an unpredictable result, considering the prevalent understanding which addresses the Kurdish Issue primarily as a problem instigated by the economic issues or poverty. (Aydınlı, 2002) As Çelik & Blum (2007, p.66) assert, this approach has always been "favored by those within Turkey, who, in an effort to defend the idea of a unitary Turkish state, see the conflict as stemming from underdevelopment, as opposed to ethnic issues." While many authors (Kirişçi & Winrow, 1997; Beşikçi, 1969; Barkey and Fuller, 1998) identify the exclusivist or inadequate government policies which impeded economic development in the predominantly Kurdish-inhabited southeast as a source of the conflict, the exclusive insistence on this factor solely reduces the conflict to a single dimension and refrains to address the ethnic or political component of it.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that this is the choice where Turkish and Kurdish respondents showed greatest agreement, in the sense that the difference between the average scores it received from both samples are the least, and their sum is the highest compared to all the other factors asked.

b) Kurdish Issue as an Act of Secessionism and Terrorism
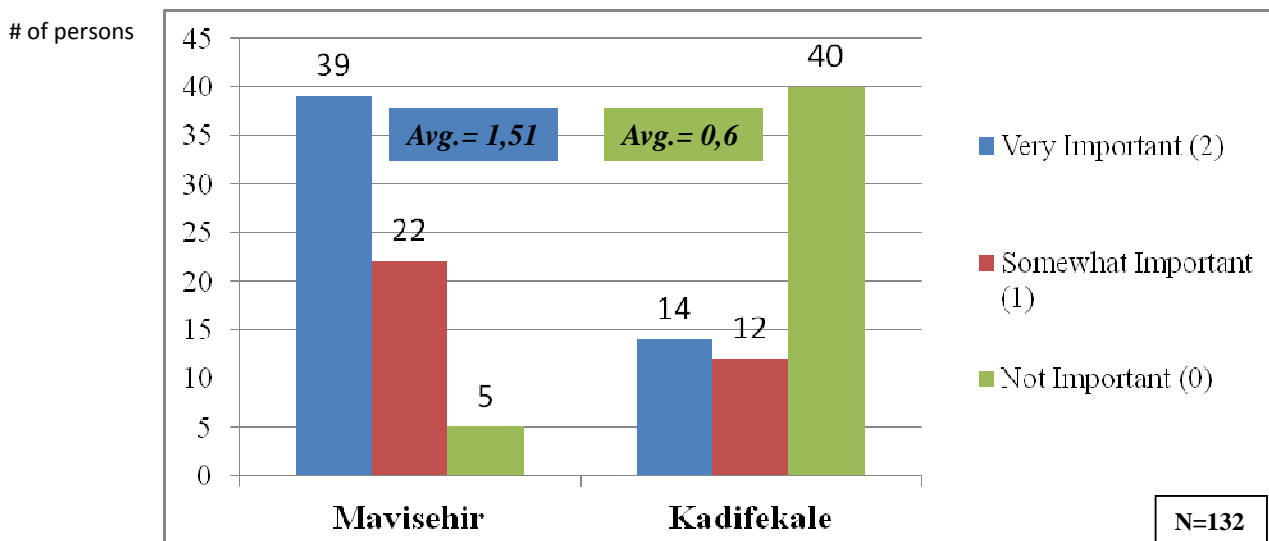
Figure 5.11: Perception of Kurdish Issue as an Act of Secessionism and Terrorism

Not surprisingly, most of the Kurds do not believe that secessionism or terrorism constitute a major component of the issue, as 40 of them (or 60 %) claim that it is not what the Kurdish conflict is about. The greater agreement on this explanation comes from the Turks, as 39 of them (or approximately 60%) believe that the Kurdish conflict is an issue of terrorism and secessionism. Again, the greater Turkish support for this claim is by no means surprising, since until very recently, the official discourse of the state had been to define the Kurdish issue simply as an example of "separatist terror against the integrity of the Turkish state". At the same time, the fact that the Kurdish issue has regained political and public attention through the armed conflict between the PKK and the Turkish army forces has also reinforced this understanding in the eyes of the many people. As Romano (2006, p.159) suggests, "if there is one thing that every observer of the conflict, be they Turkish generals or Kurdish peasants or western academics, it is that the PKK that succeeded in bringing the issue back to the limelight of public discourse." Hence, the tendency to associate the Kurdish conflict directly with the PKK is a simplistic, but very common approach.

It can be suggested that the difference in the responses of the Turkish and Kurdish participants stems from their different perception of the PKK. Based on the explanations provided above, it is hardly contestable that the PKK is seen as a terrorist organization by most of the Turks. However, for the very same reason that the Turks associate the Kurdish issue with terrorism (which is that it gained attention through the acts of the PKK), many Kurdish people do not perceive the PKK as a terrorist organization, but as a body that makes their demands and concerns heard through its actions. In a different question, the respondents were asked of their views of the PKK in representing the Kurdish population in general. Opposing to the initial expectations of the researcher, most of the Kurds conformed to the statement ***"In my opinion it is true that the PKK is an organization which represents all of the Kurds"***; and the average score of the Kurds to this question was considerably higher than that of the Turks. The distribution of their answers is displayed in Figure 5.12 below.
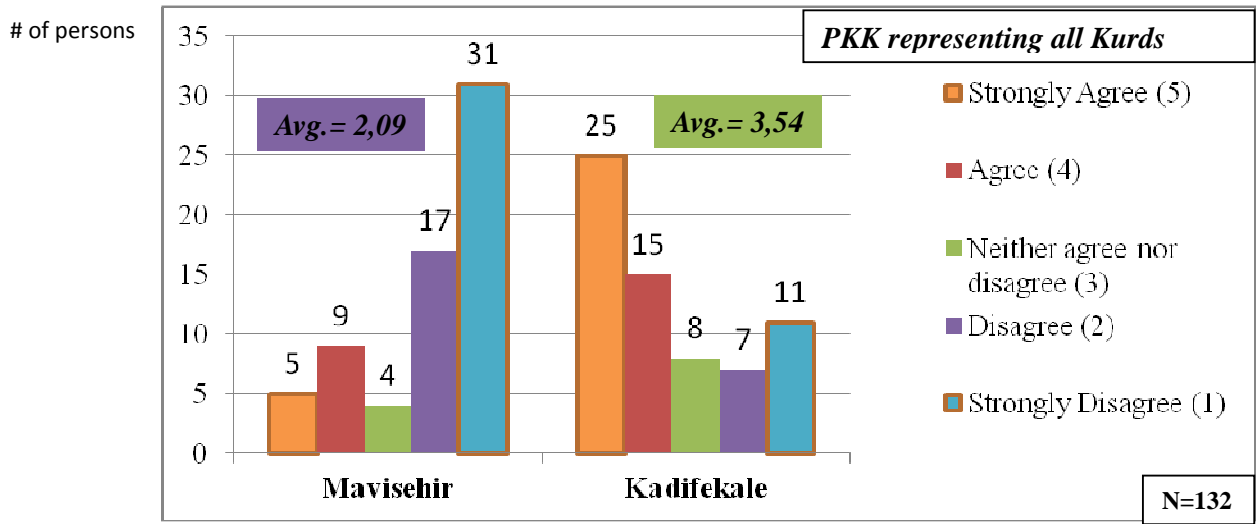
Figure 5.12: Beliefs on whether PKK represents all Kurds

As it can be seen, 48 of the Turkish respondents in Mavişehir disagreed or strongly disagreed with the claim that the PKK represented all the Kurds. It is possible to claim that for them, asking whether 'they agreed that the PKK represented all the Kurds' was somewhat equivalent to asking whether 'they believed all Kurdish people supported terrorists', and hence, their average response was low. On the other hand, in spite of their low score for believing that the Kurdish issue is a terrorism problem, the relatively high score of the Kurdish respondents for agreeing to the representation of the PKK can be explained by the different image of the PKK in their perceptions. Fuller (1999) claims that the PKK was the primary organization in Turkey that imbued a sense of Kurdish identity among the Kurds. Similarly, Cornell (2001) suggests that the PKK attempted to bolster its support among the Kurdish people by toning down its Marxist-Leninist rhetoric and instead, emphasizing Kurdish nationalism as a counter-response to Turkish nationalism. Hence, the significant agreement on the claim that "the PKK represents and is supported generally by all the Kurds" and the significant disagreement on the claim that "Kurdish conflict is an act of terrorism and secessionism" can be understood by the image of PKK in the minds of the Kurdish people not as a terrorist organization but as a body that provided a way for Kurds to become aware of their separate identity and to make their demands heard by the "others".

c) Kurdish Issue as an Identity Conflict caused by the Denial of Cultural Rights by the State
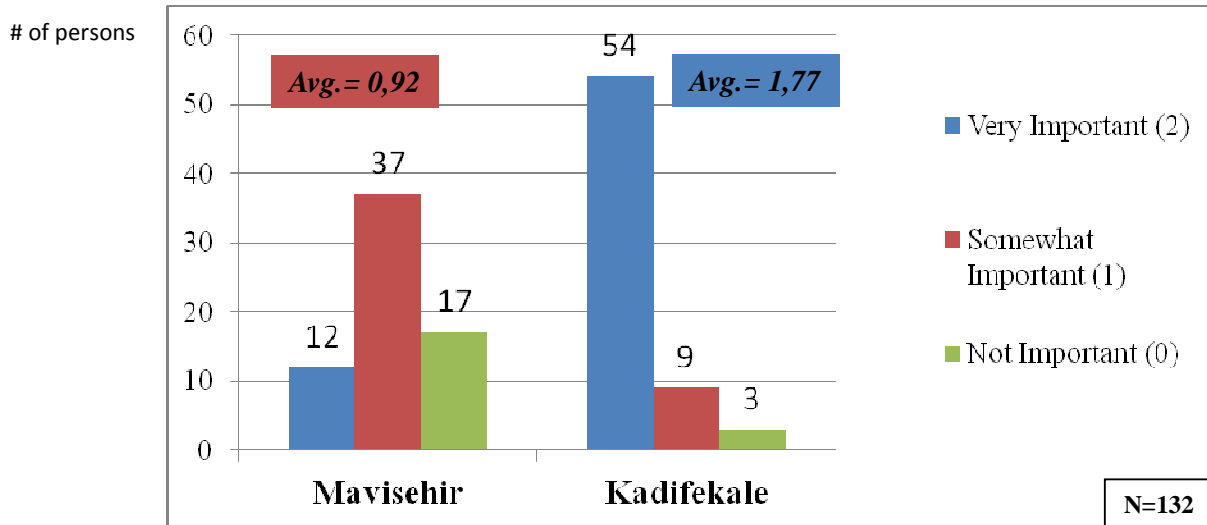
Figure 5.13: Perception of Kurdish Conflict as an Identity Conflict

For the Kurdish people sampled in this study, the denial of their cultural rights by the state is one of the two most important root causes of the problem, while this is the least important one for the Turkish respondents in Mavişehir based on their average score. There is a clear difference between the levels of emphasis the two communities place on the denial of cultural rights of the Kurdish people. This is again, not a bedazzling result, and it can be suggested that the causes of the significant disagreement on this issue go back to the early years of the Republic. According to the first constitution of the Republic, all citizens are defined as Turkish. The state initiated a severe assimilation campaign and took somewhat extraordinary measures to deny the existence of a separate Kurdish ethnicity to instill a sense of loyalty to the new state and to reinforce Turkish identity as the uniting force among the people. For instance, various towns were renamed to have Turkish names and forbade the public-speaking of Kurdish. (van Bruissen, 1992; Dixon & Ergin, 2010). The Kurds were not subjected to any sort of ethnic discrimination except the public expression of their Kurdish identity. Hence, in the official state discourse, which reflects the views of most of the Turks as well, "the Turkish Kurds were never a minority with certain rights; they were Turks with full rights." (Fuller, 1999, p.227) The divergence in the views of the Turks and the Kurds regarding the rights granted to the minorities by the state can be better understood with their answer to another related question on the survey. When asked about whether they agreed with the claim that ***"The state has granted equal rights to all citizens regardless of ethnic***

background", the discrepancy in the results hints to the different perceptions of the Kurdish Issue as well. The distribution of answers is displayed in Figure 5.14. (The difference between the results are significant at p<0.001)[17]
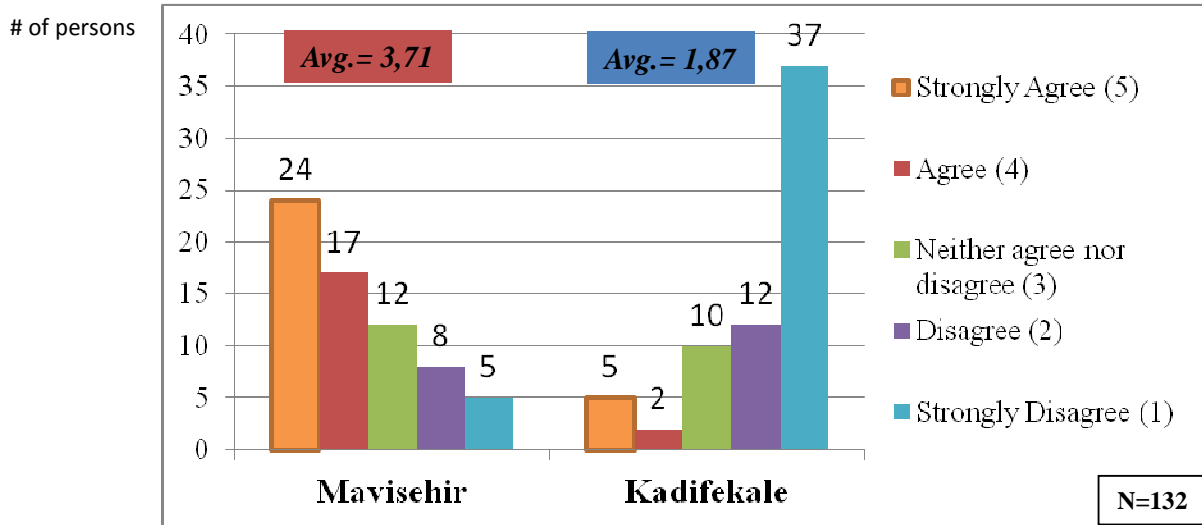
Figure 5.14: The state has granted equal rights to all citizens regardless of ethnic background.

In a way that confirms Fuller's quotation stated above, a majority of the Turks in Mavişehir believe that the state has granted equal rights to Turks and Kurds, while only 13 of them oppose to this a claim. It can be suggested that most of the Turks in this sample either do not consider Kurdish people as a different ethnic group, or that they expect the Kurds to accept their 'Turkish citizenship identity' and abandon their ethnic identity and their demands on separate cultural rights. On the other hand, 49 out of 66 Kurdish people sampled in the Kadifekale district believe that the state has discriminated against them and has not granted them equal rights, such as the right to receive education or broadcast in mother language (which they believe the Turks automatically have). Dixon & Ergin (2010) suggest that after Turkey became a candidate country for the EU in 1999, the parameters of the Kurdish issue changed in a way that the human rights, political rights and cultural autonomy became the emphasized topics. The PKK has also "toned down its separatist claims in favor of political rights and cultural autonomy." (Dixon & Ergin, 2010, p.1331) Müftüler-Baç (1999, p.105) also supports the idea that the Kurdish issue is a protracted social conflict with identity issues at its core. The importance the Kurds place on the denial of their cultural rights as a source of

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[17] Student-t test (paired difference test) was used on SPSS to compare the answers of both groups. Any value under p<0.05 was accepted significiant.

Kurdish conflict show their adherence to the above suggested view, and also create one of the major obstacles for having a mutual definition about the nature of the issue.

d) Insufficient Level of Democracy in Turkey as a source of the Kurdish Issue
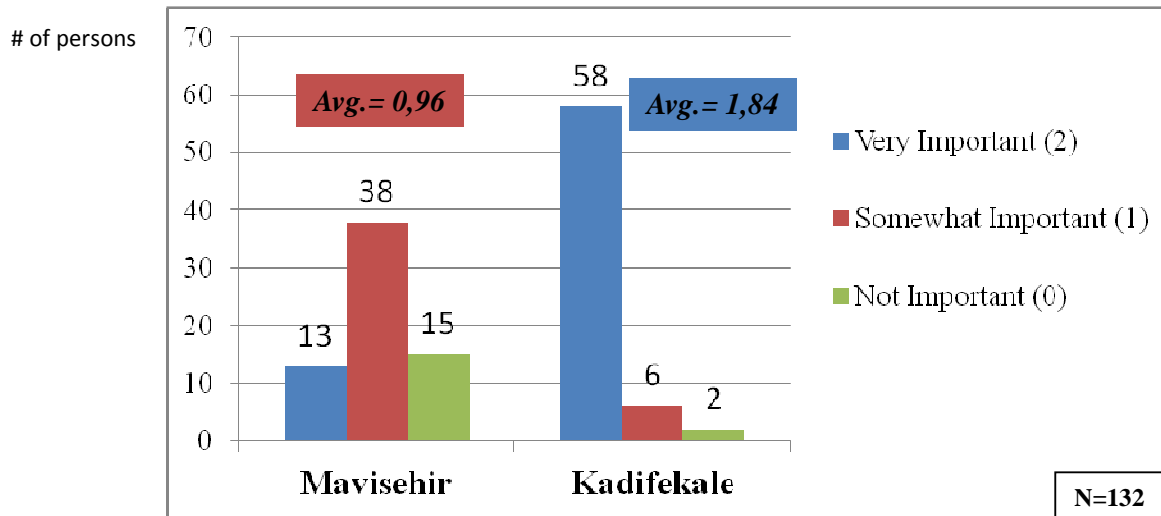
Figure 5.15 : Perception of Kurdish Issue as a Democratization Problem

The insufficiency of Turkey's democratic level is seen as the main root cause of the Kurdish issue by the Kurds in Kadifekale. Çelik (2010) confirms this view that most Kurds, as well as the international community, perceive the issue as a problem of representation. The intensive re-emergence of the Kurdish issue in the last few decades is seen as a by-product of Turkey's own process of democratization, and its lack of capability to address the demands that arise from it. However, based on the moderately low score this question and the previous one about the denial of cultural rights received from the Turkish participants, it may be argued that the relatively recent ethno-political mobilization of the Kurdish people are perceived to be instigated by the socio-economic deprivation of the people in the region and the manipulation of the foreign powers, which is showed in the next graph below.

e) Manipulation of Foreign Powers as a source of the Kurdish Issue
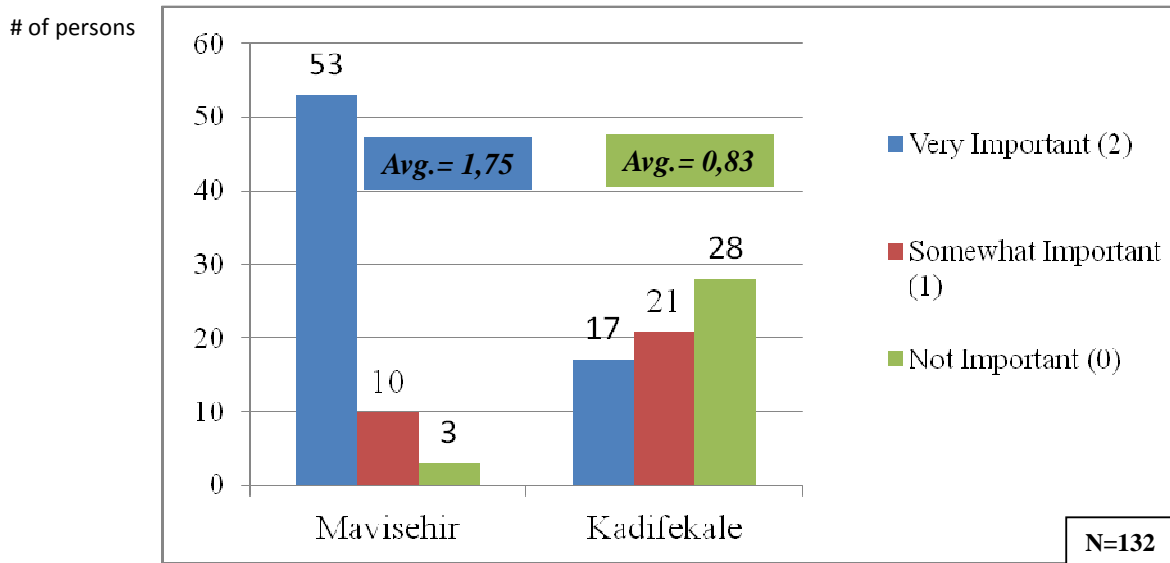
Figure 5.16: Perceptions on Manipulation of Foreign Powers as a source of Kurdish issue

Along with regional socio-economic underdevelopment, the manipulation of foreign powers is one of the two most supported sources of the Kurdish conflict according to the Turkish sample in Mavişehir. Out of 66, 53 of them thought that this was a very important factor and only 3 of them did not think that this was a major component for the occurrence of the issue. In Kadifekale, a more even distribution exists in terms of perceived importance of this choice among the sample population, although this was the second least picked choice after secessionism and terrorism. The high level of support for this choice can again be explained by going back to the beginning years of the Republic. The "Sevres Syndrome", as it is refereed to in the literature (Kirişçi & Çarkoğlu, 2003; Göçek, 2008), which proposes that to prevent a strong, unitary nation state and to fragment the Turkish nation is on the secret agenda of the Western powers, is still a persisting theme in the Turkish official narrative, and has been an influential view that shapes the public opinion. Aydınlı (2002) also claims that a large portion of the Turkish people is inclined to share these concerns. In addition, the allegations about several European countries helping the PKK financially and harboring its members and the conjectures about the United States' logistic assistance to the PKK camps in Northern Iraq reinforced the already existing doubts about the "real intentions" of Europe over the Kurdish issue under the "mask of democratization". While I will refrain from making further comments about the legitimacy of these claims, which is a topic that is out of the

scope of the current study, it has undoubtedly fortified this choice to be perceived as the most important factor by the Turkish sample for the initiation and perpetuation of the conflict.

All in all, when we make an overall comparison between the answers of the Turkish respondents in Mavişehir and the Kurdish respondents in Kadifekale, we see that a serious discrepancy exists between their views. In addition to the fact that there are significant differences between the average scores the two groups give to each of the factors; more importantly, their order of importance is almost exactly opposite and even polarized. The two most important factors for Kadifekale are the two least important ones for the Mavişehir. And the most influential factor suggested by the people in Mavişehir is one of the least important ones for Kadifekale respondents. Çelik (2010) suggests that one of the main difficulties for the path to resolution of the conflict lies in the fact that parties define the nature of the conflict differently. In other words, we are at a point where the conflict can be described as a clash of definitions, and this incompatibility is quite harmful because it creates an essential hindrance that leads to the intractableness of the conflict.

5.2.2 Support for Minority Rights

In this section, I will describe the patterns of ethnic polarization over attitudes toward minority rights. In his survey study, Evans operationalizes ethnic polarization as "the difference between the positions taken by members of the ethnic majority and members of ethnic minorities on issues concerning minority rights." (Evans, 2002, p.659) Within the scope of this study, the different level of support for minority rights is not regarded as the only dimension of social polarization along ethnic lines; however it constitutes an important aspect.

The questions on this part include: **a)** support for the right to receive education in mother-language, **b)** perceptions on whether the state has granted equal rights to all citizens regardless of their ethnic background, **c)** views on Kurdish being offered as an elective course starting from elementary school, **d)** perceptions on whether the Kurds are demanding more rights without fulfilling their responsibilities to the state as citizens of this country, **e)** support for broadcasting in Kurdish. Answers to these questions are inter-correlated in the sense that they indicate the same underlying attitudes toward minority rights. Three of these items (Items a, c and e) are coded in a positive direction – higher score indicating higher pro-rights

attitude – and two of them (Items b and e) are coded negatively – lower score signaling lower pro-rights orientation. The internal consistency among these items was relatively high, with the Cronbach-alpha value equaling .64. In this section, however, I will only present the mean scores for each of these questions separately and these five items will be manipulated into one variable (which is named as the "support for minority rights") for the correlation analysis in the next section. Table 2 shows the mean scores of the responses given by the sample populations of Mavişehir and Kadifekale for their support for minority rights in a comparative manner.

Descriptive Statistics: Comparison of Support for Minority Rights between Mavişehir & Kadifekale

(N=66 in both neighborhoods)

Question	Neighborhood	Sample Range	Mean (SD)	Significance	Description
Education in Mother-Language	Mavişehir	1-5		P<0.001*[18]	Do you believe everyone should have the opportunity to receive education in their mother-tongue?
	Kadifekale		**2.16** (1.27)		
			4.87 (0.54)		(5=Definitely Yes; 4=Yes; 3=Maybe; 2=No; 1=Definitely No)
Kurdish as an Elective Course	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.1** (1.5)	P<0.001*	Kurdish should be offered as an elective language course starting from elementary school
	Kadifekale		**4.62** (0.95)		(5=Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Maybe; 2=Disagree; 1=Strongly Disagree)
Broadcasting in Kurdish	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.62** (1.33)	P<0.001*	I support the presence of channels that broadcast in Kurdish
	Kadifekale		**4.83** (0.59)		(5= Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Maybe; 2=Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree)
Equal rights granted to all ethnic groups by the state	Mavişehir	1-5 (high score means less support for minority rights)	**3.71** (1,28)	P<0.001*	State has granted equal rights to all citizens regardless of ethnic background

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[18] In order to statistically compare the mean scores of the two groups (Mavişehir and Kadifekale), Student's t-test (Paired difference test) was used on SPSS. All values of majority/minority differences of means under P<0.05 are accepted to be significant.

	Kadifekale		**1.87** (1.23)		*(5= Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Maybe; 2=Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree)*
Citizenship duties & demands of minorities	Mavişehir	1-5 (high score means less support for minority rights)	**3.71** (1.29)	P<0.001*	Kurds are demanding extra rights from the state without upholding to their citizenship responsibilities
	Kadifekale		**1.45** (0.88)		*(5= Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Maybe; 2=Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree)*

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics: Comparison of Support for Minority Rights between Mavişehir & Kadifekale

Unsurprisingly, in the responses to all of these questions, the Kurdish people have a significantly more pro-minority rights attitude than do the Turkish people. The variance in their support for minority rights is a substantial issue, because despite the definitional incompatibilities regarding their perceptions of the Kurdish issue, the acquisition of these cultural rights may have opened a new door for the cessation of violence in the Southeast and created an opportunity for the de-escalation of the conflict. However, based on these results, it may be suggested that the implementation of these reforms will cause discontentment among the Turkish people and become an exacerbating factor for the group relations between the two communities.

As it can be seen from the table above, the greatest extent of disagreement is about the right to receive education in mother-language. The distribution of the answers to this question is displayed in Figure 5.17
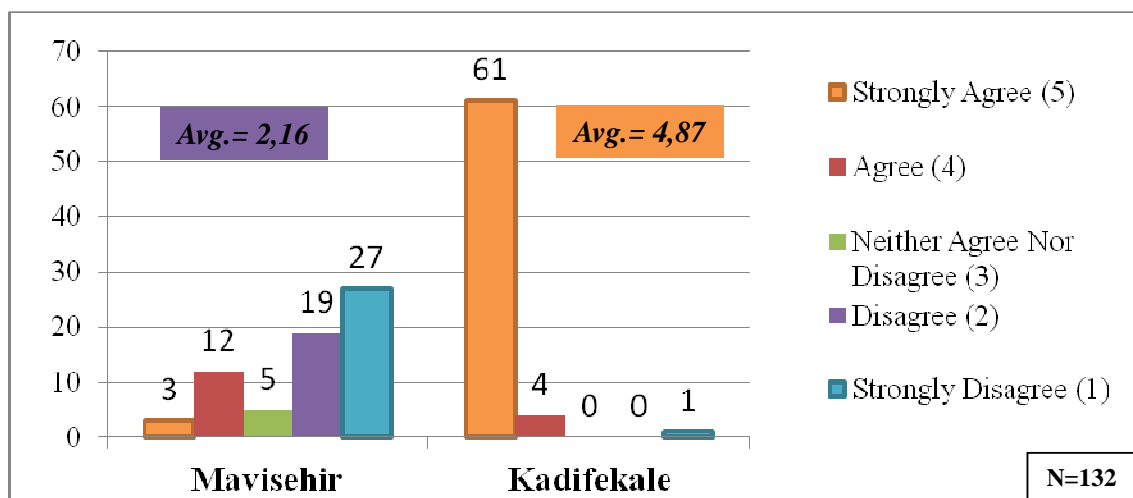
Figure 5.17: In my opinion, everyone should have the right to receive education in their mother-language.

The absolute support of the respondents in Kadifekale for the right to receive education in mother-language is encountered by the clear disagreement of the Turkish respondents in Mavişehir. The lack of support of the Turkish residents can be partially based on the view that granting linguistic rights to a specific ethnic group whose mother language is not Turkish means the recognition of diverse identities, which may harm the unitary character of the nation and lead to the disintegration of the state (Oran, 2007). Wright and Bougie (2007, p.158) argue that "language represents a real and legitimate basis for group identity." The prohibition of it also forms a basis for the perceived institutional discrimination, and as Evans and Need (2002) claim, when there is a disagreement between the majority and the minority about the need for education in the dominant language, the issue is prone to provide a foundation for political mobilization among the minority.

5.2.3 Social Tolerance & Social Distance

In this section, the analyses of the questions related to social tolerance and social distance will be presented together, because within the scope of this study, their conceptualizations essentially rely on the same theoretical foundation, which is social identity theory and formation of in-group / out-group attitudes. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the basic premise of the social identity theory is that the social group memberships have a strong influence on how individuals view themselves. (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) In other words, humans define and evaluate themselves based on the social groups that they belong to; however, this group identification inherently requires an "other", whom they compare or contrast themselves with. (Turner, 1982) This social categorization of "us" (the in-group) versus "others" (the out-group) has an important effect on human behavior in the context of intergroup relations, such as "the exaggeration of between-group differences, the attenuation of within group differences, and out-group homogeneity." (Weldon, 2006, p.332; Tajfel, 1978, 1981) They also help shape individuals' worldviews and often provide a base for societal relations in every day human interaction. (Weldon, 2006)

In terms of attitudes toward ethnic minorities, in his study Weldon (2006) defines tolerance at two levels: political tolerance and social tolerance. Political tolerance refers to the legal institutional practices that are granted to the ethnic minorities by the existing laws of the state, such as freedoms of speech and association, as well as the right to vote and run for political office. Social tolerance, on the other hand, refers to the feelings about that expression

– that is, an actual willingness to accept ethnic difference and feelings toward "the right to express cultural difference in the public sphere and the acceptance of this by the majority in daily life." (Weldon, 2006, p.335) This study adopts a similar understanding of social tolerance and the questions determining one's level of social tolerance ask the respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the following phrases:

(1)   I would feel discontent if I heard someone on the street speaking in a different language than my own.

(2)   I would feel displeasure to see people from different ethnic backgrounds in the shops I regularly go to.

(3)   I would feel discontent if the primary school teacher of my child was from a different ethnic background.

(4)   I would no longer vote for the political party I usually support if a new leader, who was from a different ethnic background than my own, was elected.

On the other hand, Bogardus (1947, p.306) describes social distance as "the feeling reactions of persons toward other persons" and maintains that social distance studies "empirically measure people's willingness to participate in social contacts of varying degrees of closeness with individual members of diverse social groups." Similarly, in this study, social distance is conceptualized as one's willingness to interact with a person from a different ethnic background in daily life and form social bonds with him or her. Karakayalı (2002, p.538) suggests that "most groups have social distance norms that differentiate 'us' from 'them' and define the limits of who should be considered as an insider and who an outsider", which supports our earlier claim that social distance, as well, is based on the social identity theory and in-group / out-group formations. The questions on the survey that aim at measuring the social distance level of respondents ask whether they would form personal relationships of varying levels (such as friendship, marriage, son/daughter in-law, neighborhood) with an individual from a different ethnic background.

In the light of the above mentioned explanations, the difference in the conceptualizations of social tolerance and social distance in this study are based on the following logic: Social tolerance asks individuals about their perceptions of the other "group", while social distance questions ask about the will to have interactions with the an "individual"

belonging to that group. In other words, the social tolerance questions are designed to find out the attitudes toward the other ethnic community as a group (i.e. how one reacts to the expression of their group identity), which is different from the social distance questions which inquire one's preferences to form a social bond with an individual from the "other" ethnic group.

After having applied 'paired difference test' on SPSS to compare the mean scores of the answers of two groups to the questions on social tolerance and social distance, all values of majority/minority differences were found significant[19]. The questions for which the means of the two groups differed most were the ones about feelings of discontent upon hearing a different language (Kurdish or Turkish) on street and displeasure caused by their child's primary school teacher being from a different ethnicity. The results of these two questions on social tolerance are displayed in Figures 5.18-5.19.
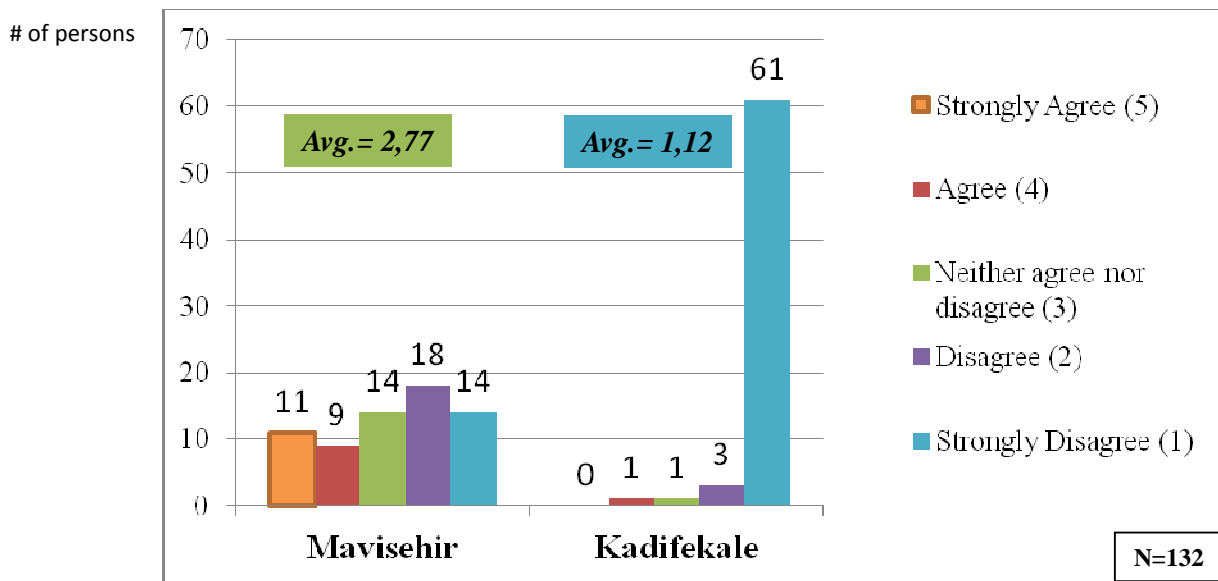
Figure 5.18: *Feeling of discontent upon hearing a different language than one's own mother-language on street*

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[19] All values of majority/minority differences of means under $p<0.05$ are accepted to be significant.
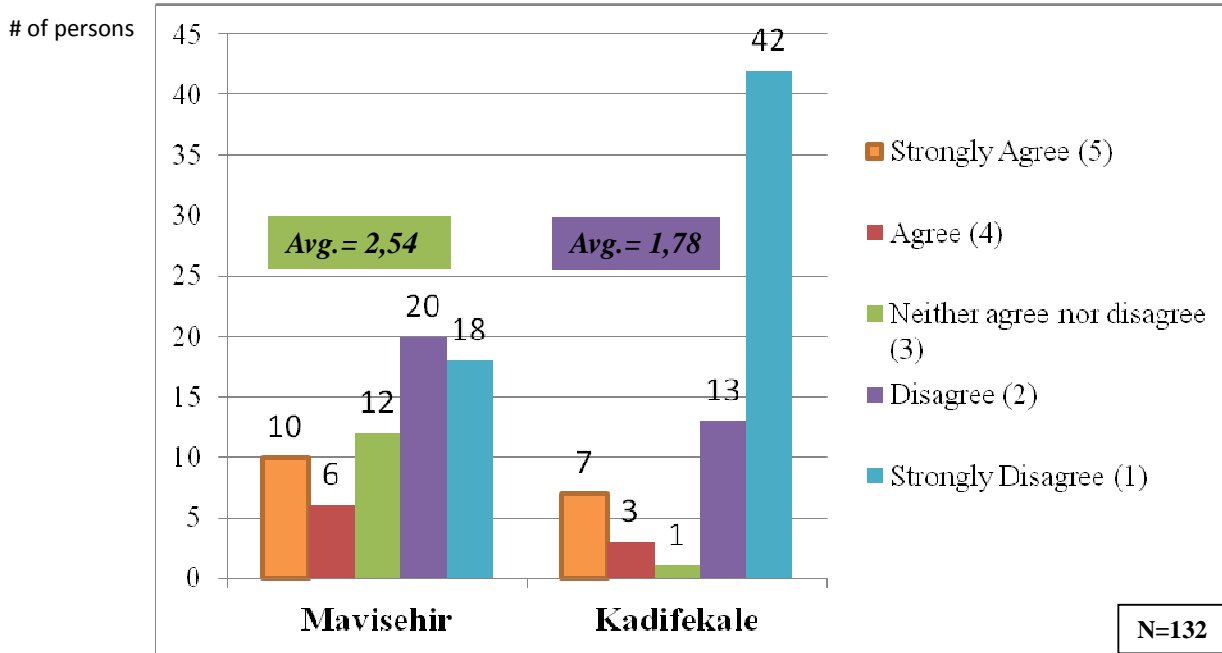
Figure 5.19: *Displeasure caused by child's school teacher being from a different ethnic background*

While both groups have a relatively low score in these questions (indicating high social tolerance), the difference between the two communities for both questions is still on a significant level. In Mavişehir 38 out of 66 (57 %) of the respondents said they would not feel any displeasure in case that the teacher of their child was not Turkish, while this number is 55 (83 %) for Kurdish respondents in Kadifekale. Despite the fact that the question was asked in a hypothetical manner, it is quite likely that the real-life experiences of this situation is more common for Kurdish people. Hence, besides the validation of the proposal that minorities usually display higher social tolerance (see, for ex. McIntosh et al., 1995; Evans & Need, 2002), the strikingly high number of "disagreement" answers among the Kurds for both of the questions stated above may also be explained by the notion that the hypothetical situations asked in the question are more frequently present for them in real-life.

As it has been suggested above, language is one of the foremost representations of group identity, and forms a basis for the claims about a distinct ethnicity. Out of the 16 people in Mavişehir who answered that they would not be pleased to have their children being taught by a Kurdish teacher, two of them explained (although it was not requested) their rationale. Both of them said that the reason they would not want a Kurdish teacher for their children was *"not because they were being discriminatory against the Kurds, it was simply because they would not want their children to start talking like 'them' and catch on the Kurdish accent of*

Turkish." [20] (Female, 54, Çanakkale) Their explanation suggest that they did not perceive themselves to be discriminatory, however it can be claimed that this was a perfect example of what Deitch et al. (2003) calls "everyday discrimination", which is the modern form of discrimination as people now refrain from making overtly discriminatory expressions and behaviors due to social norms. (McConahay, 1986; Deitch et al., 2003)

Additionally, Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for all social distance questions.

Descriptive Statistics: Comparison of Social Distance between Mavişehir & Kadifekale

(N=66 in both neighborhoods)

Question	Neighborhood	Sample Range	Mean (SD)	Significance	Description
Next-door Neighbor	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.40** (1.09)	p<0.001* [21]	Would you like to be next-door neighbors with a family that has a different ethnic background than you?
	Kadifekale		**4,66** (0.53)		*(5=Definitely Yes; 4=Yes; 3=Maybe; 2=No; 1=Definitely No)*
Close friend	Mavişehir	1-5	**4** (1.15)	p<0.001*	Would you be close friends with a person from a different ethnicity than your own?
	Kadifekale		**4.8** (0.4)		*(5=Definitely Yes; 4=Yes; 3=Maybe; 2=No; 1=Definitely No)*
Marriage	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.07** (1.37)	p<0.001*	Would you marry a person from a different ethnic background than your own?
	Kadifekale		**4.5** (0.91)		*(5=Definitely Yes; 4=Yes; 3=Maybe; 2=No; 1=Definitely No)*
Son/Daughter in-law	Mavişehir	1-5	**2.77** (1.17)	p<0.001*	Would you like your child to marry a person from a different ethnic background than you?
	Kadifekale		**4.33** (1.04)		*(5=Definitely Yes; 4=Yes; 3=Maybe; 2=No; 1=Definitely No)*

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[20] The Turkish translation: "Ben ayrımcı bir insan olduğum için ya da Kürtleri dışladığım, hor gördüğüm için değil; sadece çocuğumun onlar gibi konuşmaya başlamasını, onların aksanını kapmasını istemediğimden böyle diyorum." (Yaş: 54, Cinsiyet: Kadın)

[21] In order to statistically compare the mean scores of the two groups (Mavişehir and Kadifekale), Student's t-test (Paired difference test) was used on SPSS. All values under P<0.05 are accepted to be significant.

Child's best friend	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.15** (1.14)	p<0.001*	Would you like your child's best friend to be a person from a different ethnic background?
	Kadifekale		**4.6** (0.57)		*(5=Definitely Yes; 4=Yes; 3=Maybe; 2=No; 1=Definitely No)*
Rent house	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.39** (1.17)	p<0.001*	Would you rent your house to a family from a different ethnic background?
	Kadifekale		**4.74** (0.5)		*(5=Definitely Yes; 4=Yes; 3=Maybe; 2=No; 1=Definitely No)*

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics: Comparison of Social Distance between Mavişehir & Kadifekale

Similar to the pattern observed in social tolerance questions, the Kurdish minority in Kadifekale answered more positively to all of the questions in this section. The results are again evaluated by using a Likert-scale from 1 to 5, on which a score of 5 indicated 'definitely yes' and 1 indicated 'definitely no'. For all of the questions, the average scores of the Kadifekale respondents are well above 4 (indicating 'yes'), while those of the Mavişehir respondents are moderately above 3 (indicating 'maybe') except for the question "Would you want your child to marry a person from a different ethnic background?". It is interesting that this is the question that received the lowest score from both samples. In explaining the differences in the average scores of the both samples, we can refer to identity theory, which suggest that "more powerful groups will have negative evaluations of subordinate groups, while producing ideological myths that inequality is either useful or nonexistent." (Dixon & Ergin, 2010, p.1333) Hence, if we regard the Turks as the more powerful group with the logic that they are the majority, the abovementioned theory might help explain the lower scores of Turkish sample, which indicates that their preferred social distance is greater than that of the Kurdish minority.

Another explanation that can be suggested to illuminate why Turks do not wish to form social bonds with Kurds is the low socio-economic status of the latter group. In his ethnographic study, Saraçoğlu (2010) proposes that the difficult socio-economic conditions the Kurdish migrants in İzmir had to endure is one of the factors for the emergence of an anti-Kurdish discourse among the middle-class İzmirlis. As Rohan & Zanna (1996) claimed the use of derogatory labels in reference to other groups influences people's attitudes and behaviors toward those groups; and hence, the commonality of demeaning and pejorative labels and the presence of an anti-Kurdish discourse may explain the low scores of Turks and their reluctance to form social bonds with Kurds. Based on this account, it is also expected

that there will be a positive correlation between the preferred social distance of an individual and the level of prejudice he or she holds against the other group. This proposition will be analyzed in the second section of this chapter, but let us examine the results of the questions on prejudice and stereotyping between the two ethnic groups.

5.2.4 Prejudice & Stereotyping

Teichman and Bar-Tal (2007) propose that when there is an intractable conflict in the social background, increased out-group derogation should be evident among both parties. The ascription of negative stereotypes to members of out-groups and in fact, to the group as a whole, is one form of change in attitudes that can be witnessed commonly between the parties in social conflicts. A set of traits is attributed to all members of the particular group, and individuals belonging to this group are assumed to be similar to each other – which is referred to as the *out-group homogeneity principle*. (Brewer, 2001; Hewstone & Cairns, 2001, p.324) In the case of Turkey, Saraçoğlu again (2008) describes the ethnicization of this process of in-group – out-group formations and claim that the Kurdish migrants in İzmir are perceived as a distinct and homogenous ethnic group and are excluded and discriminated through stereotypes and stigmas. More concretely, in his study, he refers to ethnicization as "the recognition of the migrants as 'Kurdish' and the articulation of this 'Kurdishness' through some pejorative labels." (Saraçoğlu, 2008, abstract)

This part of the survey employs the content-controlled method (Sullivan et al., 1982: chapter 2), and thus, not all respondents were asked the same prejudice questions. In the preceding section of the survey, which consisted of the demographic questions, the ethnicities of the respondents were attempted to be identified via the following questions: **a)** *Which languages and/or dialects do you speak?* **b)** *What was the language spoken mutually by your parents at your home during childhood*? Based on their answers to these questions, the respondents who were of Kurdish origin were asked to express their prejudices about the Turks, while the Turkish people were requested to complete a different part that was composed of prejudicial claims about the Kurds.

In Table 4, the mean scores and the standard deviations of the questions asked to both groups are displayed. However, because they were not asked the same questions, it is not

possible to apply a paired difference test to assess whether there is a significant discrepancy between their average scores.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics: Prejudice & Stereotyping along Ethnic Lines

(N=66 in both neighborhoods)

Questions (Mavişehir)	Neighborhood	Sample Range	Mean (SD)	Description
Ethnicity based on physical characteristics & outlook	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.53** (1.18)	In Izmir, I can determine the ethnicity of a person based on his/her physical characteristics and outlook.
Tendency to commit a crime	Mavişehir	1-5	**2.71** (1.23)	In general, Kurds are more prone to commit a crime
Tendency to act violently	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.03** (1.25)	In my opinion, Kurds are more prone to act violently.
Impolite & ill-mannered	Mavişehir	1-5	**2.88** (1.27)	In general, Kurds are impolite and ill-mannered people.
Ignorant & uneducated	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.41** (1.09)	Kurds are generally ignorant and uneducated.
Rebellious & dissatisfied	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.23** (1.23)	In my opinion, Kurds are a highly unsatisfied and rebellious group.
Over-expression of the victimization discourse	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.86** (1.08)	Kurds are over-expressing the victimization discourse.
More children for political reasons	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.27** (1.35)	In my opinion, Kurds have many children due to political reasons.
Less trustworthy	Mavişehir	1-5	**3.09** (1.21)	Kurds are less trustworthy than the Turks.
Earn money based on illegal methods	Mavişehir	1-5	**2.67** (1.14)	Kurds usually earn money based on illegal methods.
Honor killings as a "Kurdish" phenomena	Mavişehir	1-5	**2.94** (1.19)	Honor killings are pertinent to Kurds and their culture
Questions (Kadifekale)	Neighborhood	Sample Range	Mean (SD)	Description
Ethnicity based on physical characteristics & outlook	Kadifekale	1-5	**3,21** (1.43)	In Izmir, I can determine the ethnicity of a person based on his/her physical characteristics and outlook.
Ultra-nationalism	Kadifekale	1-5	**3.59** (1.25)	Turks are generally ultra-nationalists.
Discrimination regarding state benefits	Kadifekale	1-5	**3.73** (1.33)	Unlike Kurds, Turks are able to benefit from all the opportunities provided by the

				state.
Perceptions of superiority	Kadifekale	1-5	**3.86** (1.35)	Turks perceive themselves as being superior to Kurds in all aspects.
Having invalidated opinion regarding the Kurdish issue	Kadifekale	1-5	**4.09** (1.24)	Despite their unfamiliarity with the realities of the Southeast, most Turks talk about the Kurdish issue as if they have extensive knowledge about it.
Ignorance in terms of the political issues	Kadifekale	1-5	**3.17** (1.29)	Compared to Kurds, most Turks are more uninformed / have limited knowledge regarding politics.
Prejudice in daily life	Kadifekale	1-5	**4.18** (1.09)	In general, Turks are substantially prejudiced against the Kurds in daily life.
Unwillingness to living together	Kadifekale	1-5	**3.44** (1.36)	In my opinion, most of the Turks do not want to live together with Kurds.
Effort for societal peace	Kadifekale	1-5	**4.19** (1.19)	Turks do not show as much effort as Kurds for the actualization of societal peace.
Exclusive 'ownership' of the country	Kadifekale	1-5	**4.36** (1.06)	Turks act as if they are the sole owners of this country in which we are living together.
Democratic values	Kadifekale	1-5	**3.79** (1.25)	In general, Turks do not possess democratic values.

(5=Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2=Disagree; 1=Strongly Disagree)

The average scores of the Kurdish respondents for all the prejudice questions are around 3.5, while those of the Turkish respondents are around 3. However, as it has been mentioned previously, to make a comparison between these scores is not objective, because the sets of prejudice questions asked to Turks and Kurds are entirely separate. Hence, it would not be appropriate to reach a conclusion such as "Kurds are more prejudiced against Turks than Turks are against Kurds." The results of this section will nevertheless be useful for the individual correlational analyses of the groups to see whether any relationship exists between the level of prejudice one holds and the other variables in question. But before doing this, let us first analyze some of the questions in more detail and suggest explanations for the score they received.

One of the questions that obtained a high average score was the one about the perception of the Kurds as being ignorant and uneducated. [22] Out of 66 people, 39 of them 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' to the claim that the Kurds are ignorant and uneducated people. As it can also be seen by the demographic characteristics of the sample population of this study and by many other reports on the socio-economic situation of the Kurds (see Ağırdır, 2008; Karayiğit, 2005), it is factually true that there is a difference between the overall education levels of the Kurdish population and the Turkish population in general. However, the 'ignorance' asked in this question and its exact translation in Turkish '*cahillik*' connotes to an understanding that is broader than the lack of education of the Kurdish people. It can be suggested that it also signifies the Kurds' alleged inability to comply with the basic norms of good manners and etiquette, and their distinct life styles which do not conform to the modern urban life. It may certainly be claimed that Kurds' under-education is one of the foremost reasons that they rarely obtain good jobs or successfully integrate into the city. In this sense Kurdish people in İzmir are "conceived as lacking the cultural capital necessary for full incorporation into city life". (Saraçoğlu, 2008, p.66) The roots of this perception can also be linked with the higher levels of social distance of Turkish people toward Kurds, and this will be analyzed in the correlational analyses made in the next section of this chapter. On the other hand, it is of course questionable that whether the Kurds' ignorance is the sole cause of their poverty, unemployment and 'backwardness', but all in all, "ignorance" is one of the most common labels associated with the identification of Kurds and Kurdishness in urban space. In fact, in the only open-ended question of the survey, which asked the respondents to name the first three words that came up to their mind to characterize Kurds or Kurdishness, [23] 25 out of 66 people (approximately 40%) included "ignorant/ignorance, uneducated, rude/rudeness, backwardness, cultureless, and un-modern" in their answers.[24]

An important point that requires further explanation is about the roots of the prejudices and stereotypes of the Turkish people in İzmir. Saraçoğlu (2008, p.133) suggest that such pejorative labels and stereotypes stem from the everyday life social relations which the individuals can easily get a chance to 'construct, test and enrich' these negative impressions that they acquire through their own direct experiences. According to his theorization, these

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[22] The original question wording in Turkish as it appeared on the questionnaire was: "Kürtler genel olarak cahil ve eğitimsiz insanlardır."

[23] The original question wording in Turkish was: "Genel olarak Türkleri (Kürtleri) ve/veya Türklüğü (Kürtlüğü) tanımlamak için aklınıza gelen ilk 3 kelime nedir? "

[24] Turkish translations are: "cahil/cahillik, eğitimsiz, kaba/kabalık, gerikalmışlık, kültürsüz, çağdışı."

relationships have been shaped by three structural dynamics on the national level, which are (1) neoliberal economic policies of the state especially after the 1980s, (2) conflict in the Southeast region, and (3) migration of people to Western metropoles. Furthermore, he argues that these stereotypes have not been created because of "a primordial sentiment that is ingrained in the make-up of Turkish identity." (Saraçoğlu, 2008, p.233) In fact, the two questions[25] on the survey of the present study (see Figure 5.20) that attempted to indicate the nationalist sentiments of the respondents according to an ethnic understanding of nationalism[26] received significantly low scores from the participants in Mavişehir. Based on the results of these questions which support Saraçoğlu's abovementioned explanation, it can be suggested that it is not their belief about the superiority of the Turks or Turkishness as a rationale behind the generation of these pejorative labels, but rather it is the unfavorable contact conditions[27] - such as unequal status or unsupportive norms and customs - that enable the dissemination of such negative stereotypes of the Kurds among the Turks.

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[25] The original question wording in Turkish as it appeared on the questionnaire was: (1) "Türk milletinin neredeyse her konuda diğer milletlerden üstün olduğuna inanıyorum." (2) "Türkiye'de Türk kimliği dışındaki kimliklerin övünülecek pek az şeyi olduğunu düşünüyorum."
It should also be noted that these questions were asked only to the Turkish respondents in Mavişehir with the concern that it would receive a negative reaction from the Kurdish respondents.
[26] "Ethnic nationalism" refers to the conceptualization of nationalism that takes 'common descent' or *ius sanguinis* as its basis. (Spencer & Wollman, 2003; Smith, 1991; Kellas, 1991) In this ethnocentric understanding of nationalism, the nation is exclusive and closed, while citizenship is acquired by birth and through blood. An ethnocentric approach to nationalism is prone to implying the superiority of one nation or ethnic group over others. (Smith, 1993). In contrast with this approach, "civic nationalism" maintains that "the nation should be composed of all –regardless of color, gender, language or ethnicity- who subscribe to the nation's political creed." (*Ignaieff, 1994, p.3*)
[27] See Chapter 2 of this thesis for an overview of the contact theory and favorable contact situations that help building positive intergroup relations.

Ethnocentric Understanding of Nationalism *(for Mavişehir respondents)*
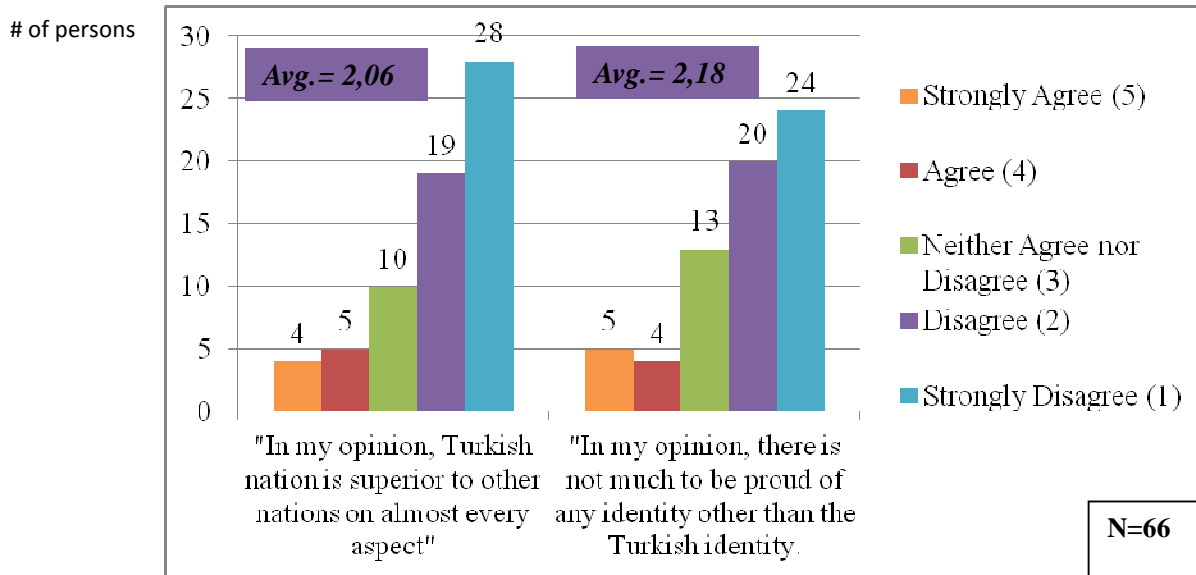
Figure 5.20: Ethnocentric Understanding of Nationalism

As it can be derived from the graphs above, ethno-nationalistic sentiments about the superiority of the "Turkish" identity or "Turkishness" are not very prevalent among the Turks in Mavişehir. Hence, in support of Saraçoğlu's arguments (2008), the relatively high commonality of derogatory labels and negative stereotypes about the Kurds are not necessarily based on the manifestations of ultra-nationalistic sentiments, but on the immediate contact with and observations of Kurdish migrants in the everyday life of Turkish cities. (Saraçoğlu, 2008, p.76) In addition to this, the present study also names the perceptions about the intractableness of the Kurdish conflict, the unending violence and loss of lives as the factors contributing to the increasingly negative perceptions of the ordinary Turks and Kurds among each other and the worsening intergroup relations.

When we look at the data on the prejudice and stereotypes of the Kurdish respondents toward the Turks, the question with the highest mean value is about the perception of the exclusive ownership of the country. The wording of the question was: "Turks act as if they are the sole owners of this country in which we are living together."[28] Out of 66 people, 44 of them 'strongly agreed', while another 9 of them 'agreed', leading to an average of 4.3 for this question. This view may be emanating from the perception that the Kurds believe they are

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[28] The original version of the question in Turkish was: "Türkler beraber yaşadığımız bu ülkenin tek sahipleriymiş gibi davranıyorlar." Although it does not refer to a specific action of the Turks, the question is nevertheless believed to be important, because it hints to the general perception of multiplicity of actions, such as the quotation in the next page suggests.

discriminated against not only by the state but also by the ordinary Turks. Confirmatively, when I read this question, one of the respondents uttered that:

> *"Whenever there is a bad incident related with the Kurds, they [the Turks] immediately unfurl a Turkish flag as an automatic reaction. What is the logic behind this? Is it not my flag as well? I hung it on my balcony at my son's circumcision feast (sünnet düğünü) last summer; my neighbor did too when he was sending his son to the military service. We didn't hang the flag of PKK, did we? No! I don't understand this flag nationalism; it is our flag, too; so why are you using it against me? I am not happy with the government or the army, but it is still my country."* (Male, 42, Mardin)

In Olczak and Pruitt's (1995) conflict escalation model, they suggest that the formation of distorted perceptions and dissemination of simplified stereotypes between the groups is a common change in intergroup relations during the second stage of their model, which they name as "social polarization". In the first stage, during which conflict is not ominously escalated, perceptions of the parties are moderately accurate (and not stereotyped to a large extent), and the possibility of a healthy communication between the parties is still present. However, when conflict escalates to the second level, with the emergence and dissemination of prejudices and negative stereotypes, mutual trust and respect between the parties decrease, the differences becomes exaggerated and values of the in-group are perceived to be superior, righteous and moral, while those of the out-group seem inferior. If the out-group's difference is judged to be non-normative and inferior, devaluation, discrimination and hostility are likely responses toward the out-group. (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999) Moreover, in polarized societies, there is a tendency to break-off contact and be unwilling to interact in daily life among the individuals belonging to different groups. (Evans & Need, 2002) Based on these accounts, it can be hypothesized that there will be a negative correlation between the level of prejudice one holds against an out-group and his/her preferred social distance from the members, but such correlations will be analyzed in the next section.

5.3 Correlational Analyses

In this section, we will present two correlation tables made for each sample group, which show the relationship, and the strength and direction of it, between the multiple variables used in this study. After having displayed the different perspectives of the Turks and the Kurds on the definitions of the Kurdish issue and their varying levels of support for minority rights, social distance and social tolerance in the comparative analyses above, the aim of the current section is to find out whether any correlations exist between these variables, which are all different dimensions of social polarization. Moreover, we also explore 'if' and 'how' certain demographical features are related to the abovementioned variables in both neighborhoods. Before proceeding to the correlation tables and the discussion of the results, though, we will first review the conceptualizations of the variables. Furthermore, some of them are constructed as multi-item scales, composed of several questions on the survey, and for the sake of internal consistency, reliability tests were applied. The results of those will also be presented before the correlation analyses.

5.3.1 Conceptualizations of the Variables

The variables used in the correlational analysis are:

1) **Demographic variables,** including age, gender, education level and income levels of the respondents.

2) **Support for Minority Rights**: composed of the inter-correlated questions of:

    a. Support for the right to receive education in mother-language

    b. Perception on whether the state has granted equal rights to all citizens regardless of their ethnic background *(negatively coded)*

    c. View on Kurdish being offered as an elective language course starting from elementary school

    d. Perception on whether the Kurds are demanding more rights from the state without fulfilling their responsibilities to the state as citizens of this country *(negatively coded)*

e. Support for broadcasting in Kurdish

3) **Importance of national or ethnic identity for self-identification.** The exact wording of the question on the questionnaire was: "Being a Turk (Kurd) is one of the most important components of my identity."[29]

4) **Perception on the level of difference between the culture of the Turks and the culture of the Kurds**

The exact wording of the question on the questionnaire was: "In my opinion, Turkish culture and Kurdish culture are quite different from each other." [30]

5) **Social Tolerance:** In this study, social tolerance referred to the willingness to accept the public expression of different ethnic identities and there were four questions comprising the social tolerance index. These were:

a. I would feel discontent if I heard someone on the street speaking in a different language than my own

b. I would feel displeasure to see people from different ethnic backgrounds in the shops I regularly go to

c. I would feel discontent if the primary school teacher of my child was from a different ethnic background

d. I would no longer vote for the political party I usually support if a new leader, who is from a different ethnic background than my own, was elected.

6) **Social Distance:** Social distance is conceptualized as 'the intention to avoid social contact and form social bonds with people from different ethnic backgrounds in different social life domains. The social distance index includes 6 inter-correlated questions which are listed in Table 4.

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[29] The original version of the question in Turkish was: "Türk (Kürt) olmak, kimliğimin en önemli parçalarından biridir."

[30] The original version of the question in Turkish was: "Türklerin kültürleri ile Kürtlerin kültürleri birbirinden çok farklıdır."

7) **Prejudice & Stereotypes:** The scale for prejudice and stereotypes were created separately for the Turkish and Kurdish sample, and each scale was composed of 11 questions, which are all listed in Table 5.

8) **Perceptions of the Kurdish issue:** This question presented 5 explanations for the occurrence of the Kurdish issue in Turkey, and asked respondents to rate each of these explanations based on their perceived importance. The answer choices included:

   a. Socio-economic underdevelopment problem of the Southeast region

   b. A problem of terrorism and secessionism

   c. An identity conflict caused by the denial of the cultural rights of the minority

   d. A problem caused by the insufficient level of democracy in Turkey

   e. A problem caused by the manipulation of foreign powers.

5.3.2 Assessing the reliability of the scales

As explained above, I created indices for 4 of these variables; namely, support for minority rights, social tolerance, social distance and prejudice/stereotypes. Cronbach's alpha tool was used to determine the internal consistency of the scales and the average correlation of items to measure the reliability of these indices. Based on the correlations between the different items, the following results were obtained for each variable:

Scale / Variable Name	No. of Items	Sample Size	Cronbach α
Support for Minority Rights	5	132	.64
Social Tolerance	4	132	.79
Social Distance	6	132	.93
Prejudice & Stereotypes *(asked to Turkish respondents)*	11	66	.93
Prejudice & Stereotypes *(asked to Kurdish respondents)*	11	66	.89

Table 5: Cronbach's - alpha values for inter-item Correlations

Because all of the Cronbach's alpha values are within an acceptable range for reliability[31], from now on I will regard these indices as single variables in the correlation analyses displayed below.

5.3.3 Correlation Tables of Mavişehir & Kadifekale

On the subsequent two pages, tables of correlation analyses of all the variables will be displayed for both Mavişehir and Kadifekale samples. Next, in order to present a clearer picture of the relationship between multiple variables, separate tables are made for the correlating variables, followed by a discussion on the findings.

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[31] Although the Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency for the variable 'support for minority rights' is slightly lower than the other four variables, it is still within an acceptable range considering the few number of items and the relatively heterogeneous nature of its content.

Correlations	sex	age	education	income	support for minority rights	Importance of 'being a Turk' in self-identification	Perception of different cultures	social tolerance	social distance	prejudice	K.I. as socio-economic problem	K.I. as terrorism	K.I. as denial of cultural rights	K.I. as insufficient democracy	K.I. as foreign manipulation
sex	1	-0,145	0,028	-,251(*)	0,088	-0,165	,262(*)	-0,114	0,08	0,01	-0,173	0,115	,265(*)	0,052	-0,087
age	-0,145	1	0,014	-0,09	0,161	-0,056	0,017	0,081	0,058	0,159	0,02	-0,117	-0,052	0	0,07
education	0,028	0,014	1	0,133	0,121	-,272(*)	-0,17	0,084	-0,147	-0,11	,429(**)	-,285(*)	-0,061	0,195	0,068
income	-,251(*)	-0,09	0,133	1	0,163	-0,079	-0,102	0,031	0,07	0,066	0,078	-0,065	0,085	0,117	-0,101
support for minority rights	0,088	0,161	0,121	0,163	1	-,531(**)	-0,157	,655(**)	-,592(**)	-,477(**)	0,152	-,255(*)	,397(**)	,272(*)	-0,11
Importance of 'being a Turk' in self-identification	-0,165	-0,056	-,272(*)	-0,079	-,531(**)	1	0,087	-,355(**)	,389(**)	,318(**)	-0,214	,294(*)	-,265(*)	-0,163	0,23
different cultures	,262(*)	0,017	-0,17	-0,102	-0,157	0,087	1	-,250(*)	,322(**)	,276(*)	-,258(*)	0,164	-0,029	-0,179	-0,074
social tolerance	-0,114	0,081	0,084	0,031	,655(**)	-,355(**)	-,250(*)	1	-,738(**)	-,672(**)	0,122	-,245(*)	0,229	0,059	-0,21
social distance	0,08	0,058	-0,147	0,07	-,592(**)	,389(**)	,322(**)	-,738(**)	1	,681(**)	-0,202	0,237	-0,179	-0,145	0,111
prejudice	0,01	0,159	-0,11	0,066	-,477(**)	,318(**)	,276(*)	-,672(**)	,681(**)	1	-0,04	,293(*)	-0,118	-0,09	0,069
K.I. as socio-economic problem	-0,173	0,02	,429(**)	0,078	0,152	-0,214	-,258(*)	0,122	-0,202	-0,04	1	-,356(**)	0,114	,259(*)	-0,069
K.I. as terrorism	0,115	-0,117	-,285(*)	-0,065	-,255(*)	,294(*)	0,164	-,245(*)	0,237	,293(*)	-,356(**)	1	0,221	-0,075	-0,121
K.I. as denial of cultural rights	,265(*)	-0,052	-0,061	0,085	,397(**)	-,265(*)	-0,029	0,229	-0,179	-0,118	0,114	0,221	1	,318(**)	-,354(**)
K.I. as insufficient democracy	0,052	0	0,195	0,117	,272(*)	-0,163	-0,179	0,059	-0,145	-0,09	,259(*)	-0,075	,318(**)	1	-0,233
K.I. as foreign manipulation	-0,087	0,07	0,068	-0,101	-0,11	0,23	-0,074	-0,21	0,111	0,069	-0,069	-0,121	-,354(**)	-0,233	1

Table 6 : Correlational Analysis of Mavişehir Data

**p<0.01; *p<0.05 (two-tailed z tests).*

Correlations	sex	age	education	income	support for minority rights	Importance of 'being a Turk' in self-identification	Perception of different cultures	social tolerance	social distance	prejudice	K.I. as socio-economic problem	K.I. as terrorism	K.I. as denial of cultural rights	K.I. as insufficient democracy	K.I. as foreign manipulation
sex	1	-0,084	-0,089	-0,158	0,055	0,049	-0,019	0,018	,292(*)	0,008	0,022	,310(*)	0,19	-0,125	-0,068
age	-0,084	1	-,427(**)	-0,094	,318(**)	,314(*)	,366(**)	-0,097	-0,162	0,019	-0,093	-,324(**)	,418(**)	0,15	-,324(**)
education	-0,089	-,427(**)	1	0,163	-0,173	-0,093	-,259(*)	0,113	-0,146	-0,083	0,097	0,144	-,263(*)	0,143	0,13
income	-0,158	-0,094	0,163	1	-,248(*)	-0,114	-0,002	-0,002	-0,158	-0,101	-0,109	0,024	-0,194	-0,167	-0,071
support for minority rights	0,055	,318(**)	-0,173	-,248(*)	1	,412(**)	0,088	-0,07	-0,007	0,181	-0,09	-,250(*)	0,188	,323(**)	-0,157
Importance of 'being a Kurd' in self-identification	0,049	,314(*)	-0,093	-0,114	,412(**)	1	0,152	0,098	-0,14	,254(*)	-0,132	-,258(*)	,244(*)	,287(*)	-,242(*)
different cultures	-0,019	,366(**)	-,259(*)	-0,002	0,088	0,152	1	-0,142	-0,03	0,205	-0,074	-0,137	,257(*)	-0,044	-0,152
social tolerance	0,018	-0,097	0,113	-0,002	-0,07	0,098	-0,142	1	-0,386(**)	-0,114	0,064	-0,006	-0,037	0,038	,327(**)
social distance	,292(*)	-0,162	-0,146	-0,158	-0,007	-0,14	-0,03	-,386(**)	1	0,025	-0,022	0,138	-0,026	0,055	-0,148
prejudice	0,008	0,019	-0,083	-0,101	0,181	,254(*)	0,205	-0,114	0,025	1	-0,045	-0,171	0,047	0,013	-0,15
K.I. as socio-economic problem	0,022	-0,093	0,097	-0,109	-0,09	-0,132	-0,074	0,064	-0,022	-0,045	1	,373(**)	-0,071	-0,012	,310(*)
K.I. as terrorism	,310(*)	-,324(**)	0,144	0,024	-,250(*)	-,258(*)	-0,137	-0,006	0,138	-0,171	,373(**)	1	-0,192	-,285(*)	,340(**)
K.I. as denial of cultural rights	0,19	,418(**)	-,263(*)	-0,194	0,188	,244(*)	,257(*)	-0,037	-0,026	0,047	-0,071	-0,192	1	0,217	-,253(*)
K.I. as insufficient democracy	-0,125	0,15	0,143	-0,167	,323(**)	,287(*)	-0,044	0,038	0,055	0,013	-0,012	-,285(*)	0,217	1	-0,085
K.I. as foreign manipulation	-0,068	-,324(**)	0,13	-0,071	-0,157	-,242(*)	-0,152	,327(**)	-0,148	-0,15	,310(*)	,340(**)	-,253(*)	-0,085	1

Table 7 : Correlational Analysis of Kadifekale Data

*__**p<0.01; *p<0.05 (two-tailed z tests).__*

5.3.3.1 Correlations of Support for Minority Rights, Social Tolerance, Social Distance & Prejudice in Mavişehir

In the next four tables, partial correlation tables are displayed for the variables of support for minority rights, social tolerance, social distance and prejudice separately in Mavişehir.

Mavişehir	(+) correlations	(-) correlations
Support for Minority Rights	Social Tolerance (,655)**	Importance of national (ethnic identity) in self-identification (-,531)**
	K.I. as an identity conflict & denial of cultural rights (,397)**	Social Distance (-,592)**
	K.I. as a problem of Insufficient democracy	Prejudice (-,477)**
		K.I. as a terrorism problem (-,255)*

Table 8: Support for Minority Rights (Mavişehir)

Mavişehir	(+) correlations	(-) correlations
Social Tolerance	Support for Minority Rights (,655)**	Importance of national (ethnic identity) in self-identification (-,355)**
		Perception of different cultures (-,250)*
		Social Distance (-,738)**
		Prejudice (-,672)**
		K.I. as a terrorism problem (-,245)*

Table 9: Social Tolerance (Mavişehir)

	(+) correlations	(-) correlations
Social Distance	Importance of national (ethnic) identity in self-identification (,389)**	Support for Minority Rights (-,592)**
	Perception of different cultures (,322)**	Social tolerance (-,738)**
	Prejudice (,681)**	

Table 10: Social Distance (Mavişehir)

	(+) correlations	(-) correlations
Prejudice	Importance of national (ethnic) identity in self-identification (,318)**	Support for Minority Rights (-,477)**
	Perception of different cultures (,276)**	Social tolerance (-,672)**
	Social distance (,681)**	
	K.I. as a terrorism problem (,293)*	

Table 11: Prejudice (Mavişehir)

In analyzing Tables 8-11 – all of which concern Mavişehir sample - one of the first observations that could be made is that none of the demographical variables asked in the survey (age, sex, income level and education level) has a significant correlation with support for minority rights, social tolerance, social distance or prejudice. This is somewhat unexpected considering the existing literature that demonstrated a positive relationship between education and tolerance in the political and civil liberties domain and in ethnic and social relations *(see, for ex. Nunn, Crockett & Williams, 1978; Greeley & Sheatsly, 1971; Taylor & Greely, 1978)*, a negative correlation between age and social tolerance *(see, for ex. Bahry, 1987; McClosky & Brill, 1983; Nunn, Crocket & Williams, 1978),* and a negative correlation between education and social distance from immigrants. *(see, for ex.Hello, Scheepers & Sleegers, 2006)* In another recent study about the levels of anti-Kurdish beliefs in Turkey, however, Dixon & Ergin (2010) also found that education did not shape Turks' beliefs about Kurds and their supposed positive or negative influence in Turkey. Alternative explanations for this finding will be discussed after linking social tolerance with support for minority rights in the next paragraph.

Going back to Weldon's (2006) conceptualization of political tolerance as the bestowment of cultural identity rights (such as the freedom of speech and of association) to the minorities by the existing laws of the state, it is possible to regard the variable of 'support for minority rights' as being equivalent to political tolerance. When analyzing Table 9, we again observe that education level is not a significant predictor for social tolerance. In order to provide an alternative viewpoint for the lack of a substantial correlation between education and the two dimensions of tolerance, Jackman (1977, 1978) proposed that while the well-educated may express tolerant views as a general principle, they are not significantly more tolerant on specific policy issues and may have acquired through their educational experience a sophisticated ideology of individualism that represents the interests of the dominant social group or official ideology adopted by the state. Similarly, Weil (1985, p.470) also argued that "the impact of education on holding liberal values is weaker or even non-existent in non-liberal democracies which did not have liberal-democratic reforms in earlier decades."

Another noteworthy finding is the high level of consistency between social tolerance and support of minority rights (which I will refer to as political tolerance based on the explanations above). However, this relationship holds true only for the Turkish respondents, and no such relationship exists for the Kurdish respondents. *(see Table 10).* A common

finding in both sample groups is the negative correlation between perceiving the Kurdish issue as a terrorism problem and political tolerance. Such a negative correlation is also present for social tolerance in Mavişehir sample, too. In other words, those who believe that the Kurdish issue can be described as a terrorism problem are more likely to have less political and social tolerance.

In relation to the perceptions of the Kurdish issue as a terrorism problem, another question which asked about the perception of threat also showed a high negative correlation with both social and political tolerance among the Turkish respondents. Although not displayed in the table above, the question asked respondents to give scores to the following statement: ***"Although it may not be expressed overtly, I believe that people who are from a different ethnic background want to divide Turkey and establish their own country***."[1] This question, which was about the perceived threat to the unity of the country was significantly negatively correlated with both political tolerance (Cronbach-alpha= -,540**) and social tolerance (Cronbach-alpha= -,629**). This finding is in accordance with the hypothesis that fear of outgroups is an important predictor of intolerance. (Sullivan, Piereson and Marcus, 1982; Marcus et al. 1995).

As another finding based on Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9 (all of which display the responses of Mavişehir sample), we see that the importance given to national identity (being a Turk) in self-identification is significantly correlated with political tolerance, social tolerance, social distance and prejudice. For Turks in Mavişehir, the more importance they place on 'being a Turk' in defining who they are, the less support they are likely to show for minority rights, as well as being less socially tolerant and more prejudiced toward minorities and preferring a higher social distance from them. In a similar study, Gibson & Gouws (2000) apply the ideas of the in-group / out-group paradigm to tolerance among ethnic groups in South Africa. They test and verify their hypotheses, which are "strong in-group positive identities create strong out-group negative identities, which are in turn connected to antipathy toward one's opponents, perceptions that those opponents are threatening and ultimately, to political intolerance." (Gibson & Gouws, 2000, p.278) Likewise, Sniderman et al. (2000) find that in-group identities affect tolerance judgments toward immigrants and ethnic minorities in Italy. In a similar fashion, if we may assume that the importance given to 'being a Turk' for self-identification purposes is an indicator of the intensity of in-group identity, then the results of

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[1] The original question in Turkish was: "Türkiye'de farklı etnik kökenden olan insanların açıkça belirtmeseler bile Türkiye'yi bölmek ve kendi ülkelerini kurmak istediklerine inanıyorum."

this study are in parallel to the ones stated above, in the sense that a strong in-group identity is negatively correlated with political and social tolerance, and positively correlated with social distance and prejudice levels.

Another variable that is significantly correlated with social tolerance, social distance and prejudice level is the perception about the difference in the cultures of two communities. An individual who believes that the culture of the Turks and the Kurds are very different from each other is likely to have a lower level of social tolerance, and higher levels of preferred social distance and prejudice. Evans (2002) suggests that the perceptions about the extent of similarity between the two cultures is argued to partially explain the extent of their attitudinal polarization The rationale behind this is that the lack of a historically shared culture provide grounds for continued ethnic distinctiveness. (Kirch & Kirch, 1995, Raun, 1991)

Furthermore, the existence of a strong positive correlation between social distance and prejudice can also be explained by the definition of social distance as it is suggested by Park (1925), who claims that "social distance captures the behavioral intention aspect of prejudice, a reluctance to enter into social relationships of varying degrees of intimacy with outgroup members. Hence, in addition to the perceived difference, if the outgroup's difference is judged to be non-normative and inferior, devaluation, discrimination and hostility are likely responses toward the outgroup (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999) and the tendency to break off contact increases.

5.3.3.2 Correlations of Support for Minority Rights, Social Tolerance, Social Distance & Prejudice in Kadifekale

Kadifekale	(+) correlations	(-) correlations
Support for Minority Rights	Age (,318)**	Income (-,248)*
	Importance of national (ethnic) identity in self-identification (,412)**	K.I. as a terrorism problem (-,250)*
	K.I. as a problem of insufficient democracy level (,323)**	

Table 12: Support for Minority Rights (Kadifekale)

Kadifekale	(+) correlations	(-) correlations
Social Tolerance	K.I. as a problem caused by manipulation of foreign powers (,327)*	Social distance (-,386)**

Table 13: Social Tolerance (Kadifekale)

	(+) correlations	(-) correlations
Social Distance	Sex (,292)*[2]	Social tolerance (-,386)**

Table 14: Social Distance (Kadifekale)

	(+) correlations
Prejudice	Importance of national (ethnic) identity in self-identification (,254)**

Table 15: Prejudice (Kadifekale)

Despite the multiple numbers of correlations between the strength of in-group identity and other variables in Mavişehir, when we look at the responses of the Kadifekale sample, we see that the only variables correlated with 'the importance given to being a Kurd in self-identity' are support for minority rights and prejudice level. *(see Table 10 & Table 13)* For the Kurdish respondents, a strong in-group identity along ethnic lines predicts a higher prejudice level toward the Turks, and more support for minority rights. However, in this case, support for minority rights should not be regarded as the equivalent of political tolerance as it was in the Mavişehir case, because the term 'political tolerance' is somewhat conceptualized from a majority perspective. In other words, the Kurds are not the ones to tolerate the bestowment of minority rights; they are the ones who are demanding them. Hence, it cannot be claimed that a correlation exists between the intensity of in-group identity and political or social tolerance for the Kurdish respondents.

Taking a different perspective may help clarify the significant positive correlation between the support for minority rights and the emphasis placed on ethnic identity in self-identification. Based on the explanations about the process of ethnic mobilization mentioned in Chapter 2, a strong in-group identity is usually developed "…in response to a set of situations which are perceived by the group to be of special significance to its concerns and indeed to its very existence." (Drury, 1994, p.15) Hence, the salience of ethnic identities in

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[2] In the coding process, "Male" was coded as "0" and "Female" was coded as "1". Hence, a positive correlation between sex and social distance indicates that women in Kadifekale sample prefers more social distance.

the minority population can be associated with their perceived discrimination, which would eventually lead to their mobilization along ethnic lines. (Gurr, 1994)

The significant correlation between the intensity of in-group identity and prejudice observed for the Kurdish respondents can be explained by two factors. The first one is linked with the postulation suggested by Livingston et al. (2004), which states that minority group members' intergroup attitudes are closely tied to their perceptions of prejudice from the majority group, and that exposure to prejudice from the majority group can instigate more negative out-group attitudes and stronger sense of in-group attachment.(Tropp, 2003; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). When we consider the high level of perceived prejudice in daily life by the Kurds from the Turks, which is seen by their responses to one of the questions on the survey[3], we can suggest that the exposure to prejudice from the majority plays a reactionary role in strengthening the in-group attachment and creating a negative out-group attitude in response. Another factor that contributes to the high correlation between in-group identity and prejudice may be stemming from the particular design of the questionnaire used in this study. Admittedly, the set of prejudice questions asked to the Kurdish respondents was predominantly comprised of statements that had political inclinations, as opposed to the set of prejudice questions asked to the Turkish respondents about their prejudices on the Kurdish people, which were mainly about different aspects of social and cultural life. So, the congruence between the strength of in-group identity and prejudice against Turks may have originated from Kurds' perceived discrimination and their standpoints in the political sphere.

Finally, a strong correlation that is commonly observable in the answers of both sample groups is between social tolerance and social distance. As it was mentioned before, both of these concepts rely on the same theoretical foundation, which is social identity theory. However, their operationalization is different in the sense that social tolerance refers to the acceptance of the public expression of ethnic differences while social distance means the willingness to come into interaction and form social bonds with people of different ethnicities. Therefore, social tolerance is a measure of attitudes toward the group, while social distance is a measure of attitudes toward an individual member of that group. After clarifying this connection and distinction, we can explain the correlation between these two measures by the

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[3] See Table 4 on page 93. One of the prejudice questions asked to the Kurdish respondents was to agree/disagree to the claim that "In general, Turks are substantially prejudiced against Kurds in daily life.", which received a very high score (4.18 out of 5), indicating that Kurds believe that Turks are very prejudiced against them and experience this prejudiced attitude and/or behavior in daily life.

phenomenon of "depersonalization". When group membership is salient (e.g. during an ongoing conflict), the individual tends to become depersonalized in the group. This is not a loss of identity, but "a shift from personal to social identity". (Hewstone & Cairns, 2001, p.324) When the individual becomes depersonalized in the group, then what affects the group or the way the group is perceived as a whole also has implications for the individual. Hence, it is not surprising that group perceptions and intergroup relations have an influence on interpersonal relations, as well.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The denial of the existence and expression of a separate Kurdish ethnic identity within Turkey and the suppression of the ideas, people and movements that react against this denial is part of the harsh assimilationist state policy that has been present over the Republican history of Turkey since its early years. (Saraçoğlu, 2010) On the other hand, the sporadic clashes between ordinary Turks and Kurds witnessed in the western metropoles of Turkey and the dissemination of an anti-Kurdish discourse among public is a relatively new phenomenon. One of the most crucial arguments that can be made about the Kurdish issue is that the nature of the conflict, including the actors, the issues, the discourses of it are changing. While it originated along the triangle of state-citizenship-rights, and emanated as a terror problem between the separatist PKK organization and the state's security forces, nowadays it has become an internal crisis that is pertinent to the society as a whole, not exclusively to the Kurdish population or the army forces.

In parallel to the dynamic course of the events and various forms the Kurdish issue has taken over the years, there has been a plethora of studies conducted on it, approaching the issue from a political, cultural and economic perspective, and focusing on its terrorism, human rights and underdevelopment dimensions. Considering the increasing commonality of the new incidents between the ordinary Turks and Kurds in big cities, and the increasing anti-Kurdish sentiments, another potentially fruitful approach to the issue would be to analyze its social-psychological reflections by focusing on the deteriorating intergroup relations, which is not a topic that has been studied extensively. (see Saraçoğlu 2008, Dixon & Ergin, 2010, and Gödelik, 2011 for exceptions) Instigated by the occurrences of recent confrontations between the Turkish community and the Kurdish migrants mentioned in the very beginning of this thesis, the principal aim of this study was to contribute to the narrowly researched dimension of the Kurdish issue, which is its social-relational level. More specifically, its precise goal was to offer a snapshot of the 'otherification' process and its implications for intergroup relations between the Turks and the Kurds from a social-psychological perspective.

As the armed conflict has been going on in Turkey for more than two decades, Turkey is experiencing a growing tendency toward ethnic identification within society. It has been suggested that the unceasing violence in the southeast region is heightening a sense of

polarization throughout the country between the Turks and the Kurds, and sudden new awareness of who is a Turk and who is a Kurd is sharpening the debate. (Fuller, 1999) The rise of ethnic awareness is important, because it is conducive the development of potentially explosive cleavages.

On top of the ongoing conflict in the background, which leads to the arousal of nationalist sentiments in both communities, the socio-economic conditions the Kurds are experiencing also leads to the emergence of a new kind of discourse on Kurdishness. It has also been suggested that the migration wave in the post-1980s period from the eastern parts of the country to the metropolitan cities in the west has been an influential factor for the deteriorating attitudes of the Turks toward the Kurds and Kurdishness in general, because of the unfavorable socio-economic conditions the Kurds are forced to experience in these cities. The Kurdish neighborhoods are spatially disintegrated from the rest of the city, located in slum areas, and most of the Kurdish migrants living in urban areas are able to find employment only in informal sectors; which have all created a situation conducive to the emergence of derogatory prejudices and hostile feelings toward them (such as intruders and invaders of the city). Hence, another main aim of the present study was to *describe the current level of social polarization between the Turks and Kurds who live in somewhat isolated neighborhoods in Izmir,* which is one of the metropolitan cities that have been a popular destination for the Kurdish migrants.

In order to do this, we designed a survey which included questions on the perceptions of the definitions of the conflict, its potential resolution mechanisms, social tolerance and social distance levels of the individuals and the intensity of prejudices and stereotypes of both communities toward each other. This survey was applied to 132 individuals in 2 neighborhoods in the city of İzmir. One of these was a high-income neighborhood (Mavişehir), where there were many few Kurdish residents. In contrast, the other one was a very low-income neighborhood that was populated almost exclusively by the Kurdish migrants (Kadifekale). The surveys were administered in November 2010 in Mavişehir and February 2011 in Kadifekale.

The results display the divergence of the societal beliefs of both communities about the root causes of the conflict, support for minority rights and the perception of state-citizenship relations. To summarize the findings, while Kurdish people believe that Kurdish issue is caused by the denial of their cultural rights by the state and the insufficient level of

democracy in Turkey, Turkish respondents see the issue as stemming from the socio-economic underdevelopment of the Southeast region and from the manipulation of foreign powers. In addition, the Turkish respondents have a clearly stronger tendency to regard the Kurdish issue as a terrorism and secessionism problem than the Kurds.

The second part of the survey is composed of questions that inquire about the social tolerance and the preferred social distance of individuals toward their out-group, as well as exploring the intensity of common prejudices and stereotypes they have against each other. While the Kurdish minority displayed significantly higher levels of social tolerance and lower levels of social distance, when we look at the correlation analyses made in the second section, the findings suggested that there is a strong correlation between perceiving the Kurdish issue as a terrorism problem and having less social tolerance and preferring more social distance. Moreover, a stronger in-group identity and nationalist attitudes predicted higher prejudice levels for both sample groups, and higher social distance and lower social tolerance for the Turkish sample.

Our findings support the existing research on the relation between in-group identity, social tolerance and social distance, while they contradict the literature about the effect of education level on prejudice and social tolerance. We observed that none of the demographical features asked on the survey, such as education level, age or income, had a significant effect on the abovementioned variables.

Acknowledging its limitations in terms of representativeness, this study is nevertheless believed to provide important data which would pave the way for further research in the area of social-psychological consequences of the Kurdish conflict. The topic of social polarization is not a phenomenon concerning only the city of Izmir, and by replicating this study in different cities would be a significant vantage point for deducting some insights into the general structure of Turkish society.

Another major venue to further develop this study would be to design it as a longitudinal study, which would allow observing whether there are changing trends in the levels of attitudes and perceptions of both communities.

All in all, the extension of the Kurdish issue from the military sphere to the social sphere signals a more risky and troubling problem. It can be regrettably argued that a ceasefire or an armistice on the battlefield or certain amendments to the constitution and legal

system may remain incapable to address the already existing negative attitudes and stereotypes and contrasting societal beliefs. Social polarization also puts a limit in the minds of the people about potential ways to resolve the conflict. Hence, the need to have a mutual commitment to reach a social consonance and act together is the first step that must be realized immediately.

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Sabancı Üniversitesi

SABANCI ÜNİVERSİTESİ SANAT VE SOSYAL BİLİMLER FAKÜLTESİ

UYUŞMAZLIK ANALİZİ VE ÇÖZÜMÜ MASTER PROGRAMI

Konu Başlığı: Türkiye'de Farklı Etnik Kökenler Arasında Toplumsal Kutuplaşma

Prof. Ayşe Betül Çelik

Ekin Ok

Kasım 2010

Merhaba,

Benim adım Ekin Ok. Sabanci Universitesi Uyuşmazlık Analizi ve Çözümü programında 2. Sınıf Master öğrencisiyim. Vaktiniz varsa, sizinle bir anket yapmak istiyorum. Bu anket, benim master tezim için yaptığım araştırmanın bir parçası. Anketin amacı, Türkiye'de farklı etnik kökenden insanların birbirine karşı tutumlarını ve Kürt sorunu hakkında görüşlerini belirlemek. Sizi de Mavişehir bölgesinde ikamet eden insanlar arasından bilgisayar yardımı ile tamamen rastgele belirledim.

Eğer bana yardımcı olmayı kabul ederseniz, vereceğiniz cevaplar hiçbir şekilde herhangi bir kurum ya da şahıs ile paylaşılmayacaktır. Adınız ya da adresiniz kesinlikle kaydedilmeyecektir. Sadece anketin sonunda, araştırmam için gerekli bazı istatistikler toplamak adına yaşınızı, eğitim durumunuzu ve doğum yerinizi soracağım, bu bilgiler de tamamen gizli tutulacaktır.

Yaklaşık 15 dakikanızı alacak bu ankete katılıp bilimsel bir çalışmanın parçası olmayı kabul ederseniz çok memnun olurum.

Aşağıda size okuyacağım cümlelere ne oranda katılırsınız? Lütfen 1'den 5'e kadar değerlendiriniz.

5= Kesinlikle katılıyorum

4= Katılıyorum

3= Ne katılıyor ne katılmıyorum

2= Katılmıyorum

1= Kesinlikle katılmıyorum

1) Kimi insanlar herkesin kendi ana dilinde eğitim alabilme imkânının olmasını savunuyor, kimileri ise aynı ülke içinde yaşayan herkesin ülkenin resmi dilinde eğitim alması gerektiğini düşünüyorlar. Siz herkesin ana dilinde eğitim alabilme imkânı olmasını destekliyor musunuz?

←----------**1**--------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

2) Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti tarafından etnik kökene bakmaksızın tüm vatandaşlara eşit haklar tanınmıştır.

←----------**1**--------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

3) Bence ilköğretimden itibaren Kürtçe seçmeli dil dersi olarak sunulmalı.

←----------**1**--------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

4) Kürtler devlete karşı sorumluluklarını yerine getirmeden devletten daha fazla imkânlar talep ediyorlar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

5) Türkiye'de Kürtçe yayın yapan kanallar da olmasını destekliyorum.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

6) 'Türk olmak' kimliğimin en önemli parçalarından biridir.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

7) Kimi insanlar etnik kimliklerini öne çıkarmaktan vazgeçip önce Türkiye Cumhuriyeti vatandaşı olduklarını kabul etmeliler.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

8) Bazı etnik kökenden insanları terörist olarak görenleri anlayabiliyorum.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

9) Farklı etnik kökenden gelen vatandaşlar da tüm Türkler gibi Türkiye'nin bütünlüğüne saygı duyarlar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

10) Türkiye'de farklı etnik kökenlerden olan insanların açıkça belirtmeseler bile Türkiye'yi bölmek ve kendi ülkelerini kurmak istediklerine inanıyorum.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

11) PKK'nın tüm Kürtleri temsil eden bir örgüt olduğuna inanıyorum.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

12) Türk milletinin neredeyse her konuda diğer milletlerden üstün olduğuna inanıyorum.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

13) Evlerin balkonlarında Türk bayrakların asıldığını görmek beni iyi hissettiriyor.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

14) Kürt sorunun çözümü için Türkiye'nin milliyetçi yönü ile öne çıkan bir lidere / iktidar partisine ihtiyaç duyduğunu düşünüyorum.

←---------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

15) Bir Türk, farklı etnik kimliklerin yoğun olduğu Güneydoğu bölgesi gibi bir yerde rahatça yaşayabilir.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

16) Farklı etnik kökenden olan bir insan, Türkiye'nin her yerinde rahatça yaşayabilir.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

17) İzmir'e göç eden farklı etnik kökenden insanların sayısının çokluğu beni rahatsız ediyor.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

18) Farklı etnik kökenden insanların İzmir'e artan göçünün İzmir'in tarihsel ve kültürel
    dokusunu bozduğunu düşünüyorum.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

19) Kürtlerin kültürleri ile Türklerin kültürleri birbirinden çok farklıdır.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

20) Türkiye'de Türk kimliği dışındaki kimliklerin övünülecek pek az şeyi olduğu
    düşünüyorum.

←----------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

21) Sokakta yürürken Kürtçe konuşan insanları duymak beni rahatsız eder.

←----------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

22) Kürtler ve kültürleri, Türkiye'nin toplumsal ve kültürel zenginliğinin bir parçasıdır.

←----------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

23) Sizce aşağıda okuyacağım açıklamaların her biri, Kürt meselesinin ortaya çıkmasında ne derece etkilidir?

(Lütfen her şıkka 0 ile 2 arasında puan veriniz – 0: Önemsiz, 1: Biraz önemli, 2: Çok önemli)

a. Bölgesel ekonomik ve kültürel gerikalmışlık sorunu

←-----*0*--------*1*--------*2*------- →

b. Bölücülük ve terörizm

←-----*0*--------*1*--------*2*------- →

c. Kültürel hakların inkarından doğan bir kimlik çatışması sorunu

←-----*0*--------*1*--------*2*------- →

d. Türkiye'deki demokrasinin yetersizliği

←-----*0*--------*1*--------*2*------- →

e. Dış güçlerin manipülasyonu / kışkırtması sonucu doğan sorun

←-----0--------1--------2------- →

f. *Diğer: (Lütfen belirtiniz):*

Lütfen aşağıda okuyacağım sorulara ne kadar katıldığınıza dair 1'den 5'e kadar puan veriniz.

1: Kesinlikle hayır

2: Hayır

3: Belki (Ne evet ne de hayır)

4: Evet

5: Kesinlikle evet

24) Etnik kökeni sizden farklı olan bir ailenin yakın komşunuz olmasına sıcak bakar mıydınız?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

25) Etnik kökeni sizden farklı olan biri ile yakın arkadaş olur muydunuz ?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

26) Etnik kökeni sizden farklı biriyle evlenir miydiniz?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

27) Çocuğunuzun farklı etnik kökenden olan biriyle evlenmesini ister miydiniz ?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

28) Çocuğunuzun en yakın arkadaşının sizden farklı bir etnik kökenden olmasını ister miydiniz ?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

29) Evinizi etnik kökeni sizden farklı olan bir aileye kiralar mıydınız?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

30) Sürekli alışveriş yaptığınız dükkanlarda etnik kökeni sizden farklı olan insanları görmek sizi rahatsız eder miydi ?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

31) Çocuğunuzun ilkokul öğretmeninin etnik köken olarak sizden farklı olması sizi rahatsız eder miydi?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

32) Oy verdiğiniz partinin genel başkanı sizden farklı bir etnik kökenden biri seçilse yine de destekler miydiniz?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

33) İzmir'de etnik kökeni farklı bir vatandaşı dış görünüşünden ve/veya fiziksel özelliklerinden tanıyabilir misiniz?

←---------**1**------------------**2**-----------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

Demografik Sorular

-Yaşınız:

-Cinsiyet:

-Doğum Yeriniz:

-Hangi dil ve lehçeleri konuşuyorsunuz? :

-Küçüklüğünüzde evde ortak konuşulan dil neydi?

-Aylık gelir durumunuz / Ailenizin aylık gelir durumu (Lütfen birini seçiniz) :

 *1000 TL ve aşağısı

* 1001-2000 TL arası

* 2001 - 3500 TL arası

*3501 - 6000 TL arası

*6001 TL ve yukarısı

-Eğitim durumunuz (Lütfen birini seçiniz) :

 *Okula gitmedim

 *İlkokul'a başladım fakat bitirmedim

 *İlkokul mezunu / Ortaokulu bitirmedim

 *Ortaokul mezunu / Liseyi bitirmedim

 *Lise mezunu / Üniversiteyi tamamlamadım

 *Üniversite mezunu

 *Yüksek lisans / Doktora derecesi

Genel olarak Kürtleri ve/veya Kürtlüğü tanımlamak için aklınıza gelen ilk 3 kelime nedir ?

    1.   2.   3.

   A. Lütfen aşağıda okuyacağım cümlelere ne oranda katıldığınızı belirtiniz.

 5: Kesinlikle katılıyorum

 4: Katılıyorum

 3: Ne katılıyor ne katılmıyorum

 2: Katılmıyorum

 1: Kesinlikle katılmıyorum

   34) Kürtler genel olarak suç işlemeye daha yatkındır.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

   35) Kürtlerin şiddete daha yatkın olduklarını düşünüyorum.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

   36) Kürtler genel olarak görgüsüz ve kabadırlar.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

   37) Kürtler genel olarak cahil ve eğitimsiz insanlardır.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

   38) Kürtlerin oldukça tatminsiz ve isyankâr bir grup olduklarını düşünüyorum.

←---------**1**------------------**2**------------------**3**-----------------**4**-----------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

39) Kürtlerin mağduriyet söylemini gereğinden fazla benimsediklerini düşünüyorum.

←---------1------------------2------------------3-----------------4------------------5---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

40) Kürtlerin daha çok çocuk yapmalarının siyasi bir amacı olduğunu düşünüyorum.

←---------1------------------2------------------3-----------------4------------------5---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

41) Kürtlerin Türklere göre daha az güvenilir olduğuna inanıyorum.

←---------1------------------2------------------3-----------------4------------------5---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

42) Kürtler genelde yasadışı yollardan para kazanırlar.

←---------1------------------2------------------3-----------------4------------------5---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

43) Namus cinayetleri genel olarak Kürtler'e özgü bir kavramdır.

←---------1------------------2------------------3-----------------4------------------5---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

44) Batı'da yaşayan bir Kürt, Güneydoğu'da yaşayan bir Kürt'e göre daha kültürlü ve
görgülüdür.

←---------1------------------2------------------3-----------------4------------------5---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

45) Batı'da yaşayan bir Kürt, Güneydoğu'da yaşayan bir Kürt'e göre daha az milliyetçidir.

←---------1------------------2------------------3-----------------4------------------5---------→

Kesinlikle hayır   *Kesinlikle evet*

Genel olarak Türkleri ve/veya Türklüğü tanımlamak için aklınıza gelen ilk 3 kelime nedir ?

    1.   **2.**   **3.**

A. Lütfen aşağıda okuyacağım cümlelere ne oranda katıldığınızı belirtiniz.

5: Kesinlikle katılıyorum

4: Katılıyorum

3: Ne katılıyor ne katılmıyorum

2: Katılmıyorum

1: Kesinlikle katılmıyorum

34) Türkler genel olarak aşırı milliyetçidirler.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

35) Türkler, Kürtler'in tersine, devletin sağladığı tüm imkanlardan yararlanabiliyorlar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

36) Türkler, kendilerini Kürtler'den her yönden üstün görüyorlar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**-----------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

37) Birçok Türk, Güneydoğu gerçeğinden çok uzak olmalarına rağmen Kürt konusu hakkında bilgi sahibiymiş gibi konuşuyorlar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**---------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

38) Türkler, siyasi konularda Kürtlere kıyasla oldukça bilgisizler.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

39) Genel olarak Türkler, günlük yaşamda Kürtlere karşı oldukça önyargılılar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

40) Türklerin çoğunluğunun Kürtler ile beraber yaşamak istediğine inanmıyorum.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

41) Güneydoğu'da yaşayan bir Türk, Batı'da yaşayan bir Türk'e göre daha az milliyetçidir.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

42) Güneydoğu'da yaşayan bir Türk, Batı'da yaşayan bir Türk'e göre Kürtler'e karşı daha az ön yargılıdır.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

43) Türkler toplumsal barışın sağlanması için Kürtler kadar çaba göstermiyorlar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

44) Türkler, beraber yaşadığımız bu ülkenin tek sahibiymişler gibi davranıyorlar.

←----------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*

45) Türkler genel olarak demokratik değerlere sahip değiller.

←---------**1**-------------------**2**------------------**3**------------------**4**------------------**5**----------→

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum   *Kesinlikle katılıyorum*