

**İSTANBUL KÜLTÜR UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IN THE CONTEXT OF CITY
(CITIZENS') COUNCIL: WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S ASSEMBLIES IN ZEYTİNBURNU,
KÜÇÜKÇEKMECE, KADIKÖY AND BAHÇELİEVLER**

Master of Arts Thesis by

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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ**

**KENT KONSEYİ BAĞLAMINDA YEREL DÜZEYDE DEMOKRASI VE KATILIM:
ZEYTİNBURNU, KÜÇÜKÇEKMECE, KADIKÖY VE BAĞÇELİEVLER KADIN VE ÇOCUK
MECLİSLERİ**

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
KISA ÖZET	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Research Questions	2
1.2. Main Arguments	4
1.3. Methods of Analysis	5
1.4. Chapter Outline	10
CHAPTER 2: DEMOCRACY, PARTICIPATION AND CITY COUNCIL	
CONCEPTS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL	12
2.1. The Concept of Democracy	12
2.2. The Relation Between Democracy and Participation	14
2.2.1. Democratic Participation and the Concept of Governance.....	23
2.2.2. Forms and Models of Participation	27
2.3. City Councils: Participation Model in Democracy at the Local Level	30
2.3.1. Historical Background of City Councils	30
2.3.2. The Formation of City Councils in Turkey	31
2.3.3. The Structure and Current State of City Councils.....	33
2.3.3.1. Women’s Assembly.....	44
2.3.3.2. Children’s Assembly	46
CHAPTER 3: CITY COUNCIL IMPLEMENTATIONS	49
3.1. City Councils Concerning Women’s and Children’s Assemblies	49
3.1.1. Zeytinburnu City Council	50
3.1.2. Küçükçekmece City Council	57
3.1.3. Kadıköy City Council.....	65
3.1.4. Bahçelievler City Council	71
3.2. The Evaluation of City Councils Concerning Women’s and Children’s	
Assembly	75
CONCLUSION	84
Summary of Research Findings	84
Future Research	92

REFERENCES	94
APPENDIX A.....	112
APPENDIX B.....	114
APPENDIX C.....	116

ABBREVIATIONS

BMKP	: Birleşmiş Milletler Kalkınma Programı (United Nations Development Programme)
YG21	: Yerel Gündem 21 (Local Agenda 21)
LA21	: Local Agenda 21
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
TÜİK	: Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (Turkish Statistical Institute)
UN	: United Nations
ECHR	: European Convention on Human Rights
UDHR	: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
CEDAW	: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
UNCRC	: The Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	: The United Nations Children's Fund
TBMM	: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (The Grand National Assembly of Turkey)
PRSP	: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
OECD	: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
IMF	: International Monetary Fund
EU	: European Union
WCED	: World Commission on Environment and Development
IULA-EMME	: International Union of Local Authorities-Section for the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Region
UNDESA	: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
LAR	: Local Administration Reform Project
İBB	: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi (İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality)
ZEYKOM	: Zeytinburnu Yerel Kalkınma ve Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri Koordinasyon Merkezi (Zeytinburnu Local Development and European Union Relations Co-ordination Centre)
AKDEM	: Aile Kadın Destekleme ve Engelliler Merkezi (Family and Women Support and Disabled Center)
ÇABADER	: Çalışan Kadınlar Derneği (Working Women Association)
KA-DER	: Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği (Association of Women Candidates)
İŞKUR	: Türk İş Kurumu (Turkish Employment Agency)
YINFO	: Youth Information Service

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ABSTRACT

DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IN THE CONTEXT OF CITY (CITIZENS') COUNCIL: WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S ASSEMBLIES IN ZEYTİNBURNU, KÜÇÜKÇEKMECE, KADIKÖY AND BAHÇELİEVLER

Esmâ Vanlıoğlu

This thesis deals with the democracy and participation concepts in the context of city (citizens') council model at the local level by sampling Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils women's and children's assemblies in Turkey. The research explores the role of city council women's and children's assemblies in democracy and participation at the local level in the Turkish context.

The research explores city (citizens') council women's and children's assemblies in terms of women's and children's participation. This thesis specifically questions the problems of city (citizens') council participation model which starts with Local Agenda 21 (LA21) project by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the context of governance approach in order to realize democracy and participation at the local level.

The research has revealed that city (citizens') council women's and children's assemblies could not achieve women's and children's participation in an expected manner although remarkable active works of assemblies to ensure democracy and participation at the local level. In this thesis, it has been stated that city (citizens') council model with women's and children's assemblies will contribute to democracy and participation in political decision-making processes more effectively if the problems encountered in the implementation process are resolved.

KeyWords: Democracy, Participation, Participatory
Democracy, Governance, UNDP, LA21,
City (Citizens') Council, Women's Assembly,
Children's Assembly

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KISA ÖZET

KENT KONSEYİ BAĞLAMINDA YEREL DÜZEYDE DEMOKRASI VE KATILIM: ZEYTİNBURNU, KÜÇÜKÇEKMECE, KADIKÖY VE BAHÇELİEVLER KADIN VE ÇOCUK MECLİSLERİ

Esmâ Vanlıoğlu

Bu tez, yerel düzeyde demokrasi ve katılım olgusunu kent konseyi modeli bağlamında İstanbul dahilinde Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy ve Bahçelievler ilçeleri Kent Konseyleri kadın ve çocuk meclisleri örneklemi üzerinden incelemektedir. Türkiye bağlamında kent konseyi kadın ve çocuk meclislerinin yerel düzeyde demokrasi ve katılımı sağlama konusunda rolü araştırılmıştır.

Araştırmada, kent konseyleri kadın ve çocuk meclisleri, yerel düzeyde kadın ve çocuk katılımı bağlamında incelenmektedir. Bu tez dahilinde, yerel düzeyde demokrasi ve katılımı gerçekleştirmek amacıyla yönetim yaklaşımı doğrultusunda Birleşmiş Milletler Kalkınma Programı (BMKP) tarafından sunulan Yerel Gündem 21 (YG21) projesi kapsamında bir katılım modeli olarak oluşturulan kent konseylerinin uygulanması aşamasında karşılaşılan sorunlar irdelenmiştir.

Araştırma sonuçları, kent konseyi kadın ve çocuk meclislerinin yerel düzeyde demokrasi ve katılımı sağlama konusunda aktif olarak çalışmalarına rağmen beklenen doğrultuda kadın ve çocuk katılımını gerçekleştiremediğini göstermiştir. Kent konseyi modeli ile kadın ve çocuk meclisleri, uygulama sürecinde karşılaşılan sorunlar çözüldüğünde demokrasi ve siyasi anlamda karar verme süreçlerine katılım konularında daha etkin düzeyde katkı sağlayacaklardır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Demokrasi, Katılım, Katılımcı Demokrasi,
Yönetişim, BMKP, Yerel Gündem 21,
Kent Konseyi, Kadın Meclisi, Çocuk Meclisi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In modern times, democracy conveys a meaning of the political ideals of values and principles in definitions more than a simple form of governmental model. In this context, ideal democracy is realized not only by voting in elections to delegate but also by public participation to political decision-making processes at the local level. Accordingly, individuals have an increasing demand on having a voice in decisions effecting their life. In this respect, representative democracy which includes the traditional form of participation mainly casting a vote excluded public from participation out of election times. On the other hand, participatory democracy represents a modern democratic approach providing participation opportunities to the public in decision-making processes regarding the right of voice in self-interest policies. The modern political and governmental approaches focuses on public-oriented methods in the problem determination and solution processes. The most widespread public-oriented approach emerges as governance which conveys the meaning to govern together. The governance concept consists of platforms and processes for public to participate in decision-making activities at the local level. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines governance as “It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions—achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action.” (UNDP, Governance Indicators: A Users' Guide 1). UNDP very much emphasizes governance approach. In this respect, subsequent to the governance concept UNDP provides plans and projects to make this approach to be adopted at the local level.

At the local level Local Agenda 21 (LA21) project emerges from Agenda 21 action plan in the Rio Environment and Development Conference which is named as “Earth Summit” in the Rio de Janeiro in 1992. LA21 is a process in order to assist to the realization of governance approach which consists of participatory mechanisms based on partnerships at the local level. Accordingly, Emrealp asserts that local action plan under the LA21 project aims enhancement of democracy at the local level (Yerel

Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 20). In order to achieve the purpose of LA21 project, city (citizens') council mechanisms which aims to function as democratic platforms are created as implementation model of LA21 at the local level. Those models acquire a legal strongfold by taking place in Article 76 of Municipality Law No.5393 *Belediye Kanunu* (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.25874) and by obtaining Regulation on Citizens' Assembly *Kent Konseyi Yönetmeliği* (T.C Resmi Gazete No.26313). Although the implementation model of LA21 project is entitled as "Citizens' Assembly" in the legislative literature in Turkey, in this thesis, those structures are named as "City Council" by the references to UNDP which provides Turkey LA21 programme and Sadun Emrealp who has been the national coordinator of LA21 program in Turkey until 2011. In this respect, "assembly" as a term is used in order to refer to the organ of city councils.

1.1.Research Questions

The research questions in this thesis are based on city council models in the context of democracy and participation concerning local level. In the process of participation to decision-making at the local platforms, city councils constitute one of the mechanisms that provide participation opportunities to the public although encounter specific problems. Accordingly, the purpose of this thesis is to attach the importance to democracy and participation at the local level and to explore the role of city councils which aim to provide active and effective participation to public people in decision-making processes in the Turkish context. In this context, the main research question of this thesis is "what kind of role, if any, does city councils play in democracy and participation at the local level in the Turkish context?" Three interrelated puzzles have been identified regarding the main research question and they have been formulated as the research sub-questions in order to contribute to argument of this thesis. Accordingly, the first research sub-question is "what are the aims of establishment of city councils in Turkey?" This question examines the purpose of city council structures regarding democracy and participation by analyzing the historical background and current state of those mechanisms. The second sub-question is "how do women's and children's assemblies contribute to participation process at the local level in Turkey?" This question investigates the contribution of the city council organs of women's and children's assemblies to

democracy by providing participation opportunity. The final sub-question is “what are the problems of city councils concerning democracy and participation process at the local level in the Turkish context?” This question explores the discrepancy between the expectations from city councils and the outcome regarding democracy and participation at the local level and probes the reasons behind it.

The contribution of this thesis to the earlier works is its focus on the role of city councils regarding the participation of public to decision-making processes at the local level through women’s and children’s assemblies with respect to encountered problems. Emphasizing the significance of the city councils at the local level, most of previous studies (Demirci; Batal; Görmez and Altınışik; Kaypak; Kestelliođlu; Özdemir; Őat; Bozkurt) focus on city council mechanisms by emphasizing their structures, functions and problems. However, participation of more disadvantaged groups in society such as women, children, youth and disabled people should also be regarded. The research of Özer emphasizes youth assembly (Gençlerin Toplumsal Yaşama Katılımı ve Yerel Yönetimlerin Rolü). Özgökçeler concerns assembly of disabled people (Bir Katılımcı Demokrasi Uygulama Alanı Olarak Özürlüler Meclisi: Bursa, Türkiye Örneđi). Özer focuses on children’s assemblies (Çocuk Hakları, Katılım ve Yerel Düzeyde Uygulaması: Türkiye Örneđi) and F. Őahin explores women’s assembly (Kadınların Siyasal Katılımları Çerçevesinde Kadın Meclislerinin Yerel Siyasetteki Etkinlikleri ve Üye Profilleri). In this respect, those studies investigate women, children, youth and disabled people separately in the context of assemblies in city councils. In this respect, for a more detail analysis, different from previous studies, in the fieldwork this thesis makes observations and interviews regarding both women’s and children’s assemblies. Therefore, this research focuses specifically on women and children due to display how two significant figures struggle in order to participate to the social and political life under the same mechanism in Turkey. One of the figures constitutes women who acquire capability to participate more effectively, whereas the other figure, children will need to get a long way to have enough competence and opportunity of participation. In order to point out the participation position of two groups at the local level, this thesis concerns with women’s assemblies and children’s assemblies, mainly the first one is more active compared with the second in appearance. In this respect, this thesis by asking the first sub-question of “what are the aims of

establishment of city councils in Turkey?” attempts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of city councils and assemblies as a participatory mechanism. The second sub-question analysis the role of women’s and children’s assemblies in the participation of women and children to decision-making processes by asking “how do women’s and children’s assemblies contribute to participation process at the local level in Turkey?” Accordingly, the third sub-question analysis in a wide concept, the kinds of problems city councils encounter in practice concerning democracy and participation process in the Turkish context. This more detailed exploration would enable a better understanding of the problems of democratic participation of public emphasizing women and children at the local level beyond theory. City council perception, in this thesis, is not a simple mechanism that acts at the local level. Rather, the functionality of city council platforms regarding democracy and participation of public to decision-making processes at the local level by women’s and children’s assemblies are analyzed considering chosen samples in İstanbul.

1.2.Main Arguments

In the changing conditions of the world, it is not enough to realize political participation by only voting in elections but also to make public participate to administrative and political decision-making processes is required. This approach makes an increase in the interest for participatory democracy (Nacak 211). In today, it is not possible to voice participatory democracy unless providing structures which make it possible to participate in the decision-making processes (Geray, Yerel Demokrasi, Özerklik ve Halk Katılımı 75). In this thesis the aim is to understand whether or not city councils have a role in democracy and participation at the local level by its women’s and children’s assemblies in the Turkish context. For this purpose, this research investigates the city council structure and assemblies regarding democracy and participation at the local level. This thesis reveals discrepancy between the expectations from city councils and assemblies and the outcome regarding decision-making processes at the local level. By implication, in the context of the main research question, the argument is that city councils and its women’s and children’s assemblies are mechanisms that have been established to be effective in theoretical perspective concerning democracy and participation at the local level however, in practice they have significant problems. With the guidance of the

research sub-questions, this research establishes reasons behind the problems of city council mechanisms by referring to categorization of Güneş and Beyazıt. They classify problems into four basic sections. The first one is the relationship between city council and municipality. The second area refers to relationship between public people and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The third part constitutes legal issues. The last category is administrative and organizational issues (150).

The fieldwork indicates that city councils function ineffectively in contradistinction to the role they are expected to have at the time of establishment concerning democratic participation to decision-making processes at the local level in the Turkish context. In spite of dissatisfaction regarding their functionality in decision-making processes, they constitute significant platforms of different social groups which have disadvantaged position in the society such as women, children, youth and disabled people. Those groups come together and form an interaction mechanism by assemblies. Moreover, this research reveals that city councils constitute unique structures at the local level by providing opportunity and tool for local child and women participation. In this respect, women's assemblies which take place in a high number at the local level are more concerned in the city council structures compared with children's assemblies. Moreover, women's assemblies provide a more active structure than children's assemblies concerning participation at the local units.

1.3.Methods of Analysis

This thesis provides review of the literature and collection of the fieldwork related to the subject. The primary sources that provide data constitute laws, regulations, legislations, working guidelines, reports, charters, semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observations whereas secondary sources which contribute to this research are the publications such as book and book sections, journal articles, articles in periodicals, documents from website and electronic sources. This research examines and assesses each sources in detail. The data which is obtained by research help to establish the theoretical structure of this thesis.

As a citizen who regularly votes in elections, I recognize the requirement of an effective and active mechanism to involve public regarding women in political decision-making processes at the local level beyond election times. I also recognize lack of an effective model in order to include children in political decision-making processes in Turkey. I concern with the democratic participatory methods which aim to include more disadvantaged groups in the society such as women and children in the decision-making processes at the local level in the Turkish context. Therefore, I am interested in exploring city council mechanisms at the local level in Turkey. I am interested in learning about the structure of city council and the status of this mechanism in the democratic participation with respect to traditional methods in Turkey. I have recognized that their structure is unique. Although city council mechanisms aim to enact as alternative units in participation to decision-making processes compared to traditional methods their recognition is low in the community. Beside low awareness of city councils in the society, the arguments arise concerning their effectiveness and functionality regarding democracy and participation at the local level. Therefore, I aim to explore the role of city councils in democracy and participation of public in particular women and children concerning decision-making processes at the local level by investigating their structure and functionality.

The population consist of participatory implementations in the democracies at the local level in all societies. The sample constitutes Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils women's and children's assemblies in İstanbul. Because of women and children being one of the more disadvantaged position in the community concerning democratic participation, I determine samples as women's and children's assemblies in city councils in the Turkish context. The basic reason of choosing İstanbul is its representative value considering Turkey. İstanbul has a higher number of in-migration between 2012 and 2013 among eighty-one cities according to report on Address Based Population Registration System Results of Turkish Statistical Institute *Türk İstatistik Kurumu Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi* (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu). According to results, İstanbul has a higher population among eighty-one cities (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu). After I have pre-investigated city councils in İstanbul regarding their status and activities, I have enlisted them. City councils which provide activities, reports on activities, relevant records of meetings and information on continuous organizations of assemblies are

regarded as active (B. Şahin 998). In this respect, according to pre-investigation results, I have contacted with city councils in İstanbul. The city councils with which I have continues cooperation I advance studies. I choose the city councils those which are actively running children's and women's assemblies for the research. I also choose Bahçelievler City Council which has women's assembly but lack of children's assembly. I add it to the sample due to active works of women's assemblies and a sign of studies on children by working groups in city councils although lack of children's assembly. I also select the sample implementations according to their representative value beside their structural and functional implications. People from all regions of Turkey have been migrating to İstanbul. The districts Küçükçekmece, Bahçelievler and Zeytinburnu have enlarged by in-migration. However, Kadıköy have been less migrated compared with other three. In this respect, Kadıköy City Council constitutes the case-control group. As a result, I choose Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils and their women's and children's assemblies as sample in this research. In addition, I concern with the establishment date of city councils to be close to each other due to their practical experiences.

This thesis is built upon qualitative data that I obtain through ethnographic observations and semi-structured interviews. In this respect, I have made interviews with presidents of city councils, presidents of women's assemblies, vice presidents of women's assemblies, general secretaries of city councils and representatives of children's assemblies. In order to illustrate the case, I have visited some of the offices of city councils and municipalities. I also have made observations on some of the ordinary general assembly meetings. I conducted research during the periods through the ends of 2013 and the middle of 2015 in İstanbul concerning three districts Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu and Bahçelievler. For this purpose, I have visited the working offices of Bahçelievler City Council president, Zeytinburnu Women's Assembly president, Küçükçekmece City Council general secretary and Zeytinburnu City Council general secretary. I have also visited Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Learning Center *Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Gökalp Bilgi Evi*, Bahçelievler Municipality and Zeytinburnu Municipality. While I have conducted some interviews in their offices, I have met and talked with the president of Bahçelievler Women's Assembly in other places, they have been similar, mostly cafes. In order to

observe the works of women's assembly in deep, I visited Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly Center in 2015. I also visited Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Learning Center *Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Gökalp Bilgi Evi* to take information about children's assembly in 2015. I visited Küçükçekmece Municipality Register Office *Küçükçekmece Belediyesi Nikah Sarayı* to observe the thirteenth ordinary general meeting of Küçükçekmece City Council in 2013. However, I had difficulty to gain access to the children's assembly of city councils except Zeytinburnu City Council due to lack of working offices and impossibility to reach the members of the children's assembly due to their age level. As a result, I could not obtain relevant data in the fieldwork concerning children's assembly. I have obtained information concerning children's assemblies mostly through online sources. On the other hand, I have acquired information about Küçükçekmece City Council Children's Assembly by Küçükçekmece City Council General Secretary and information of Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly by Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly vice president and a teacher in Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Learning Center *Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Gökalp Bilgi Evi*. Although limitations, I think that the data I have collected about city councils and their women's and children's assemblies provide a valid and valuable insight into the questions and issues that lie at the core of this inquiry. In the evaluation, I follow a descriptive and interpretive approach by qualitative analysis.

Furthermore, I have developed three forms including interview questions. The first one includes semi-structured questions for presidents and members of women's assemblies (see Appendix A). The second one consists of semi-structured questions for city council presidents and general secretaries (see Appendix B). The third form refers to representatives of children's assemblies (see Appendix C). Each of them constitutes specific questions on certain issues. First of all, I have made interviews with some of the women's assembly presidents and members of women's assemblies in order to comprehend whether or not the questions work. Then, I have eliminated some of the questions which have not been significant for this research. I ask questions to women's assembly members and women's assembly presidents about their experiences concerning their working life, political life and NGO studies in order to understand their interest areas which have directed them to city councils. Accordingly, I ask a question regarding the main reason that ensure women to

actively involving in the city council mechanism due to emphasize the voluntariness component of city councils as well as women's interest regarding participation to decision-making processes. The questions related to the structure and the works of the sampled women's assembly reveal the information about the role of women's assembly in participation process concerning activities. I question the aims of women's assembly as well as its practice concerning the active participation of women to the political life and decision-making processes in order to understand the effectiveness of city councils and assemblies in democracy and participation issues. Regarding the role of the mechanisms under the city council such as women's assemblies in the participation process at the local level concerning decision-making processes, I provide the question of what kind of issues are directed to the city council and how many of them have been delivered to the local governments by city council and have returned back. I also ask from where women's assembly get support about their works in order to enlighten the level of support of municipalities as it is ensured in Municipality Law No.5393 and Regulation on Citizens' Assembly. I question the partnership of women's assembly with other institutions regarding joint plans and projects in order to reveal the understanding on the practice and studies of women's assemblies based on city councils' partnership approach concerning participation of public at the local level. At the end of the interview, I ask the personal ideas of presidents of women's assemblies concerning the studies in strengthening women's assemblies in order to comprehend the problems and solutions of the city council mechanisms and assemblies (see Appendix A). On the other hand, in the second form, I provide questions to the city council presidents and general secretaries such as mission, vision and definition of city councils in order to understand city council mechanisms in meaning (see Appendix B). The function of city councils in ensuring the participation at the local level is one of the questions. I also question the organs and the membership conditions of city councils in order to understand their current structures at the institutional level concerning Regulation on Citizens' Assembly. I also ask the ordinary general meeting reports in order to explore the issues discussed and decisions are taken. Accordingly, I investigate what kind of issues are sent to municipality and reciprocity of municipality council to the city councils in order to understand the effectiveness of decisions that are taken in city council mechanisms in local governments. I direct questions regarding projects and studies in order to understand the activeness of them. I also asked questions

about the support of municipalities to city councils as well as the problems regarding the city councils. In the third form, I organize questions for representatives of children's assemblies (see Appendix C). I question the role of interview participants in children's assembly in order to understand their interest to the issue. General informations concerning establishment date, number of members, age of members and member selection method are taken into account. I also formulated the question regarding aim of children's assembly and advertising studies. I ask information about working commissions and their works in order to take information about activities. I direct question with respect to support of municipality in order to comprehend viewpoint to children's assembly. I have formulated and asked the questions which proposed a fixed and predetermined flow. Also, I sometimes have revised or reformulated the questions in accordance with the reactions of the interviewees or provided new questions during interview. Accordingly, it should be noted that I did not use tape recorder in any of the interviews. Although I have asked the permission to use the recording mechanism, most of them have not wanted their talk to be recorded. Therefore, I have taken field notes during the conversation.

The limitations of the research could be stated as difficulty in obtaining all required data in fieldwork regarding city council practices and difficulty in obtaining data in the fieldwork concerning the members of children's assembly due to the age factor.

1.4.Chapter Outline

In this thesis, Chapter I refers to introduction section concerning research questions, main arguments, method of analysis and chapter outline. Following the introduction section, Chapter II starts by explaining democracy concept concerning its values and chances in democratic approaches from representative level to participatory one. This research investigates the relation between participation and democracy at the local level. This thesis very much emphasizes governance approach in order to convey a theoretical base that is lying behing city council mechanisms due to convey a meaningful answer for the sub-question of "what are the aims of establishment of city councils in Turkey?" This thesis also provides a range of participation models at the local level in order to signify the unique structure of city

council mechanism. This research explains city council mechanism in detail concerning its historical background, formation and legal framework. This thesis continues by exploring the structure and current state of city councils in order to comprehend their functions in detail. This research defines and very much emphasizes the organs of city councils concerning women's and children's assemblies.

In Chapter III, this research focuses on city council and their women's and children's assembly implementations in predetermined districts in İstanbul: Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler. This thesis explores city councils and their women's and children's assemblies in order to understand "how do women's and children's assemblies contribute to participation process at the local level in Turkey?" In Chapter III, this thesis provides field analysis of predetermined city councils and their women's and children's assemblies in order to explore city councils in practice with an emphasize on their problems in participation process in accordance with observations and interviews. The conclusion chapter presents a review of the main arguments and findings of research as well as proposals regarding future research.

CHAPTER 2: DEMOCRACY, PARTICIPATION AND CITY COUNCIL CONCEPTS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

2.1.The Concept of Democracy

Democracy as a concept constitutes one of the most problematic terms in the literature by being the subject of disputes considering its meaning, definitions and indicators. Dahl by referring to the concept of democracy says that “it was the Greeks-probably the Athenians-who coined the term *democracy*, or *demokratia*, from the Greek words *demos*, the people, and *kratos*, to rule.” (11). Accordingly, Novkovic also states that the origin of the democracy is based on the ancient Greek States (3). Democracy conveys the meaning as Abraham Lincoln states “the government of the people, by the people, for the people” in 1863 (Lincoln). In this respect, democracy reflects the meaning of power of public. However, citizen power is insufficient in order to describe democracy which is multidimensional and comprehensive. Lipset on the other hand describe democracy as: “[...] a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office” (45). Definition of Lipset combines regular elections to democracy. According to claims of Özkan to explain democracy only as the governance of public or the use of power by public creates a democracy perception in terms of terminological side (23). In this respect, there is a need of a more comprehensive understanding of democracy to explore how it is practiced in political life.

In accordance with assumption of Gözler democracy in practice could be categorized as direct democracy, semi-direct democracy and representative democracy (115). Gözler claims that in the direct democracy only public could take decisions by voting without representatives whereas semi-direct democracy refers to use of sovereignty by public and representatives by ways of referendum, the veto of

public, public enterprise and dismissal of representatives (115-20). Gözler describes the representative democracy as use of sovereignty by elected representatives (117). However, Çukurçayır asserts that in modern times, the most accepted democracy approach is pluralist democracy that allows the representation of the majority of public people but the pluralist approach excludes people outside of the political process except voting (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 24). Sartori explains the function of election by claiming that people vote “[...] not to make a democracy more democratic but to make democracy possible [...]” (108). In modern democracies, the principles of election and representation are questionable for real democratic representation because they may influence decide of individuals concerning participation. The requirement is directed individuals to vote. However, participation serves much to voluntary feature. Therefore, Rosanvallon claims that democratic actions could not be limited only to the electoral-representative factor but also consists of various practices by which citizens use pressure on their rulers (290). Accordingly, Mansbridge claims that a new approach comes to the force as an ideal democracy is named participatory democracy which became widespread after 1962 (376). However, participatory political systems have their roots in the eighteenth century. Rousseau, in this sense, provides the philosophy of participatory system in his saying that: “Why is it that the general will is always in the right, and that all continually will the happiness of each one, unless it is because there is not a man who does not think of "each" as meaning him, and consider himself in voting for all?” (Rousseau The Social Contract Book II Chapter IV. 36). In this sense, in a participatory democracy individuals make decision-making which does not serve to only their own interest but society. Çukurçayır defines participatory democracy as to have a say in self-interest policies by providing participation opportunities to the public in decision-making processes (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 25). According to Sarıbay, participatory democracy has features as distinct from representative democracy such as facilities of participation of individuals to the decisions regarding their own, requirement of methods different from elections in order to take joint decisions and the educational function of participation to non-political subjects (Siyasal Sosyoloji 91).

The concept of democracy is self-renewing and continuing to its development and persistence. In order to comprehend the reason of being indispensable throughout years, the values that democracy emphasizes should be taken into consideration. Çukurçayır describes the basic concepts of democracy as having a universal character: freedom, equality and sovereignty of public (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 26). According to Çam, democracy has certain principles such as public participation, the process of individual and society relationships, the protection of the rights and freedom of individuals as well as to provide equality of opportunity to the all members of society (388). Dahl provides five criteria which are process-oriented in order to ensure participation of people to decisions about the policies. Dahl proposes “effective participation”, “voting equality”, “enlightened understanding”, “control of the agenda” and “inclusion of adults” (37-38).

Although democracy conveys the meaning of political ideals of values and principles in descriptions rather than a simple form of governing model, institutional democratic structures, mechanisms and models should be regarded to ensure participation of public at the local level. At this point, democracy concept should be analyzed according to the relation with participation at the local level.

2.2.The Relation Between Democracy and Participation

By the last quarter of twentieth century, democracy and participation is defined together (Şat 119). Roberts says that “Citizenship participation is the cornerstone of democracy [...]” (315). In this context, citizen participation is a basement in order to make democracy work (Langton 27). In this respect, Çukurçayır defines the general aim of the participation as more democracy (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 56). Pateman asserts that “participation” as a term became widespread in political vocabulary through the last few years of 1960’s (1). As review of literature indicates, the meaning of citizen participation is argued by researchers and political theorists (Kweit and Kweit, Implementing Citizen Participation in a Bureaucratic Society 31). In this respect, Pateman claims that participation can make a reference to a series of different actions by different people (1). Belli and Aydın assumes that the concept of participation includes different cases: voting of individuals, participation in governing issues in public institutions and decisions taken in work and social life

(138). In this respect citizen participation refers to contribution to decision-making processes in municipality services. On the other hand, Arnstein assumes that by participation, the power is allocated to citizens who have not been involved in economic and political processes (216). According to the assumptions of Arnstein there is a basic comprehension regarding citizen participation as being cornerstone of democracy, however, in reality, citizens either could reach a level to influence decision-making processes or they will struggle in an empty ritual (216). According to Strange in the comprehension of what is meant by participation, it is significant to include the controversial understandings of the participation concerning the definitions of giving advice, making decisions, or making policy (460). According to democratic theory, participation refers to the process that determines social aims and the ways to reach them (Sarıbay, Yurttaşlık ve Katılımcı Demokrasi 19). Accordingly Sivrekli asserts that in participation context, democracy at the local level ensures a collective approach in which all opinions are evaluated and all needs and problems are considered by making public to come together and work with a consensus in the context of collective ideas (128). In the context of public administration, Geray assumes that participation consists of demands regarding the quality and needs of services as well as control the administration by attributing pluralist content to representative democracy (Kentsel Yaşam Kalitesi ve Belediyeler 325). In the same direction, Yalçındağ defines the participation as the actions of public in order to affect the government activities, inspecting the work of government and meeting the needs of the society (Belediyelerimiz ve Halkla İlişkiler 29). Participation in democracies is emphasized by political thinkers since early 19th century. Mill argues that the ideally best form of government is one in which citizens both have “a voice” and having function in governmental issues:

[...] every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being, called upon to take an actual part in the government by the personal discharge of some public function, local or general (Mill, The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, 403-04)

Mill's ideal on participation is that political participation occurs in various modes such as electoral participation, jury duty, participation in "voluntary associations", at the place of work and local government within the representative democracy. Accordingly, Mill says that:

[...] in many cases, though individuals may not do the particular thing so well, on the average, as the officers of government, it is nevertheless desirable that it should be done by them, rather than by the government, as a means to their own mental education—a mode of strengthening their active faculties, exercising their judgment, and giving them a familiar knowledge of the subjects with which they are thus left to deal. This is a principal, though not the sole, recommendation of jury trial (in cases not political); of free and popular local and municipal institutions; of the conduct of industrial and philanthropic enterprises by voluntary associations (Mill, *On Liberty* v.19).

One of the most widely used description in recent years is belong to Brady who perceives participation as activities of people who aim to effect end products of politics (737).

According to the research, participation could be classified as political and administrative. Çukurçayır defines political participation in a narrow sense as participation to elections and in a wide sense participation to bureaucracy and political decision-making processes (*Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi* 39). In the same direction with Çukurçayır, Öztekin describes political participation as voting in regular elections as well as interest level that appears in political decisions resulted in participation to decision-making processes (251). Accordingly, democratic decision-making refers to people who have a right to participate in making decisions that affect them. Dursun clarifies the issue by keeping in mind the assumption that political participation means the election of political administrators at local and national level but also he provides a meaningful understanding of political participation by referring involvement of public in political decision-making processes (234). Kurthan, on the other side of argument, defines administrative

participation as participation to decision-making processes. Kurthan also adds that administrative participation also includes implementation of taken decisions. According to Kurthan, other dimensions of administrative participation are control after application of decisions at the level of civil society organizations, private sector, national and local governments as well as formation of the mechanisms that make functional the participation process (Kurthan 36).

There are several benefits related to the use of citizen participation in the administrative process. Accordingly, many defenders claim that citizen participation enhances democracy (Langton; Rosenbaum; Checkoway and Van Til). Participation make public gain practical skills in democratic approaches (Pateman 42). The participation phenomenon contributes to protection and enhancement of classical democratic values. Çukurçayır asserts that participation strengthens individual freedom, provides equal opportunities to different social groups, embodies the sovereignty of the people, and enables democracy become functional (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 26-33). By participation, the social aims are determined by the cooperation and interaction between people who govern and are governed (Sarıbay, Yurttaşlık ve Katılımcı Demokrasi 19). One of the contribution concerning citizens is enhancement of participation in decision-making that advance responsiveness and effectiveness of government (Brudney, 467). Koryakov and Sisk claim that in spite of assumptions about decision-making including citizens' participation which is perceived as complex and taking time as well as difficult to enhance in decision-making processes, the consequences of decisions taken in partnership as collectively are regarded as more legitimate and having a feature of wide acceptance than independent decisions of elected officials (25). Pateman claims that participation ensures acceptance of collective decisions (43). Another significant result of participation concerning administration process constitutes increase in trust, decrease in citizen alienation and instruction of citizens about the government operations and decisions (Kweit and Kweit, Implementing Citizen Participation in a Bureaucratic Society 35-36). Koryakov and Sisk states the important functions of citizens' participation as enhancement of powerful system of local self-governance, to build consciouness about significance of the local structures and a means to comprehend the concerns and needs of the community (25). Moreover, participation help to make effective decisions and to find a solution to conflicts (Thomas 180). In

this respect, disadvantaged groups in public are found receptive regarding specification of problems with new approaches. The studies also indicate that responsiveness is enhanced (Strange 479). Beside responsiveness of local government, power is also redistributed to public.

Although participation constitutes indispensable component of the democratic life, it is questionable whether the equal opportunities are provided to each individual. According to Çukurçayır, the administration and decision-making mechanisms aim to ensure the functions related to individuals: equality, checking the work of government and the protection of individual rights (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 57-58). It is claimed that at the time of creation of public policies, involvement of different groups could lead to increase in equity, accessibility and political participation (Andrew and Goldsmith 109). Participation could be achieved by balanced representation of all community members. Democratic structures in any society should be inclusive without discrimination with respect to age, gender, religion, nationality and disability. In this respect, “Gender Mainstreaming” takes the attention due to being a globally accepted strategy to develop gender equality. UN Report of the Economic and Social Council in 1997 described “Gender Mainstreaming” as:

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2)

One of the main requirement of “Gender Mainstreaming” constitutes to make effort in order to increase women's participation at all levels of decision-making processes (United Nations Economic and Social Council 3). Despite to equality value of

democracy, women are not included enough in political life. F.Şahin claims that in terms of gender based perspectives, level and types of political participation activities of women is low and women are not sufficiently represented (3). Women could not establish ties with the political systems due to value judgments and legal restrictions. One of the great barrier for women to participate in politics, education, employment and other activities constitutes a universal and societal attitude that reflects the perception of women as mothers and wives (Shaul 495). The traditional roles accepted for women is not accorded with participation to political life (Gökçimen 51). Therefore, women's political presence was not on the agenda a few years ago. In Turkey, the efforts of women in searching their rights is based on the The Second Constitutional Era but reaches to the expected level in The Republic of Turkey period (Polat 11). Women gained the right to vote for the first time in 1930 local elections and in 1935 general elections (Bilgili 111). In Turkey, between the 1930s and the 1970s, involvement of women to education, employment, and other public domains of life advanced (Özkanlı and Özbilgin 153). At the national level, legal regulations concerning women rights occurred as Constitution of Turkey No.2709 *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası* in 1982 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.17863), Family Protection Law No.4320 *Ailenin Korunmasına Dair Kanun* in 1998 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.23233), Turkish Civil Code No.4721 *Medeni Kanun* in 2001 (T.C. Resmi Gazete, No.24607), Labor Law No.4857 *İş Kanunu* in 2003 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.25134), Turkish Criminal Code No.5237 *Türk Ceza Kanunu* in 2004 (T.C. Resmi Gazete, No.25611), Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence Against Women No. 6284 *Ailenin Korunması ve Kadına Karşı Şiddetin Önlenmesine Dair Kanun* in 2012 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.28239). The Laws ensure to protect the right of women in economic, social and political life. The Laws also facilitates participation of women to different segments of life. At the international level, Turkey ratified European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in 1954, signed UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1949 and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1985. One of the most significant conventions is CEDAW which aims to establish equality between men and women concerning economic, social, political and cultural rights (United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women). The most important indicator of officially support of women's movement is connection of General Directorate on the Status and

Problems of Women *Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü* to the Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry *Başbakanlık* in 2003 (Polat 16). The purpose is to ensure gender equality in Turkey by strengthening the position of women in all spheres of social life and to create policies for the prevention of all forms of discrimination against women, develop strategies, and collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure coordination (T.C. Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü: Misyon ve Vizyon). According to claims of Bilgili although inclusion of women in political system concerning representative democracy, practically serious problems have still survived (107). Accordingly, Shaul claims that women have certain obstacles regarding equal political participation such as negative attitudes of men toward women participation outside of home, lack of skills and self-esteem of women for political participation, burden of women concerning involvement to political life and family responsibility, insufficient trust of women to support women candidates and officials (496). Gökçimen asserts that in order to increase social and political participation of women, it is required to have equal and democratic family structure, to create a women discourse in politics, to participate in NGO's and political parties, to strengthen and support women associations and to support women participation at the legal level (51-53). In this respect, F. Şahin claims that women participation level concerning decision-making, planning and implementation processes is determined and accepted as insufficient (38). The decision-making processes that are excluded women become unsuccessful in the creation of sensitivity to women issues. F.Şahin assumes that political participation of women concerning decision-making processes effects political life positively (3). Thus, women could carry problems of women in specific areas to political space. In order to reflect women problems and solutions in local decision-making bodies, representation of women in local councils and decision-making structures is required. In order to have equal representation of women in local government and decision-making bodies, Shaul suggests to have better job experiences, to get education related to politics, to have a wide range of network in order to eliminate isolation, to change women image in books and media and to share household responsibilities (498). Shaul also added the list to form women groups to lobby, to support women candidates in party structures, to support people who are sensitive to women issues and to have mentor relationship with people who are influential in parties or government (498). Shaul asserts that local level provides the most effective

participation ways to women with regards in issues which are directly related to women. Moreover, women are less likely to resist participation at local levels than compared to other levels due to similar interests of local units with family concerns (499).

Although today representative democracy includes the majority of the individuals compared to past, children are excluded in Turkish political system. Children constitute another disadvantage group in the society who remain back in the participation processes due to lack of the right to vote and insufficient participation units. Today, formal political representation is insufficient to increase participation of children. In this respect, decisions related children should be taken involving children who are more concerned by results. Children are lack of perception of being participatory actors in the society. Based on the assumptions of unequal opportunity for children in the society, the rights of the children progressed. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) came into the force in 1990 by United Nations (UN) (United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child). Turkey signed UNCRC on September 14, 1990 and ratified it on December 9, 1990 (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Rights of the Child in Turkey). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) classifies UNCRC as survival and developmental rights, protection rights and the rights related to participation (UNICEF, Rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child). Participation rights of children constitutes one of the guiding principle of UNCRC by emphasizing effect of children in the decision-making processes in subjects that influence their lives in family, school and community (UNICEF, Fact Sheet: The Right to Participation). Participation means to be effective in implementation and evaluation processes. In order to advance children's rights, children themselves should have influence in decision-making processes concerning issues related to children. UNCRC becomes effective in guiding local and central government about increase of the competence and reputation of children. UNCRC provides a definition concerning the age of a "child" as a person below the age of eighteen. Hart claims that "child" as a concept could be equal to pre-teenage years, "youth" or "teenagers" could embrace to the ages thirteen to eighteen, "young people" on the other side of the argument could refer to the both age groups (4). On the other hand, Williams asserts that "child" indicates to those who are twelve or under, and "young people"

refers to those who are between thirteen and eighteen (6). Although Turkey ratifies UNCRC which accepts eighteen and under as a child, the participatory mechanisms such as city council children's assemblies and assemblies of municipalities concern the elementary age level appropriate for participation of children and specifies the age range of members as eight and fifteen with the permission of parents by instructions and regulations (Draft of Pendik City Council Children's Assembly Working Guideline *Pendik Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi Çalışma Yönergesi Tasarısı*, Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly Working Guideline *Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi Çalışma Yönergesi*, Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Children's Assembly *Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi Yönetmeliği*, Bağcılar Municipality Regulation on Children's Assembly *Bağcılar Belediyesi Çocuk Meclisi Yönetmeliği*). Children between determined ages are directed to the decision-making processes by the legal permission of their adults. Williams describes participation as the involvement in decision-making processes of the concerned children (6). In the context of rights of the children, Roose and De Bie claim that an intense emphasis arises at the international level concerning development of the legal statue of children, to be able to express the problems and to participate decision-making processes (38). UNCRC encourages children to be an active participant concerning public issues. The right of the participation is a mean to provide solutions to the problems as well as to shape the future. Children are deprived of participation processes due to lack of suffrage and insufficient participation concerning opportunities that are provided them. Based on the assumption of UNCRC committee Erbay assumes that participation should be encouraged in the environment of family and school as well as in the subjects of media, sustainable development and general policy decisions (*Çocukların Katılım Hakkı Üzerine Bir Türkiye Değerlendirmesi* 40). In recent years, although Turkey has improved children's right about establishment of associations such as Child Rights Monitoring Committee in Grand National Assembly of Turkey *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (TBMM) Çocuk Hakları İzleme Komitesi* and Child Rights Committees in districts, participation level of children is found insufficient (Acar 11). It is significant how much the expression of children is taken into account by adults in implementations. Therefore, the perception about protection of children concerning their family, social environment and government is changed by UNCRC for children in the direction to express their ideas, to participate into decision-making

processes and democratization. In order to have a participatory action, there is a requirement of democratic approach concerning partnership and cooperation of different segments in society including children.

2.2.1. Democratic Participation and the Concept of Governance

Participation in democracy occurs most effectively at the local level. In this respect, Pustu & Yaylı conveys the prevailing views that local governments are the starting point of the democratic life (134). Siverekli claims that local governments are areas where the realization of democracy and participation are achieved (127). In the same direction, Tortop et al. claim that local governments constitute the most democratic units in which public participation is realized (21). Based on definition of Çukurçayır local governments are transfer of power to the less authorized structures in order to carry out public services with a local nature by public entities other than government entities (Yerel Yönetimler:Kuram, Kurum ve Yeni Yaklaşımlar 98). In this respect, local governments serve as an organizational structure with a public entity. According to Eryılmaz local governments are effective units in public participation and public control of administrative process (122). Participation as a value is signified by local authorities due to opportunities that are provided to the public people to manage themselves. In recent years, significant steps are taken at the international level in order to emphasize democracy and participation at the local level as if in European Urban Charter and European Charter of Local Self-Government which provide guidance to Turkey concerning participation. Council of Europe accepted European Urban Charter in 1992. This charter has opened for signature of local government units by the European Council but in Turkey there has been not any local government unit that have ratified the charter (Pektaş and Akın 27). The philosophy of the European Urban Charter is that citizens have basic urban rights without discrimination in respect of gender, age, race, belief, position in socio-economic or political level and physical or psychological handicap. In the part B, section 4, the theme of 4.12 is named “citizen participation, urban management and urban planning” emphasizes that people should be decisive in the local political and administrative matters, public consultation should be in every major project that will affect the future of society, local policy decisions will be based on urban and regional planning which will be realized by teams of experts, local governments should provide opportunities to young people in order to participate in community

life (Council of Europe, European Urban Charter 28-31). European Charter of Local Self- Government like European Urban Charter underlines participation of the public at the local level. In this respect, European Charter of Local Self-Government was opened for signature in 1985 by Council of Europe with the purpose of:

[...] to make good the lack of common European standards for measuring and safeguarding the rights of local authorities, which are closest to the citizen and give him the opportunity of participating effectively in the making of decisions affecting his everyday environment. (Council of Europe, European Charter of Local Self-Government and Explanatory Report 29)

Turkey ratifies the charter by putting a number of reservations (Keleş 59). One of the significant reservation is in Part I, Article 4 item 6 which underlines to consult local governments about issues related to them in planning and decision-making processes (Keleş 60). By putting reservation, Turkey avoids to give commitment about consultation to local governments about issues that concern them. According to Article 3 in European Charter of Local Self-Government, strong binds should exist between “[...] assemblies of citizens, referendums, or any other form of direct citizen participation where it is permitted by statute” and elected local decision-making bodies (Council of Europe, European Charter of Local Self-Government 3). European Urban Charter II which was provided as manifesto for a new urbanity by Council of Europe in 2008 stated use of participation methods in the statement that:

As far back as 1985, the European Charter of Local Self-Government envisaged the possibility of having recourse to participatory democracy practices alongside the traditional mechanisms of representative democracy.

We therefore encourage, as the Charter of Local Self-Government invites us to do, the use of citizens’ assemblies, local referendums and all forms of direct citizen participation. (Council of Europe, European Urban Charter II:Manifesto for a new urbanity 7).

In this respect, the concept of participation is questioned in terms of the place in the democratic local government models. Siverekli argues that, local governments by being in a close relationship with public assign a meaning to participatory democracy by determining problems and providing solutions in a more consistent manner (129). However, Görün asserts that by insufficiency of representative democracy in the participation of public to the administration and decision-making process, a new government model within the participatory democracy is debated (165). The term democratic governance reveals including the relationship of democracy, public space and local government in the basement of public, private and civil society cooperation (Yüçetürk 228). Governance ensures a democracy model which includes the features of participatory and pluralist functions (Kalfa and Ataay 236). The concept of governing directly in one way changes to the governing together because of the reason that in today's democracies, it is insufficient to make public only know about decisions, but also to make them participate in the decision related to them is required.

The first time governance as a term was used by the World Bank in 1989 in the report of Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth; A Long Term Perspective Study (The World Bank, Sub Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth; A Long Term Perspective Study). The World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) Handbook describes governance as a way that "[...] power is exercised through a country's economic, political and social institutions" (The World Bank, A Sourcebook for Poverty Reduction Strategies 271). UNDP, The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) stated global perspectives on governance concept. UNDP explains the concept of governance as "[...] the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority necessary to manage a nation's affairs." (UNDP, Reconceptualising Governance: Discussion Paper-2 7). Accordingly, OECD provides the definition of governance as "governance denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development." (OECD 14). On the other hand, IMF states that "Governance is a broad concept covering all aspects of the way a country is governed, including its economic policies and regulatory

framework, as well as adherence to the rule of law.” (IMF, Good Governance Factshit 1). In a broader concept including the principles and features of governance, The Ninth Development Plan of Turkish government emphasizes governance concept conveying the definition as:

[...] a compatible economic and political order which give importance to democracy, the principles of the rule of law and human rights, participation, effectiveness and efficiency, local administration, openness, transparency and accountability, quality, competence and ethics are dominant, which help civil society to develop by highlighting civil society organizations, which have independent functioning judicial system, which is compatible with the advancement in technology. (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, Kamuda İyi Yönetişim Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu 5)

The overall of the definitions point out that governance as a concept including economic, political and social aspects could not be restricted with a narrow context. In this new approach, problem solving and decision-making are ensured by all sectors of society with a partnership of central government, local government, business environment, workers, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, scientists, women, children, youth and indigenous people (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, Kamuda İyi Yönetişim Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu 2). The traditional administration model changes to the one that consists of multi-actors emphasizing the governing issues. Governance approach very much concerns with public sectors, private sectors and NGOs as well as states. In the governance approach a mutual cooperation of social actors exist highlighting the civil participation takes base on transparency, openness and accountability (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, Kamuda İyi Yönetişim Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu 4). Kooiman asserts that the relation between state and citizens gain the features of dynamic, complex and mutual interaction (3). Before the governance approach, governments have been on the focus of management process. Rosenau discusses that new actors in global and local levels appears and no longer centralized authority could become only one model (3). By the governance approach, administrators and public people affects each other in a systematic way. Adıgüzel claims that in participatory context, taken decisions have the features of quality and legitimacy (49). Çukurçayır assumes that public is

perceived as stakeholders in the decision-making position by giving direction to public policies in accordance with demands (Çukurçayır, Yerel Yönetimler:Kuram, Kurum ve Yeni Yaklaşımlar 50).

International organizations such as UN and European Union (EU) took the concept of governance into their agenda by conveying the principles of good governance. UN describes the elements of good governance as “transparency, responsibility, accountability, participation and responsiveness (to the needs of the people)” (United Nations Commission on Human Rights, The Role of Good Governance in the Promotion of Human Rights). European Commission created its own governance concept which is named “White Paper on European Governance” in 2001. The principles of good governance in the White Paper conveys the meaning of: “[...] openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence [...]” (European Commission, European Governance: A White Paper 10). According to UN, “Good governance promotes equity, participation, pluralism, transparency, accountability and the rule of law, in a manner that is effective, efficient and enduring” (United Nations, Governance). On the other hand, it is an argument how to make people to participate in the governance processes and in what ways to raise awareness about participation to governance issues.

2.2.2. Forms and Models of Participation

Participation at the local level could occur in different ways. In order to have an effective participation that serves democracy it is necessary to have a systematic way by the comprehension of various forms and models. Yalçındağ classifies participation as active and passive (Belediyelerimiz ve Halkla İlişkiler 131). Yalçındağ assumes that in active participation public who provide the first initiative are interested in issues related to city by conveying their ideas (Belediyelerimiz ve Halkla İlişkiler 131). Public initiative could be organized or unorganized but intended to effect the public authorities in decision-making processes. Yalçındağ provides the second type of participation as passive because it is started by a public authority initiative such as by municipalities (Belediyelerimiz ve Halkla İlişkiler 131). Another classification regarding participation is traditional forms of participation and new methods of participation. Çukurçayır states traditional participation methods as elections of mayors and municipality council members;

direct democracy and participation; dismissal of selected representatives by public opinion pools (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 135-43). According to Çukurçayır, casting vote every five years is founded insufficient concerning formation of a participatory democratic social structure (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 135). On the other hand, Çukurçayır conveys modern participation methods as citizen initiatives, planning chambers, citizen committiees, future workshops, community organizing, roundtable meeting and forums, public opinion pools, public meetings, participation to municipality council meetings, electronic democracy and internet, phone, forums, petition, socialist and solidaristic organizations and NGOs (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 143-70). In the same respect, Belli and Aydın add Local Agenda 21 and city councils to the list (139). Çukurçayır asserts that citizen initiatives could be started by individuals about dissatisfaction of public decisions by following a systematic way (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 143). Planning chambers on the other hand refers to the work of a randomly selected groups of people to solve determined problems accompanied by experts (Çukurçayır, Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 145-48). Çukurçayır specifies citizen committiees as the groups that are neglected by social structure are involved in the local decision-making processes (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 149). Polat explains that future workshops include issues related to the youth and roundtable meetings consist of a wide range of issues such as women and environment problems (9). Çukurçayır, on the other hand, defines public meetings as organizations of municipalities in order to inform the public about government activites (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 154). One of the methods that increases public participation at the local level could be stated as participation to municipality council meetings in which citizens could transfer their demands and problems to the government authorities (Çukurçayır, Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 156). Belli and Aydın explains electronic democracy, in other words, internet as a tool to develop democracy by providing citizens opportunities to engage in democratic activities on public space (139). As a final assumption concerning participation methods, voluntary participation mechanism increases public participation by providing an opportunity to support and control local governments.

On the other hand, in the international literature, different ideas regarding participation methods have been existed. One of them belongs to Koryakov and Sisk which provides the model of “standing citizen advisory councils” which are placed under the consultation category of participation (28). In the definition of Koryakov and Sisk, this model includes citizens who representatively provide suggestions and proposals to the local authority by the knowledge of or interest in a particular issue (28). Sario and Langton provides another participation model as “citizen advisory committees” in which citizens are expected to represent the ideas and intentions of their groups and communities (217). Rowe ve Frewer provides one of the significant participation method which is named as “citizen/public advisory committee” that includes groups in small size and they are selected by sponsors as being a representative of various groups (9).

In recent years, participation of the different social groups at the local level arises as a significant point. The participation of children in the social life gains importance. However, debates regarding appropriate models have been existing. Stephenson, Gourley, and Miless describe the types of participation for children as “children’s clubs”, “children’s movements and networks”, “children’s councils” and “children’s parliaments” (23). Stephenson et al. claim that children’s councils in decision-making at the local level are found as a significant step in achieving child participation (26). In the same respect, children’s parliament encourages children to participate in decision-making processes by providing an opportunity to them to get a voice at political level which makes them develop an understanding concerning child related issues (Stephenson et al. 27).

One of the modern ways of participation of public concerning disadvantaged groups in the society is Local Agenda 21 (LA21) programme. Municipalities are one of the programme partnership of LA21 at the local level in Turkey. UN Rio Earth Summit and LA21 very much emphasize the concept of governance (United Nations, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: Agenda 21). Ergin asserts that municipalities support democracy by providing various forms of participation through elections, pools, referendum, NGO’s, at the level of neighborhood, citizen participation, participation of citizens to parliament decisions, call back, communication technologies, local ombudsman, voluntariness in

participation to local services and LA21 application (54-70). The programme of LA21 creates city council applications which are described as a new participatory mechanisms in the Turkish context.

2.3.City Councils: Participation Model in Democracy at the Local Level

The function of traditional representative democracy is argued whether or not achieved its aims regarding participation in democracies at the local level. In this respect, modern democratic approaches are developed such as participatory democracy which emphasizes participation of public actively to the decision-making processes. The right of public in the determination of needs and problems as well as participation to the solution oriented decision-making processes reveals ineffectiveness of traditional participation models. In this context, the governance approach has a concern on governing together come into the agenda. In governance approach, people who govern and are governed acted together. City councils are rooted in the governance approach which becomes a pioneer for Agenda 21 concept and LA21 projects that have turned into a program at the local levels in Turkey.

2.3.1. Historical Background of City Councils

City council mechanism emerges from LA21 project which is based on Agenda 21 plan. The starting point consists of the consumption of natural resources and the contamination of the world that the industrial revolution accelerates. The conference in the name of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment occurred referring those problems in Stockholm in 1972 (United Nations, Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment). The period continued with establishment of World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1983. Brundtland Common Future Report followed the establishment in 1987 (United Nations, Development and International Economic Cooperation: Environment-Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development). In the Rio Environment and Development Conference also known as Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 by the participation of 179 countries which reported a declaration in the name of Global Action Plan and they accepted it as Agenda 21 including four sections and forty chapters (United Nations, Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development). The action plans

convey the meaning of local solutions for sustainable development referring environment and development problems. The process of global cooperation gains importance. The traditional government approaches change to governance approach. The cooperation between local governments, NGO's as well as other local actors and international communities gain the attention. Görün asserts that public, private and civic society actors cooperate actively in this method which includes democracy, public space and local government relationship (182). The most important suggestion of Agenda 21 is to provide facilities in order to prepare local action plans. Therefore, local authorities should develop a consultative process with their citizens and to apply LA21 for their own communities. The chapter 28 in the name of "Local Authorities Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21" constitutes the starting point of the process of LA21 (United Nations, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: Agenda 21). LA21 constitutes a plan that prevails how development becomes sustainable concerning social, economic and environmental issues by including participatory mechanisms. Local partnership and governance approach are at the significance in LA21 with the aim of enhancement of democracy at the local level.

2.3.2. The Formation of City Councils in Turkey

The concept of governance was used in Turkish first time in The Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements: HABITAT II, in İstanbul within the year of 1996. Çetinkaya and Korlu explains that in the conference, local governments are suggested to prepare LA21 plan and to implement in their own district (97). Habitat II Conference emphasizes fundamental principles such as democracy, being respectful to human rights, transparency, participation and accountability which are basement for the LA21 (United Nations, Habitat II Conference: UN Conference on Human Settlements). Emrealp perceives the first phase of LA21 as the implementation of "The Encouragement and Development Project of LA21 in Turkey" which is supported by UNDP in the coordination of International Union of Local Authorities, Section for the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Region (IULA-EMME) (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 30). UNDP, The Turkish Government and IULA-EMME signed the projects in 1997. At the first time 23 cities join to the project. The first part of the project constitutes "Promotion and Development of Local Agenda 21

in Turkey” in pilot cities (United Nations, Turkey Local Agenda 21 Program). Emrealp (2011) explains that the second phase of LA21 in the name of “Implementing Local Agenda 21 in Turkey” started in January 2000 and the project changed as “Turkey Local Agenda 21 Program” by the partnership of the Ministry of Interior-General Directorate of Local Authorities (The City (Citizens’) Councils 4). Emrealp reports that by the increasing number of local governments that participate to the project, LA21 turned into a program rather than a project (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 30). Emrealp asserts that in 2001, UNDP selected the program as resulting in successful experiences in terms of Turkey and determined as “best practice” to be presented during the UN World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (The City (Citizens’) Councils 6). The third phase of the LA21 programme consists of a series of projects. Emrealp explains the main emphasizes of the project are to create LA21 Governance Network, to make women and youth participate in local decision-making process, to increase recognition of the programme in government and public sphere (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 30). LA21 project assists to the realization of governance principles in the local governments. Emrealp concerns that municipalities will facilitate the process by internalizing and putting governance approach into the core of their administration structure (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 40). In this respect, good governance consists of opportunities which are provided by municipalities to the public in order to participate decision-making processes. In this concept, Municipality Law No.5393 is reformed on July 12, 2005 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.25874). Emrealp asserts that city council structures attain a significant legal stronghold by Article 76 of regulated Municipal Law No.5393 (The City (Citizens) Councils 9). According to the Article 76 in Municipality Law No.5393, the principles that city council will follow:

[...] development of a vision of the town or city’s future and of an awareness of citizenship of the town or city; protection of the town’s or city’s rights, laws and regulations; sustainable development; environmental awareness; social solidarity and mutual assistance; transparency; accountability; participation and local selfgovernment. (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Municipality Law No.5393)

One of the most important function of city councils constitutes participation in order to effect the administration processes by advicing at the local level. The Law commission of the Ministry of Interior prepared Regulation on Citizens' Assembly which is published in the Official Gazette of Turkey on October 8, 2006 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.26313). This process leads to another success which is presented by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) during the 7th Global Forum on Reinventing Government in Vienna, 2007 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs). Emrealp states that UNDESA perceives Turkey as a successful model in terms of participatory governance (The City (Citizens) Councils 6). In order to continue to the progress, increased support of local units comes to the agenda. In this respect, Şat states that municipality constitutes a local government unit that provides assistance and support to the formation of the city council (116). In the same direction The Ministry of Interior revised articles by Regulation for Amending the Regulation of Citizens' Assembly *Kent Konseyi Yönetmeliğinde Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Değişiklik* on June 6, 2009 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.27250). Regulation strenghtenes the structure of city councils as well as facilitates the participation process.

2.3.3. The Structure and Current State of City Councils

Article 5 of the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly explains establishment requirements of city councils in Turkey. The most significant requirement constitutes a municipal entity which should assist and support to establish city council within the three months following the election results at the local level (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Regulation on Citizens' Assembly 1). Article 9 conveys three significant organs of city council mechanism: "The General Board, Executive Committee, Assemblies and Working Groups" (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Regulation on Citizens' Assembly 3-4). The last organ was added in 2009 by Regulation for amending the Regulation of Citizens' Assembly as president of the citizens' assembly (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.27250). The members of city councils are listed in Article 8 as:

(1) the highest civil administrator of the locality, or his representative; (2) he mayor or his representative; (3) representatives, not to exceed 10, of public entities to be nominated by governors in provinces and by district governors in districts; (4) all neighbourhood masters in municipalities that have up to 20 neighbourhoods, or for other municipalities, representatives elected by neighbourhood masters convened upon the mayor's call from among themselves not to be less than 30 percent of the total number of neighbourhood masters and not to exceed 20; (5) representatives of political parties with an organization established in the town; (6) at least one and at most two representatives from universities; or in case there is more than one university, one representative from each university; (7) representatives of public professional organizations, trade unions, notaries, bar associations and related associations and foundations; (8) one representative from each of the assemblies and working groups formed by the citizens' assembly. (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Regulation on Citizens' Assembly 3)

The membership to city council is voluntary. City council structures underline participation of different segments of society. Municipality Law No.5393 Article 76 underlines the representatives in city council as: “[...] public professional organizations, trade unions, notaries public, universities if any, the civil society organizations concerned, political parties, public entities and neighbourhood masters, and other parties concerned.” (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Municipality Law No.5393). Duties of the city council which are regulated by the Article 6 of Regulation on Citizens' Assembly are to enhance democratic participation in the local units by embracing governance approach which consists of a number of actors and partners, to maintain sustainable development, to put planning, implementation and problem solving processes on the agenda and to develop action plans for city with a common sense (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü Regulation on Citizens' Assembly 2). In the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly, in the concern of subsidiarity, it is signified to create a consensus based on participation culture and democracy as well as protection of values, identity and resources of the city (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü Regulation on Citizens' Assembly 2). Civil society is

another factor that should be developed. Article 6 in Regulation on Citizens' Assembly ensures that city councils: "[...] increase the activity of children, youth, women and people with disabilities in social life and ensure their active participation in local decision-making mechanisms" (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü Regulation on Citizens' Assembly 2). In the administration of the city, the principles of "transparency, participation, accountability and predictability" are very much emphasized in the Article 6. (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü Regulation On Citizens' Assembly 2). The duties also underlines the significant point that "[...] the opinions of the citizens' assembly are communicated to the relevant municipality for consideration." (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü Regulation On Citizens' Assembly 2). Regulation of Citizens' Assemblies emphasizes governance as a concept refers to the governing by concerning participation, transparency and accountability by multiactors and social partnership (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Regulation on Citizens' Assembly). Bozkurt explains that the reason of presence of city councils constitutes to enhance participation to decisions regarding governance principles, to mold public opinion and to verify that the proper authority being used (237). According to implications of Regulation on Citizens' Assembly regarding democracy and participation at the local level, participation contributes to democracy as well as consciousness of living together. In order to determine basic strategies and action plans related to the city, establishment of a collective wisdom by the city council is required. According to Regulation on Citizens' Assembly, city councils will contribute to the development of civil society. One of the significant implication is that city councils will increase the effectiveness of children, women, youth and disabled persons in the social life. It is also critical to make them take an active role in the local decision-making mechanisms. City councils add much to the values of democracy such as freedom and equality by providing platforms to women, children and other interest groups to have a voice regarding the problems and solutions. City council will provide its own opinions and recommendations. The opinions are expected to be forwarded to the concerned municipality by city council in order to be evaluated by municipality councils. In this respect, if local governments get an approach of managing together, city councils will contribute to the administration process by information and experience they have.

Emrealp asserts that the role of municipality in the process of LA21 is indispensable as it is in the world (Yerel Yöneticinin 1 Nisan Rehberi 78). In this respect, municipality as a unit of local governments constitutes to have a facilitating effect with respect to partnership approach. Accordingly, due to the problems encountered in practice, in the light of the suggestions Regulation for Amending the Regulation of Citizens' Assembly is published in the Official Gazette of Turkey on June 6, 2009 (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.27250). The main issue is that municipalities should provide financial support to city councils by making respective allocations in their budgets by the Article 16/A (T.C. Resmi Gazete No.27250). The support is ensured by Municipality Law No.5393 Article 76: “[...] The municipality shall provide assistance and support in order to ensure that the assembly's activities are conducted effectively and efficiently [...]” (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Municipality Law No.5393).

Currently, in the statistic information concerning 81 cities and 892 districts in Turkey, the number of city councils constitute 439, the number of women's assemblies is stated as 281 whereas the number of youth assemblies is specified as 277 (Mahalli İdareler il Genel Müdürlüğü, 81 İlde Kadın Sığınma Evleri ve Kent Konseyi İstatistikleri). On the other hand, statistical information concerning children's assemblies and assembly of disabled persons have not been existing although information is requested from General Directorate of Local Authorities and Family and Social Policies Ministry in 2014. In İstanbul, the number of city councils is thirty-seven, the number of women's assemblies is stated as thirty-one and youth assemblies as thirty-three in 2014 (Mahalli İdareler il Genel Müdürlüğü, 81 İlde Kadın Sığınma Evleri ve Kent Konseyi İstatistikleri). According to a research of B. Şahin the number children's assemblies is stated as ten (998). Although the reported number of city councils and assemblies, the activeness regarding their status is an arguable point. The activeness could be determined according to practices, developmental reports and related proceedings and organized existing works. In this respect, among fifty-nine assemblies, active assemblies in İstanbul constitute eighteen in number by the year of 2012 (B. Şahin 998).

In 2006, UNDP reported that LA21 supported participation of civil society organizations and citizens to decision-making processes (UNDP, Local Administration Reform in Turkey). On the other hand, European Union published Turkey 2008 Progress Report and evaluated the city councils in the section of “political criteria” by citing that:

City councils, which are designed to be a platform to enhance citizens' participation in local government, have been functioning effectively in only a limited number of cities. Efforts are needed to strengthen all city councils. Accountability systems and transparency also need to be strengthened. (Commission of the European Communities, Turkey 2008 Progress Report 8)

Support of UNDP concerning local government reform starting from 2005 resulted in implementation of a projects that is named Local Administration Reform Project (LAR Phase I) which is accomplished by EU financial support. The aim is to support progression of legislative framework, to provide tools for planning and budgeting needs of the local units as well as to provide resource people. Accordingly the second phase of support which is named as LAR Phase II came to the agenda between 2009 and 2011 in order to make possible a government that has the values of transparency, involvement and participation. Other significant aims of the project are implementation of new legislation, improve the capacity of city councils and other forms of citizen participation and advance the capacity of local authorities by domestic and international municipal cooperation (UNDP, Support to the Further Implementation of Local Administration Reform). In the implementation of LAR Phase II project, a study is advanced by Özden in 2010 with the name of The Study of Determination the Current Status of Strengthening Local Participatory Mechanisms *Yerel Katılım Mekanizmalarının Güçlendirilmesi Mevcut Durum Tespiti Çalışması*. Özden provides a report in this study on city councils concerning their functioning by focusing on low level of awareness about city councils, restricted perception about the function of city councils such as being a municipality unit, lack of an independent budget from municipality and low level of participation to city council (8). Özden also underlines the point that city councils do not function as

participatory mechanisms to local decisions (20). Moreover, the general indication of Özden being coincide with European commission Turkey 2010 Progress Report is that participatory mechanisms at the local level should be strengthened. In this respect, European commission Turkey 2010 Progress Report emphasized local government by stating that: “Transparency, accountability and participatory mechanisms need to be strengthened, especially in local government to which further resources and responsibilities have been transferred.” (European Commission, Turkey 2010 Progress Report 9). Reports of European Commission continues in following years by emphasizing lack of expected empowerment of local government. In Turkey 2012 Progress Report city councils are stated as: “City councils, designed to encourage citizens’ participation in local government, functioned effectively in only a limited number of cities.” (European Commission, Turkey 2012 Progress Report 11). Turkey 2014 Progress Report did not mention city councils but emphasized “[...] devolving power to local governments [...]” (European Commission, Turkey 2014 Progress Report 10).

In recent years, the assumptions have revealed concerning city council mechanisms being unable to perform its function effectively in spite of the successful results of the LA21 program at the beginning in the Turkish context. Basically, four problematic areas are stated by Güneş and Beyazıt with respect to city council mechanisms in Turkey: legal area; administrative/organizational area; local people and NGO relations area; city council and municipality relations area (150). Güneş and Beyazıt point at the problems under the legal area as unbinding decisions of city councils; lack of legal entity; the undefined place of city councils in the participation process; undefined responsibilities; unclear concept of city councils (150). With respect to argument on city councils having enforcement power to be effective in decisions taken in the municipality councils Emrealp argues that city councils by having the claims about the possession of function regarding a decisive organ which “located on the municipality council” or “displays with the municipality council” will bring legal and structural problems as well as being contradictory to the principle of “local and self-management” (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 68). On the other hand, Özden argues that there is not almost any relationship between municipality council and city councils and the decision proposals of city councils to the municipality councils are very

limited (21). Moreover, taken decision of city councils have a recommendation feature in the municipality councils. However, in accordance with the argument of Öner, in order to ensure democracy at the local level, public should participate actively in decision-making process and control the process of implementation regarding taken decision of administration (54). Additionally, Özdemir asserts that Municipality Law No.5393 and Regulation on Citizens' Assembly make council decisions exist only as a suggestion and the mayor and municipality council decide on whether or not suggestions will be stay as proposals or turn into a taken decision (48). Moreover, Toprak argues that mayors take city council decisions under their effect by influencing the election of city council presidents (Yerel Yönetimlerde Başkanın Politik Lider Rolü 314). On the other hand, Emrealp claims that city councils are institutions that reinforces the association of local representation and participation rather than a mechanism that function as elected representatives (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 68). In this respect, Emrealp also claims that although the decisions of city councils are perceived in the structure of suggestion rather than binding for municipalities, city councils having a growing weight in the decision-making processes (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 69). However, Municipality Law (No.5393) Article 76 emphasizes that: "Opinions formed within the citizens' assembly shall be placed on the agenda of the municipal council and deliberated at its first meeting." (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Municipality Law No.5393). Soygüzel asserts that municipality councils do not discuss decision of city councils as a priority and do not step further to implement them (22). Accordingly, Köseoğlu asserts that city councils are not functional as participatory mechanisms at the local decisions (333). Therefore, as Savut claims the motivation of city council participants is effected negatively by the lack of binding of the decisions taken by city councils (360). In the same direction with Güneş and Beyazıt, Soygüzel claims that lack of a legal personality constitutes another problematic area of city councils (22). Emrealp claims that city council stakeholders demand a legal entity due to interlocutor position in the eyes of municipalities and central government institutions, supply of personnel, possession of personal budget, use of bank account of city council, collecting donations and getting use of international and domestic projects fundings (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 59). Geray argues that city

councils which are established as a civil initiative should not be included in municipality law (Kent Konseyleri Üzerine Görüşler 22). In this respect, Şat claims that in order to base city council establishment on democracy, the needs of local public about city councils should be taken into account instead of obligation referring the establishment of city councils (124). In accordance with the arguments against to obligatory position of city council establishment, Özdemir states the reason as having a voluntary participation base of city councils (45). The voluntary base of city councils establishment results in lack of city council awareness in local governments. As B. Şahin assumes many of the city councils have a presence only on paper (1001). In other words, they are established symbolically but not effectively used. Özden in the same respect reports that one of the significant issues concerning city councils is limited awareness of city councils in the society (8). According to the same explanation, Özden provides the report that they have difficulty in the formation of institutional identity and mostly are perceived as a municipality unit (8). In this respect, Soygüzel claims that the perception on city councils is being a backyard of municipalities (22). Accordingly, Bozkurt asserts that city councils could be perceived as a sub-unit of municipalities or a unit functioned on top of the municipalities (237). In the same direction, Erkul, Baykal and Kara claim that city council perceptions constitute being a unit of municipality (8). Those arguments indicate that city council concept is unclear in the society. According to the results of research by Görmez and Işıldar with university student in Ankara, the duties and establishment aims of city councils are not known well by university students (169). Bozkurt claims that in order to develop democracy at the local level, the comprehension of city council in right meaning is required beside participation of public (237). In this respect, the aims of assemblies in city councils is misperceived as the research of F. Şahin on women's assemblies indicates that instead of the expected aims of women's assembly as having a voice in the city regarding participation to problem-solving processes, the purpose of women to join to women's assemblies is to fulfill the leisure time (106). The results display that misperception concerning the aims and duties of city councils and its assemblies exists in the society.

The second problematic area stated as managerial/organizational. In this context, Soygüzel argues that city councils do not have their own budget (22). In this respect, Regulation on Citizens' Assembly Article 16/A states that "Municipalities shall provide in-kind and cash aid and support to citizens' assemblies by allocating funds from their budgets" (Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü, Regulation on Citizens' Assembly). Özdemir put forward two arguments that city councils should have its own budget, personnel and instruments like public institutions whereas the second argument supports an idea of a civil and autonomous structure of city council from municipalities with a financial support from NGOs (47). According to Özden independent budget is argued in city councils regarding independent decision-making processes (9). In this respect, if city councils are financially independent from municipalities they will have an effective role in representation of different segments in the society. As a result of financial dependence to the municipality city councils depend on municipalities in all actions. Özdemir assumes that municipalities have insufficient qualities to meet their own needs therefore financial support that allocated to city councils is ineffective (48). Moreover, the summary report agenda of Turkey City Councils Union Relationship and Partnership Network in Regional Balıkesir Meeting *Türkiye Kent Konseyleri Birliği Bölgesel Balıkesir Toplantısı Özet Raporu* conveys a significant assumption. According to report, to determine proportionate budget of city councils in the municipality budget allows easier movement to city councils (Türkiye Kent Konseyleri Birliği 1). Contrary to the assumptions that supports an independent budget, the demand on legal personality and independent budget could mean that city councils have an intention to be an institution which have already existed numerous in Turkey. In the same report, it is asserted that the meaning of independent budget of city councils could be resulted in a new public institution (Türkiye Kent Konseyleri Birliği 1). Emrealp claims that city councils will be away from being a platform position (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 69). However, civil structure of city council mechanisms constitutes unique for participation to administrative and decision-making processes. Güneş and Beyazıt assume that the structure of working groups and assemblies also could be searched under the organizational problems of city councils due to having members out of city councils, lack of internal dynamics and failure to provide continuity (150). Özdemir on the other hand asserts that working groups and assemblies which should be

formed in the direction of problems of the city by executing solution based studies have a significant value regarding contribution to participation at the local level (50). Emrealp claims that a powerfull relationship between city councils and its organs of assemblies and working groups will increase the effect of volunteer participation (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 82). Thus, internal dynamic and continuity will be realized. In the same direction, strong bind between city councils and women's assemblies is required (Emrealp, Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 88). Özdemir suggests that the problems of more disadvantaged groups in the society concerning women, children, youth and disabled people should be argued and developed solutions in the participatory platforms such as the assemblies (50). Accordingly, children are mentioned under special interest group in city council mechanism. On the other hand, children are under the category of one of the disadvantaged groups in the society. Emrealp assumes that relationship between disadvantaged groups and city councils is required more than providing a formal and ostensible right (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 102). City councils are required to make effort in creating solutions to problems of children from different segments in the society (Emrealp, Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 102). In this respect, the platforms such as children's assemblies assume the role of providing children opportunities to freely express their opinions in decision-making processes. The problems concerning city council members could be cited as having different political tendencies as members. Özdemir claims that in the formation of working groups and assemblies, city councils should have a neutral structure regarding political ideas (49). Güneş and Beyazıt assert that it is also a problematic issue that elected city council presidents feel responsible not to the public but to the people who is influential in the election (150). As Çukurçayır indicates it constitutes a problem that in the implementation of city councils the initiative is belong to the mayor (Yerel Yönetimler:Kuram, Kurum ve Yeni Yaklaşımlar 168). It is argued also by Özden that mayors become decisive and city councils function under the effect of municipality (20). In this respect, Özdemir claims that it is resulted in the work of city councils based on the interest of mayor which directs the activities of city councils in a narrow mannor (50). Moreover, Çetinkaya and Zorlu argue that the participation process of city councils are perceived as ineffective by municipality councils. It could lead to municipality

council not to take serious the proposals of city councils in participation process. Bozkurt emphasizes one of the reasons about uncontinuity of city councils as mayors' use of city councils in their individual decisions (238).

The third area as Güneş and Beyazıt claims that constitutes a problematic issue is city council and municipality relations (150). As it is reported by Özden city councils are perceived as a unit of municipalities (8). S. Şahin asserts that the presidential authority of some city councils consist of mayors, deputy mayors, deputy chairman and the member of municipality council and city councils are provided as means of municipal institutions (182). Therefore, city councils are perceived as a subsidiary bodies of municipalities. Soygüzel claims that city councils in some municipalities are established in order to perform the legal obligations (22). Beyond the assumptions on establishment, Güneş and Beyazıt concerns with mayors who demand for a supportive city council structure rather than an opponent (150). In this respect, T. Bulut claims that city councils provided legitimacy by supporting the activities of municipality instead of effecting decision making processes and protection of city rights (127). S. Şahin claims that representation and participation at the local level constitute a problematic area (186). One of the problems that Güneş and Beyazıt underline is municipalities which do not include city councils in their strategic planning and yearly activity reports (150). Özdemir regards the issue that city councils should take place in the strategic planning and yearly activity reports of municipalities (49). Özden argues that city councils do not participate into the process of strategic planning of municipalities (15). Moreover, as Özden states they do not contribute to planning and they are far away from being partnership (14). It could be mean that the works and studies of municipalities concerning future of the city are determined by excluding city councils in the process by municipalities.

The last problematic area could be provided as local people and NGO relations. It is mainly related to the development of participation conciousness of local people (Güneş and Beyazıt 150). In this respect, the vision of public on finding enough to vote in elections constitutes obstacle for participation. Drawing upon a conception advanced by Dursun who argues a form of culture which assists to the development of democratic political culture could be named as participatory culture in which individuals are aware of political system, institutions and processes (85).

According to Kerman, Altan, and Akteş city councils increase the interest of public to the city management (26). However, Çevikbaş and Kaplan assumes that a citizenship consciousness should be created in order to be aware of rights and responsibilities in the context of participation (35). In this respect, T. Bulut asserts that in order to have a participation in the real meaning, it is not enough to participate decision-making processes and then leave up the process (134). It is valuable to have a consciousness in participation approach as well as stability. People in general focus on the results thus the demand for participation decrease. One of the problematic area is voluntariness. In the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly, the establishment of women's assembly and youth assembly as well as other groups such as children's assembly and the assembly of disabled are suggested. In order to generate a participatory democracy, the participation culture should be created by including all local disadvantaged groups such as women and children in the decision-making processes. B. Şahin claims that although bureaucratic structure decreases by emphasize on voluntariness, the large amount of assemblies are not functional in city councils due to voluntariness requirement (996). Moreover, it is required to incorporate all groups in the community to the decision-making processes and to implement the decisions are taken. Belli and Aydın asserts that public whose decision are not considered by local governments would not participate in meetings and local development will sustain without local democracy (146).

2.3.3.1. Women's Assembly

The main participatory structures under the umbrella of the city councils constitute working groups and assemblies mainly women's assembly, youth assembly, children's assembly and assembly of disabled persons. Regulation on Citizens' Assembly states the assemblies and working groups as the organs of the city council. Çukurçayır asserts that as a requirement of modernization and development, participation in public life of women gains importance concerning expression of women in social life in the process of formation of urban environment which met the requirements of women (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 172). Emrealp asserts that at the first years of the LA21 project, an argument comes to the force about the necessity of a separate platform for women (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 83). As a result, insufficient representation of women in city councils concerning women participation in

decision-making processes is required to establish women platforms which have turned to women's assemblies by times (Emrealp, Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 83). Çukurçayır argues that governments should benefit from the experience of women regarding the problems women encountered in urban life (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 172). Emrealp asserts that women's assembly of city council could be described as a platform that aims to bring together all relevant local stakeholders under the same umbrella (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 32). Moreover, Emrealp claims that women's assembly strengthens the representation of women in city councils as well as provides priority to gender issues in order to come into the agenda of the city management (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 31). Accordingly, Emrealp points out the significant functions of women's assembly mechanism which are listed as supporting active participation of women in decision-making and planning processes, having awareness about urban and women problems and responsibilities, policy-making concerning women point of view, to create awareness on gender issues and problems and to have responsibility in the execution of local services (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 32).

Emrealp states the constituents of the women's assembly in the definition of all women residing in the city (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 33). In this regard, Emrealp states that a balance exists among representatives by including members of women elected at the local level, representatives of public institutions concerned with women related issues such as bars, professional chambers, women centers of universities, women-related cooperatives, clubs, foundations and associations (The City (Citizens') Councils 27). However, in order to have an assembly structure, women's assemblies should also consider how to reach the unorganized women in the city. In this respect, cooperation with NGOs which work on women could facilitate the process. In order to have coordination of all women's assemblies, the joint committee established by the representatives of the women's assemblies. Emrealp states that starting from 2002, each year a "Women Activities Festival" *Kadın Etkinlikleri Festivali* is organized in order to survive the coordination

(Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 34). Emrealp claims that the coordination of city councils and women's assemblies gains importance concerning a thread of insufficient representation of women in the urban-scales participatory platforms and poor representation of women's perspectives in the local governments (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 88).

2.3.3.2.Children's Assembly

Emrealp describes children's assembly as a platform which is established in the light of LA21 that concerns children as special interest group in Turkey (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 42). Regarding the purpose of children's assembly, Emrealp points out to make UNCRC active at the local level, to represent children from different segments, to put significant child issues on the agenda, to search for solution and to participate in local decision-making processes as active agents (Yerel Gündem 21 Uygulamalarına Yönelik Kolaylaştırıcı Bilgiler El Kitabı 99). Emrealp states the functions of children's assemblies as to develop urban consciousness and to gain attributes of working together within the partnership approach (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 43). One of the significant function of children's assemblies is opportunity to develop a participatory approach at the adulthood. In the same direction, Erbay claims that children's assemblies provide opportunity for achievement of democratic culture (Çocuk Hakları 107). Accordingly, city councils have a significant value in terms of providing experiences to children in participation process and giving them responsibilities in decision-making processes. According to Çukurçayır in the regulation of urban areas to include children's needs as well as to consult them contributed to democratic governing approach (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 174). Emrealp claims that city councils are required to make effort regarding to provide solutions to the problems of working children, street children, mentally and physically disabled children and children in need of protection (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 43). Therefore, the establishment of children's assemblies in city council mechanisms is required to have a child point of view on problems related to children. As a result of obtaining information from e-mail

contacts and exploring web pages of city councils concerning the number of children's assemblies within the city councils in İstanbul, the findings indicate that thirteen children's assembly exist within İstanbul districts. However, twenty-six districts do not consist of children's assembly although the existence of city council mechanisms possibly due to existence of different mechanisms such as children's assemblies within the municipalities. Children's assembly of İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB) under the Directorate of Youth and Sports is one of them. Similarities as well as differences existed between two children's assembly structure. The age range of children both in İBB Children's Assembly and City Council Children's Assembly are stated as eight to fifteen or ten to fifteen in guidelines and legislations which include mainly children at the primary school level (İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Regulation on Children's Assembly, Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly Working Guideline and Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Children's Assembly). The members of İBB Children's Assembly are representatives of thirty-nine county chair person but the membership process is undemocratic due to determination of members by district and provincial level municipalities (İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Regulation on Children's Assembly). On the other hand, in city council structures, the representatives of each school in the same district are elected in a democratic way for children's assembly. Moreover, Kadıköy Children's Assembly includes representatives from foundations and associations which work for children as well as children from institutions of provincial social services (Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly Working Guideline). In accordance with the aims, differences arise regarding active participation of children to city management as it is ensured by Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly Working Guideline. İBB Children's Assembly aims children to be active concerning cultural, art and sport areas (İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Regulation on Children's Assembly). On the other hand, both assemblies support children to take place in the problem solving processes related to children. The awareness related to partnerships and urban issues is on the agenda of regulations concerning city council children's assemblies (Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly Working Guideline).

According to assumption of Toprak regarding the current state of children's assemblies in Turkey, the platform of LA21 concerning children achieves its aim in affecting local decision-making authorities (Çevre Yönetimi ve Politikası 25-27). In this respect, children who live in the city have a right to say a word related to child issues at the local level. On the other hand, Erbay claims according to reports of some academics and people who are exercising in the field, children's assemblies are institutions in which ideas of children are not considered and they are established as symbolically and they are not active (Çocukların Katılım Hakkı Üzerine Bir Türkiye Değerlendirmesi 49). Erbay states that works of children's assemblies are not known well by children and although they are perceived as significant, they are found for show only and dysfunctional by adults (Çocuk Hakları 109). Accordingly, Erbay claims that local governments do not gain conscience about children (Çocukların Katılım Hakkı Üzerine Bir Türkiye Değerlendirmesi 49). Moreover, Değirmencioğlu assumes that mayors and governors are lack of required knowledge about children's rights and participation (384). At the institutional level, it is misleading that participation of children and youth is restricted to the determined activities and level of participation is measured accordingly (Karataş and Acar 37-38). Değirmencioğlu asserts that the model of LA21 is not powerful enough in terms of child participation. At the public administration, municipalities except in a few metropolitan city are equipped weakly on child rights and participation issues (385).

CHAPTER 3: CITY COUNCIL IMPLEMENTATIONS

3.1.City Councils Concerning Women’s and Children’s Assemblies

City councils realize public participation by assemblies which are categorized as women’s assembly, youth assembly, children’s assembly and assembly of disabled persons. This thesis concerns women’s and children’s assemblies by sampling city councils in Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler districts in İstanbul by an emphasize on women’s and children’s participation at the local level. City councils aim to involve women and children in decision-making processes in consulting the issues of district related to women and children. The organs of city council women’s and children’s assemblies aim to provide opportunities in organizing women and children to be active agents in the city management. Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils Women’s Assemblies function in order to make women active in democracies at the local level. Children’s assemblies, on the other hand, aims to give a voice to children who are one of the most disregarded agents in terms of participation to decision-making processes in democracies. Children’s assemblies provides opportunities to children to be concerned with child related issues in district. Zeytinburnu Küçükçekmece and Kadıköy City Councils Children’s Assemblies aim to organize children to produce solutions to issues related to children living in district.

In order to comprehend the structure and functionality of women’s and children’s assemblies, analysis of each choosen city council structure by including their activities and works is required. One by one exploration of city councils and their women’s and children’s assemblies will provide implications regarding democracy and participation at the local level.

3.1.1. Zeytinburnu City Council

Zeytinburnu Municipality joined to LA21 in 2004 (Zeytinburnu Kent Konseyi, Zeytinburnu 1. Kent Konseyi Toplantı Tutanağı). Accordingly, Zeytinburnu Local Development and EU Affairs Coordination Center *Zeytinburnu Yerel Kalkınma ve AB İlişkileri Koordinasyon Merkezi (ZEYKOM)* has come to practitioner status in Zeytinburnu Municipality (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, ZEYKOM Hakkında). By the initiative of Zeytinburnu mayor LA21 process turned to Zeytinburnu City Council in 2004 (Zeytinburnu Kent Konseyi, Zeytinburnu 1. Kent Konseyi Toplantı Tutanağı). According to Regulation on Citizens' Assembly in 2006, the work of Zeytinburnu City Council is harmonized with the regulation (Zeytinburnu Kent Konseyi, Yerel Gündem 21'den Kent Konseyine Geçiş). Zeytinburnu City Council President is also Zeytinburnu Municipality Council member from a specific party as well as representative of mayor in the Zeytinburnu Municipality Council. According to interview with Ateş who is the general secretary of Zeytinburnu City Council, description of city council is “an institution which embraces the whole of the city and works in a solution-based structure.” Ateş provides the mission of Zeytinburnu City Council as “to have a participatory structure which combines the representatives of each group”. In the interview Ateş emphasizes that “Zeytinburnu City Council is an institution which identifies problems and provides solutions, activates people to solve problems, and follows the results.” The aim is explained as “to contribute to broaden the horizon of people who are leaving in the city and to add contribution in Zeytinburnu to become livable.” (Ateş). The duties of Zeytinburnu City Council according to Article 6 in Zeytinburnu City Council Working Procedures and Principles for Practice Guideline *Zeytinburnu Kent Konseyi Çalışma Usul Ve Esasları Uygulama Yönergesi* is appropriate to the duties that have been previously listed in Regulation on Citizens' Assembly. Article 6 indicates contribution to the “[...] development of democracy, civil society, multi-actor governance model, establishment of consensus, the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, opportunities to the children, youth, women and disabled persons in order to take an active role in local decision-making processes [...]” (Zeytinburnu City Council Working Procedures and Principles for Practice Guideline 2). It is also significant that one of the working principles of Zeytinburnu City Council is to take participation and collective wisdom as a basis (Zeytinburnu

City Council Working Procedures and Principles for Practice Guideline 3). Ates says that “Zeytinburnu City Council explores practical solution methods to ensure participation by cooperation of NGOs. Zeytinburnu City Council is a successful example.” In this respect, Zeytinburnu Municipality in 2010-2014 Strategic Plan emphasizes public participation in decision-making by the way of establishment of city councils (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi , Zeytinburnu Belediyesi 2010-2014 Stratejik Planı). The organs of the Zeytinburnu City Council are general board, executive committee, assemblies and working groups. The assemblies according to Article 12 constitute women’s assembly, youth assembly and assembly of disabled. Children’s assembly is established in November 2014. The working groups are NGO capacity development, health and environment, education and culture, the consumer rights, sports, social issues and tourism working groups (Zeytinburnu City Council Working Procedures and Principles for Practice Guideline 3). The meetings of general board are organized at least two times in a year. Ateş says that “District governor and mayor participate to general board meetings in which subjects of health, education, environment, human rights and urban transformation are discussed.” According to the requested data which was obtained by e-mail from Zeytinburnu Municipality information acquisition unit in January 13, 2015, decisions and discussion topics of Zeytinburnu City Council are evaluated in the first municipality council meeting and they are found appropriate (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, Re:Zeytinburnu Belediye Başkanlığı / Bilgi Edinme Birimi). Ateş also states that “a survey about problems is applied to members of city council and a report based on solution is prepared.” Accordingly, projects are planned and applied after Municipality Council have accepted and discussed all decisions that are taken appropriate to Municipality Law No.5393 Article 76 and Regulation on Citizens’ Assembly (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, Re:Zeytinburnu Belediye Başkanlığı / Bilgi Edinme Birimi). The kind of Zeytinburnu City Council suggestions and decisions which are discussed and approved by Zeytinburnu Municipality Council between the years of 2006-2012 are listed as: the reports on urban transformation, street children, governance, sport and education; the projects of Baby Friendly Zeytinburnu *Bebek Dostu Zeytinburnu*, I Like My Profession, *Mesleğimi Seviyorum*, the project of Protecting Children At Risk *Risk Altındaki Çocuklara Sahip Çıkma*, the suggestions on regulations, establishment of assembly of disabled people, education on sign language and to organize earthquake drill (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, Re:Zeytinburnu Belediye

Başkanlığı / Bilgi Edinme Birimi). According to working procedures, the evaluation is required to be announced to the public (Zeytinburnu City Council Working Procedures and Principles for Practice Guideline). However, only decisions starting from April 4, 2014 of Zeytinburnu Municipality Council are open to public as online (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). Therefore, Zeytinburnu Municipality Council decisions up to December 3, 2014 is explored and accordingly, name of city council could not be observed. On the other hand, Ates says that “Zeytinburnu City Council provides all decisions of general board meetings to municipality council. Zeytinburnu Municipality Council has found all decisions of Zeytinburnu City Council appropriate. Zeytinburnu City Council applied projects after Zeytinburnu Municipality Council had confirmed them.” Zeytinburnu City Council member structure has the same structure with the previously listed members of Regulation on Citizens’ Assembly (Zeytinburnu City Council Working Procedures and Principles for Practice Guideline). Zeytinburnu City Council meetings occurs regularly. The reports on meetings are published on the web sites (Zeytinburnu Kent Konseyi, Kent Konseyi Toplantıları). The participants of meeting are representatives of public institutions such as Zeytinburnu governor and mayor, neighborhood headmen, representatives of NGOs, representatives of health, art and sport institutions, political party representatives and provincial council members. In the meetings, surveys on city problems, report presentation of working groups, problems and suggestions are provided by members. Ateş explains that “Zeytinburnu City Council joins to EU Project and has benefit of the use of İstanbul Development Agency.” Ates also says that “Zeytinburnu City Council has cooperation with municipality, public institutions and NGOs.” The question regarding support of municipality, Ates says that “Municipality support city council about every issue such as working office, personnel, and equipment.” Ates also adds that “I support the current state of city councils concerning independent budget from municipality. If city council becomes independent, it may cause misperceptions about becoming an independent institution from municipality as well as a rival mechanism to municipality. Thus, it creates problems about the function of city council.”

Zeytinburnu Women's Assembly former president Demirel provides information about the works of women's assembly. Demirel who became the deputy mayor in Zeytinburnu Municipality after interview following local elections in March, 30, 2014 stated that assembly targeted to increase participation level of women starting from its establishment date of April 11, 2013. The organs of women's assembly are president of the women's assembly, executive board and working groups. Working groups have a significant function in the women's assembly to make women participate political and social life concerning democratic structures. Demirel said that: "sub-working groups and commissions could be listed as arge and project working group, neighborhood solidarity associations working groups, social assistance and solidarity working group, education and culture working group, public relations working group, old, orphan and disabled working group, women working group, foreigners working group, neighbourhood working group, legal awareness working group and family working group". Demirel explains that the meetings of Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly occur regulary. The board of directors of women's assembly occurs first Monday of each month and women's assembly executive board meeting occurs once a week, every Tuesday.

In Zeytinburnu Municipality, the institution of Family and Women Support and Disabilities Center *Aile Kadın Destekleme ve Engelliler Merkezi* (AKDEM) works in coordination with Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly. In the interview, Demirel explains the reason of being active in women's assembly as "to make women visible and have a say in political and social areas because women are disregarded in every area". Demirel also stated the importance of women's point of view to problems of district. Demirel stresses the aims of women's assembly as "to highlight the place of women in social and political life and to prepare women for labor market". Participants become aware of problems related to women in district. Women's needs and demands are determined and participants are encouraged in order to take active role in planning and problem solving processes by women's assembly. It is an indication of the efforts to make women active not only in political life but also to qualify them in terms of socio-economic position. Therefore, municipality provides marketing opportunities to women for their products. Zeytinburnu Municipality supports women's assembly by providing place to women to sell their own products as well as educating them about marketing techniques.

Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly is able to use AKDEM in meetings, conferences and studies of working groups. The support of municipality is found enough by women's assembly in terms of projects, personnel, a building to work and other facilities (Demirel). The members of women's assembly consist of social service agencies related to women, foundations, associations, neighbourhood associations, NGO's related to women, the bar representatives, elected women local government representatives and business world representatives. Demirel explains that "the membership process starts as either invitation of women to the assembly membership or self-initiative of women to be a member by leaving personal information." The number of members concerning management and executive board are stated as thirty-seven. Women get information about women's assembly by social media, local TV channels, local newspapers, NGO's, friends, neighbors, posters and brochures. In order to ensure participation of women to political life and decision-making processes, Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly provides seminars and educations about the political issues as well as it sends voluntary members to the international symposiums by support of Zeytinburnu Municipality. It is also significant to underline the support of Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly to women's assembly members regarding district headmen/women and the general provincial council membership positions in local elections (Demirel). Although suggestions and decisions of Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly are not reflected in Zeytinburnu Municipality council decisions according to investigation of published documents of Zeytinburnu Municipality Council meeting decisions between April 4, 2014 and December 3, 2014, Zeytinburnu City Council and Women's Assembly has gained a powerful representative in Zeytinburnu Municipality, Demirel who works for benefit of women's assembly in the position of the vice president in Zeytinburnu Municipality (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly work cooperatively with municipalities, LA21 secretary, İstanbul Narcotics Crime Branch Manager, city council assemblies, other women's assemblies and NGO's. The question of what could be done for a more powerful women's assembly is answered as "many problems that women face could be solved if women is given a value they deserve in social and political areas. Municipalities should continue to support women's assemblies at the local level in an increasing manner" (Demirel). Activities in 2006 concerning works of women are stated in the activity report of ZEYKOM. According

to the report, women in the city council participated to the meetings related to EU, women, youth, education and they represented Zeytinburnu Municipality. Women in the city council provided seminars to women in the World Women Day and a groups of women visited EU Information House in Taksim to have information about EU (ZEYKOM, Zeytinburnu Yerel Kalkınma ve AB İlişkileri Koordinasyon Merkezi'nin 2006 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu). In addition, to avoid substance use Safe Families-Safe Districts-Leader Family Project *Güvenli Aileler, Güvenli Mahalleler Lider Aile Projesi* is started by the coordination with Narcotics Crime Branch Manager in 2013 (Demirel).

Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly started working by the first meeting in November 17, 2014 (Zeytinburnu Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi). The aim is to provide children opportunities to make their own action plan and to ensure their roles in social life. Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly is a democratic platform which aims children to be able to voice their demands and proposals, to be able to learn their own cultural and moral values, and to be able to have confidence for future (Zeytinburnu Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi). Dal who gives information about children's assembly is a teacher in Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Learning Center *Zeytinburnu Yenidoğan Gökalp Bilgi Evi* which is a social and cultural center for children between the age of eight and eighteen. Dal has a role in children's assembly as providing coordination in determination of date of meetings, following the meetings and guiding children in meetings. Uncular who provides information about children's assembly is Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly vice president and provides coordination and communication in Zeytinburnu City Council. Uncular has also a role in guiding children in all the work of the children's assembly and to ensure their introduction to all relevant institutions. Uncular also monitors projects and the list of members of commissions of children's assembly. Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly consists of thirty-six voluntary children from seven learning centers *Bilgi Evi* in Zeytinburnu between the age of eleven and fourteen (Dal). Uncular and Dal explain that the aim of children's assembly is to provide children an environment in which they are able to express themselves and to voice their problems and solutions. Uncular and Dal also list commissions which works on specific issues related to children such as education; media and advertising; the rights of students; children's rights; environment; spor and disable persons. Dal states that

in the first meeting of children's assembly; the president, vice president and council members were chosen. In the second meeting, working commissions, their members and presidents were elected. Uncular explains that in the third meeting, the studies concerning 23 April Children's Day was performed. In addition, groups were created in order to produce projects which will be introduced to children's assembly and city council general board. Uncular states that studies are initiated to publish a journal within children's assembly. Uncular emphasizes also the success of Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly due to having a representative in İBB Children's Assembly. One of the members of Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly is elected as council member by the members of İBB Children's Assembly. Uncular and Dal states that Zeytinburnu Municipality provides any kind of support to children's assembly such as building supplies for meetings and studies, vehicle supplies and advertising. Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly uses social media in order to promote their works. Other activities that are planned in order to introduce the works of children's assembly consist of visits to various public institutions and their representatives in district (Uncular).

To sum up, Zeytinburnu City Council and its women's and children's assemblies are consistent with the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly and they function in accordance with Zeytinburnu City Council Working Procedures and Principles for Practice Guideline. The aims of Zeytinburnu City Council has an implication of governance approach. As a result of investigation of Zeytinburnu City Council, this structure works for active participation of its members in order to solve problems related to district. In this respect, different projects are produced by city council members and as interviews indicate they are accepted in Zeytinburnu Municipality Council meetings. As interview with the former president of women's assembly displays, Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly with its working groups aims to make women active agents in political and social life by qualifying them in socio-economic issues. Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assembly works actively by providing educations and seminars on politics, sending members to international conferences and producing projects to support families in town. The support of municipality is sufficient regarding place, personnel, material and partnership in projects. However, there is no any indication about existence of the proposals or decisions of Zeytinburnu City Council and Zeytinburnu Women's

Assembly in the municipality council decisions in 2014. According to investigation of published municipality council decisions, name of city council and women's assembly is not found. Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly is a newly established structure, therefore there is not any action concerning participation to decision-making processes.

3.1.2. Küçükçekmece City Council

Küçükçekmece City Council is established in 2006 by the support of Küçükçekmece Municipality. The president of Küçükçekmece City Council has a role in education sector away from a political background. The purposes of Küçükçekmece City Council indicates that Küçükçekmece City Council works with local government to produce projects for district needs with respect to development of city and urban people, to develop urban consciousness and consensus culture and to be in coordination with NGO's, political parties, chambers and other intellectual platforms (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, Amaçlarımız). In the personal interview with the general secretary of Küçükçekmece City Council, Güler stated the main aim as "to bring together city stakeholders and NGO's in the umbrella of collective wisdom and to reach a collective value". The aims of Küçükçekmece City Council have various implications regarding governance approach. According to Güler, "city council mechanisms could be called as civil society organizations." The organs of the Küçükçekmece City Council constitute general board, executive committee, assemblies, working groups and city council president according to Küçükçekmece City Council Guideline *Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Yönergesi*. Küçükçekmece City Council management principles constitute compatibility, accountability, neutrality, sensitivity, transparency, participation, sustainability, notifiable inducibility, conventionality, technological competence, attainability, institutionalism, modernism, efficiency, friendliness and preservation of moral values (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, İlkelerimiz). Güler says that the member structure is appropriate with the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly by consisting of district representatives. The number of members out of ninety-two general board members are approximately 250 (Güler). Küçükçekmece City Council establishes commissions which have the similar functions with working groups. In the Küçükçekmece City Council, the commissions could be stated as education and culture commission, environment and health commission, economic relations commission, promotion and

public relation commission, youth and sport commission (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, Komisyonlar). Küçükçekmece City Council meetings are organized regularly and meeting reports are published in the web page of city council. The first impression regarding observation of the general thirteenth ordinary meeting of Küçükçekmece City Council in October 2013 is its being open to participation of public. The president of Küçükçekmece City Council manages the meeting in a democratic way by giving a say to all representatives in the district such as mayor of Küçükçekmece, the director of the Kızılay, representatives from different parties, local media, civil society organizations, representatives of working groups, commissions and assemblies. The meeting is started by city council president's description concerning objectives and aims of city council. Then, working commissions and assemblies provide their yearly activity reports. It is significant to point out that the activity report of children's assembly is not provided by a child representative but an adult. At the end of the meeting, Küçükçekmece Mayor provides the works and projects of municipality and listens the problems of public sometimes by responding with a solution. The transparency is emphasized by city council not only by organizing meetings open to public but also reporting the meetings on the web page (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi 13. Olağan Genel Kurul Toplantısı). According to the statement of Güler in the interview, although a predetermined agenda is sent to the members concerning meetings, it is reviewed again together with the members. According to documents which are obtained, each decision of Küçükçekmece City Council is sent to Küçükçekmece Municipality which put them into their own agenda. One of document is related to Küçükçekmece City Council decisions of 13. General Assembly meeting in 2013. Küçükçekmece City Council sent decisions to Küçükçekmece Municipality which get them on the agenda in the Küçükçekmece Municipality Council meeting in February, 3, 2014. According to document, the issue is given in writing to the members of Küçükçekmece Municipality members who are accepted as to be informed (Küçükçekmece Belediye Başkanlığı Yazı İşleri). Küçükçekmece City Council follows the process and the demands could be put into the agenda of city council again in any dismissal (Güler). According to Güler, the issues are discussed in the municipality council meetings related to the environment, reconstruction, education and health. However, according to research of Küçükçekmece Municipality Council decisions between the period of January 6,

2014 and December 5, 2014 the name of Küçükçekmece City Council has not existed in the documents related to decisions (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). Moreover, according to research on Küçükçekmece Municipality Council meeting agenda between April and December of 2014, there is no any sign of city council (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, Meclis Gündemi). Küçükçekmece City Council publishes an “activity report” book each year. The activity report of 2014 consists of information about executive board meetings, the ordinary general assembly meetings, visits, activities, informational and review meetings (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Faaliyet Raporu 2014). Küçükçekmece City Council organizes share of idea meetings with district mufti, district neighborhood headmen, political party leaders of district, NGOs, educationalists and representatives of business. As a result of those meetings, the proposals to the problems and demands are reported to the appropriate institutions and accordingly, progress are followed up (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, Yapılan Çalışmalar). The examples of activities could be stated as “World Human Rights Day” activity, distribution of wheelchairs, the panel of “Turkey: Rising Power” “*Yükselen Güç Türkiye*”, the panel of “Juvenile Crime And Punishment” “*Çocuk Suç ve Cezaları*”, the seminar on “I am a Women-Then I Had” “*Kadınım O Halde Varım*” (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Faaliyet Raporu 2014). Güler articulated the subject of the main projects of the Küçükçekmece City Council as the active enrolment of women in the seminars on politics which are organized by women’s assembly, “No To Drugs” “*Madde Bağımlılığına Hayır*” campaign by youth assembly and the concern on the obesity by the education commission. Güler said that “Küçükçekmece Municipality prepared the strategic plans of 2010-2014 in coordination with the city council”. Güler also said that “Küçükçekmece Municipality supports the works of the city council by providing working office, material and an assistant personnel”. Güler regarding participation stated that “Regulation on Citizens’ Assemblies is contradictory in itself and public do not have a voice directly”. The members are representatives of different institutions that create general assembly which provides proposals. However, as Güler stated, “Küçükçekmece City Council always made public to participate directly to the decision-making processes by including and giving a voice them in the general ordinary meetings.”

The assemblies of Küçükçekmece City Council are women's assembly, youth assembly, children's assembly and assembly of disabled persons. Avşar who is the president of Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly as well as manager of the World of Turkish Office *Türk Dünyası Ofisi* and coordinator of projects in Küçükçekmece District Governor. In the interview Avşar states that "women's assembly is a participatory mechanism that has been provided for women by Küçükçekmece City Council since February 2006." The aims of Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly is: "women's solidarity, creation of sisterhood awareness, make women active in business life, e-commerce and entrepreneurship educations." (Avşar). The president of Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly conceptualized aim of women's assembly as to develop participatory management approach (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, T.C. Hukukunda Kadın Hakları El Kitabı 7). Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly is described by Avşar as a civil society organization which aims to propose solutions and to create projects related to the problems, needs and demands of the women living in the Küçükçekmece as well as participation to the implementation of the project by making women to take responsibilities (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, T.C. Hukukunda Kadın Hakları El Kitabı 7). Avşar stated the basic reasons of participation to the assembly as "[...] the problems that women face and efforts to search for a solution because women are perceived as not have an idea about how to solve their own problems in the society". Avşar also stated that her previous works in NGO's facilitates the process of sharing experiences. The overall aims of Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly complies with UN description of governance which implies that "[...] responsibility, participation and responsiveness (to the needs of the people) [...]" dimensions (United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *The Role of Good Governance in the Promotion of Human Rights*). The organs in the women's assembly are stated in Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Women's Assembly *Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi Yönetmeliği* as executive board, presidential board and commissions. Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly emphasized the working principles that make women in Küçükçekmece be aware of problems of the city and help women to have a voice in different areas such as work and politics, support women active in the determination of demands as well as creation of solutions and projects and to make them deliver their work to the responsible units (Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Women's Assembly). One of the commissions in the Küçükçekmece City Council

Women's Assembly constitutes legal commission which is run by the members of lawyers that transfer the changes in the acts to the women in the seminars and also support concerned legal problems (Avşar). Other commissions include social activities commission, education and culture commission, environment commission and struggle with the discrimination commission (Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Women's Assembly). The president of women's assembly adds also family commission. The number of members of Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly is almost 1000. The profile of members constitute women between the age twenty-five and fifty-five but also twenty-three men participate as member. Other members are social service agencies related to women, foundations, associations, neighborhood associations, NGO's related to women, the bar representatives, elected women local government representatives and business world representatives, unions, representatives of professional chambers, representatives of women cooperatives, academiissions and volunteer female participants. Moreover, each hometown has a representative in women's assembly in order to identify the problems and accordingly to provide solutions. The membership process includes membership to the facebook page of the assembly. Then, Turkish identity number and contact information is required for membership. The official documents are filled up by candidates and legal membership starts up by women's assembly (Avşar). The data indicates that strict procedures about membership is eliminated by women's assembly. Women get knowledge about women's assembly by social media, TV, newspapers, brochures and activity reports. The general assembly and district meetings occur regularly in order to strength relations among members (Avşar).

The activities of the women's assembly are to print women rights booklet, panels on women rights, to organize consultation meetings with İstanbul Women's Assemblies, to provide vocational training concerning women who are needy, to establish Küçükçekmece Women Platform, to visit women deputies concerning constitutional law and to organize a workshop about "Representation of Women in Politics" "*Siyasette Kadın Temsili*", to provide reports in city council symposiums, to be a member of Gökkuşığı Women Platform and Constitutional Law Women Platform, joint projects with other city councils and women assemblies (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi, Küçükçekmece Kadın Meclisi Faaliyet Raporu). According to research, one of the activity of Küçükçekmece City

Council Women's Assembly is the contribution of president of women's assembly to 2010-2014 Strategic Plan of Küçükçekmece Municipality (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, Küçükçekmece Belediyesi 2010-2014 Stratejik Planı). Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly also organized "Women Politics School" "*Kadın Siyaset Okulu*" seminars by the support of universities and almost 200 members of Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly members participated in (Avşar). According to Avşar "women problems at the local level are provided to the city council by women's assembly concerning security of women in the district with a demand on regulations". However, there is not any reflection of women's assembly suggestions and decisions in Küçükçekmece Municipality Council decisions between the period of January 6, 2014 and December 5, 2014 (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). Moreover, there is not any suggestion of women's assembly which is taken into agenda of Küçükçekmece Municipality Council meetings between April and December 2014 (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, Meclis Gündemi). Avşar also said that "every problem is solved by the coordination of city council and until now the mayor have supported the women's assembly and we hope the continuation of this support". It is found also significant that Küçükçekmece Women's Assembly works cooperatively with private and public institutions and organizations such as universities, children's assembly, youth assembly and assembly of disabled. In order to have a more powerful women's assembly, Avşar emphasizes a required legal entity of women's assemblies because of having the advantage of EU or developmental agent funds. Avşar regards that lack of legal entity could result in women's assembly to depend on municipality concerning support which is generally in the mercy of mayor. It could lead dependence in decision-making processes and restriction in implementations.

The organs of city councils aim to provide democratic participation of children as well as women to decision-making processes in local governments. Children's assemblies in city councils provides participation opportunity to children only in some metropolitan and district municipalities. Whereas, in early ages, children should encounter with a democratic atmosphere in order to sustain a democratic culture. Children's participation rights should be respected by society. An opportunity to express their ideas should be provided by adults. The establishment date of Küçükçekmece Children's assembly is 2006. The aim of the Küçükçekmece

Children's Assembly is defined by Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Children's Assembly *Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi Yönetmeliği* as to increase the sensitivity of elementary age children to their family, environment and the district, to increase their self-concept and develop the ability of representation, to provide opportunities in order to develop awareness of children about democracy in the European Union harmonization process, to make them to be in dialogue with universal cultures, to make them express various problems and demands as well as to help to produce solutions, to take an active role in social issues, to participate in activities related to education, culture, art and sport, to comprehend the national and cultural values of the country as well as customs and traditions (Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Children's Assembly). The aims of Küçükçekmece Children's Assembly are compatible with UN description of the elements of good governance as "responsibility, participation and responsiveness (to the needs of the people)" (United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *The Role of Good Governance in the Promotion of Human Rights*). Küçükçekmece City Council Children's Assembly consist of children between eight and fifteen years old. According to regulation on children's assembly Article 6 of the city council execution board demands representatives from school offices at the beginning of school term. Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Children's Assembly Article 9 determines the membership requirements. One of the main requirements of membership is parent permission. The other one is to fill up a membership application form. The name of the candidate must be reported to the city council by school offices. The children's assembly by the assistance of commissions determines the problems related to children and carries them to the city council. According to the Article 12 in the regulation of children's assembly the decisions of children's assembly are in the advisory level and conveyed to the Küçükçekmece City Council Executive Board. However, according to exploration of Küçükçekmece Municipality Council decisions between the period of January 6, 2014 and December 5, 2014 the name of Küçükçekmece City Council Children's Assembly is not reflected (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). Moreover, there is not any suggestion of children's assembly which is taken into agenda of Küçükçekmece Municipality Council meetings between April and December 2014 (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, Meclis Gündemi). The commissions are stated in the Article 8 as children's rights and problems, street children and their abuse, environment and health, education, culture

and public relations, sport commissions by children's assembly (Küçükçekmece City Council Regulation on Children's Assembly). The activities of Küçükçekmece Children's Assembly are the planting campaign, book donation campaign, to systemize school canteen controls, to observe and report internet cafe whether or not work appropriately to legal procedures, seminars on "Child Development, Education and Prevention of Domestic Violence" "*Çocuk Gelişimi, Eğitimi, Aile İçi Şiddetin Engellenmesi*", to visit street children and nursing homes and the seminars on "Children's Rights" (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi, Çocuk Meclisi Gerçekleşen Faaliyetler). Other significant activities of children's assembly that are reported in 2013 activity report compose of education of children with autism disorder, dental screening of disabled children, the project of "Basic Disaster Education in Kindergardens" "*Anaokullarında Temel Afet Eğitimi Projesi (ATAP)*" and exhibition of "Human Through The Eyes Of Children" "*Çocuk Gözüyle İnsan*" (Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi, Küçükçekmece Kent Konseyi Faaliyet Raporu 2013).

In conclusion, the purposes of Küçükçekmece City Council, its women's and children's assemblies are compatible with governance approach. Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly is established appropriate to the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly and act accordance with Regulation on Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly. The data displays that Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly with its working groups aims to develop a participatory approach by providing opportunities to women in order to work on problems and to create projects related to the problems, needs and demands of the women living in the Küçükçekmece as well as participation to the implementation of the project by making women to take responsibilities. Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly works actively by providing educations and seminars on politics and producing projects. The support of municipality is reported as sufficient regarding place, personnel, material and partnership in projects however, there is no any indication about existence of the decisions of Küçükçekmece City Council and its women's assembly in the Küçükçekmece Municipality council decisions. According to investigation of published Küçükçekmece Municipality council meeting agenda and decision reports, suggestions and decisions of Küçükçekmece City Council and its women's and children's assemblies have not existed. Küçükçekmece Children's Assembly seems to be functional according to reported activities and projects

however, in decision-making processes they are not taken serious due to their age level. In Küçükçekmece Municipality council meeting reports, there is not any decision that is taken or proposed by Küçükçekmece Children's Assembly. Moreover, in ordinary general meeting presentations, children's assembly is represented by adults. The kind of activities are mainly visits, exhibitions, seminars and educations related to child issues.

3.1.3. Kadıköy City Council

Kadıköy City Council is established in May 18, 2004 (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kuruldu). The former president of Kadıköy City Council Göymen states the aim of the city council as: "the city council is the focus point of civil society and a collective wisdom platform in Kadıköy". The recent Kadıköy City Council president became candidate in elections from a party in 1994 but after that period she worked in a civil society organization called Association for Support of Women Candidates *Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği* (KA-DER). In the Article 1 of Kadıköy City Council Working Guideline *Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Çalışma Yönergesi*, the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, governance and local governance are emphasized. Kadıköy City Council Working Guideline by Article 6, conveys the duties of city council by focusing on promotion of democratic participation in Kadıköy, a multi-partner and a multi-actor governance model, preparation of Kadıköy City Action Plan, democracy and consensus culture, contribution to the development of civil culture in Kadıköy, opportunities to the children, youth, women and disabled persons in order to take an active role in local decision-making processes and sending decisions of Kadıköy City Council to the Kadıköy Municipality Council (Kadıköy City Council Working Guideline). However, in the exploration of Kadıköy Municipality council decisions between January 6, 2014 and December 5, 2014, city council is absent in the agenda of municipality council meetings and decisions except in one decision regarding election of a municipality representative for city council (Kadıköy Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). According to council decisions, it seems that decisions of Kadıköy City Council are excluded in decision-making processes by Kadıköy Municipality. On the other hand, Kadıköy City Council emphasizes Kadıköy City Action Plan by the way of studies in established working groups. As a consequence of works, Kadıköy City Council takes place in the Kadıköy Strategic Plan under the section of "urban services, urban

infrastructure and superstructure” as a target 8 with the function of “organization of activities by city council working groups” between 2010 and 2014 (Kadıköy Belediyesi, Kadıköy Belediyesi 2010-2014 Stratejik Planı 60). The organs of Kadıköy City Council consist of general board, executive committee, assemblies, working groups and city council president in the Article 9 of the Kadıköy City Council Working Guideline (Kadıköy City Council Working Guideline). The member structure of Kadıköy City Council is the same with the Regulation on Citizens’ Assembly (Kadıköy City Council Working Guideline). Kadıköy City Council is transparent regarding easy achievement to the executive board and general assembly meeting reports from 2007 to 2009 (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi, Meclis ve Çalışma Grupları). Kadıköy City Council working groups include historical cultural heritage and city memory, social services and urban poverty, environment and infrastructure and consumer rights (Kadıköy City Council Working Guideline). Kadıköy City Council consist of women’s assembly, children’s assembly, youth assembly, senior citizens assembly and assembly of disabled people.

Kadıköy Women’s Assembly was established in November 12, 2012. According to Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly Working Guideline *Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi Çalışma Yönergesi*, Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly focus on the protection of the rights of urban and urban people. In addition, Kadıköy Women’s Assembly emphasizes to empower urban women and enhance their consciousness, to provide active participation of women in the subjects of sustainable development and solidarity by the principle of joint approach in solution. Moreover, as it is stated in Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly Working Guideline Article 6, Kadıköy Women’s Assembly takes the responsibility to ensure that women will follow the national and international developments on women rights and produce proposals to solutions. In this respect, the functions of Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly constitute to raise awareness about women problems and to create policies accordingly. Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly prioritizes the struggle with gender inequality and violence against women. Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly also supports women in order to be researcher, entrepreneurs, and producing individuals. The assembly gives importance to development of individual initiative of women. Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly also aims to make widespread the awareness of democracy on

the basis of participation and consensus. The assembly makes an effort to make organized and unorganized women to participate works of women's assembly (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi). Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly includes active and participatory members. Active members consists of members of general board of women's assembly, women headmen or their representatives, women representatives of civil society organizations, representatives of women's branches of each political party in the Kadıköy, representatives of university and chambers (Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly Working Guideline). The members fulfill the membership form. Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly Working Guideline Article 7 indicates that the participatory members constitute the public who do not have a right to be elected but have a voice in the assembly meetings. The participatory members could also participate to the working groups by contributing the projects and activities. The organs of the Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly consist of women's assembly general board, executive board and working groups. The working groups according to the Article 14 are listed as Monitoring the Work of the Kadıköy Municipal Council, Gender Roles and Gender Inequality Awareness Enhancement and Women's and Girls' Education and Employment. In addition, other working groups are Urban Services, Women with Disabilities, Women's Health, Ensure Involvement of Women in Decision-Making Processes, Culture and Art, Public Relations and Recruiting (Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly Working Guideline). One of the significant working groups could be stated as Ensure Involvement of Women in Decision-Making Processes which aims women to participate politics actively, to reach to the decision-making positions in the working life and to open school of politics (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi, Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi). However, Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly decisions are not reflected in Kadıköy Municipality Council agenda and decisions according to research between January 6, 2014 and December 5, 2014 (Kadıköy Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). According to Article 19 in working guideline, the assumption is that the members of the women's assembly could not make propaganda of any political party (Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly Working Guideline). In this respect, Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly emphasizes a civil formation. Cooperation of Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly with different public institutions including Kadıköy Governorship, Kadıköy Municipality, District Education Directorate, District Health Department

Group, Kadıköy Mufti Directorate and other institutions consisting of Directorate of Culture and Social Affairs, NGO's and Turkish Labor Agency *Türk İş Kurumu* (İŞKUR) are significant (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi, Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi). The planned works of the women's assembly include social gender equality consciousness studies, to direct women to the more demanded occupations in the market, to increase the number of women's counseling centers regarding evaluation the demand and problems of women, establishment of a women's shelter, determination the problems of physically and mentally disabled women, the education and employment of women who are responsible with disabled persons, women and maternal health protection (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi, Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi). The examples of activities of women's assembly consist of seminars on communication, personal image and joint work with KA-DER on the issues of non-governmental organizations, to provide information about gender inequality and discrimination to the KA-DER employees, the works including interactive participation and dramas on the issues of NGOS, volunteering, teamwork and efficient use of time and lastly participation to the "Women's Assembly Summit" "*Kadın Meclisleri Zirvesi*" (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi, Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi). The activities that Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly has participated constitute women workshop in İstanbul "Women's Studies Local Government Network" "*İstanbul Kadın Çalışmaları Yerel Yönetimler Ağı*", "Kadıköy Safe City" "*Kadıköy Güvenli Kent*" project with Kadıköy District Police Department, "Draft of New Constitution Panel" "*Yeni Anayasa Taslağı Paneli*", international semposium of "Metropolitan Governance" "*Metropolitan Yönetişimi*" and town metropolitan municipality city council briefing (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi, Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Kadın Meclisi).

Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly is established in April 24, 2010 (Sefer). The main aim of the Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly in Article 6 is to ensure participation of children in Kadıköy to the city management processes (Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly Working Guideline). Governance approach has an implication in Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly regarding participatory and pluralist functions. President of Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly describes children's assembly in the activity report as the start of democracy culture (Sefer). The main points in the Kadıköy City Council Children's

Assembly Working Guideline include to participate solution of problems, to represent children in Kadıköy, to make children respectful to the human rights, to have entrepreneurial spirit, to develop their solidarity and sharing behaviors (Kadıköy Children's Assembly Working Guideline). The age group of children are stated as ten-fifteen years old in the Article 7. The members constitute representatives of primary schools, one representative from each of the foundation and association related to children and one representative from each of the social services of children (Kadıköy Children's Assembly Working Guideline). The members fill up the membership form. According to the 2010 activity report, the presidents of school councils are natural members of children's assembly (Sefer). The article in Kadıköy Children's Assembly Working Guideline regarding requirement of being a school assembly representative in order to be a member of Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly is removed from the force (Çocukların Aklındaki Kadıköy). Thus, all children who are studying and residing in Kadıköy could be a member of Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly. The organs of Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly are general board, executive board, working groups and the consultant group. One of the remarkable organs of children's assembly is the consultant group consist of consultants who carry up the children's needs. In the general board meetings, the taken decisions are about the protection of environment, animals and street children by the cooperation of Kadıköy Municipality (Sefer). The members of general board express their ideas on equality of opportunity in education, the rights of disabled children, to work for the child-friendly city vision of Kadıköy, the emphasize on children's rights, insufficient playgrounds, problems about working children, demands on the child hospitals, preschools and art centers (Sefer). One of the collaborative institution of children's assembly is school assemblies which together work on the problems related to the city and aim to create a platform that support the role of children in social life. Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly supports the projects of "Holiday Dress for a Child" "*Bayramda Bir Çocuk Giydir*" which is coordinated by children's assembly. The project of Youth Information Service (YINFO) is named "Child Workshop" "*Çocuk Atölyesi*" which aims to prevent child labor. In addition, the projects of other institutions are listed as "Let Girls Be Girls" by UNICEF and the project of "This Work is not a Child's Play" "*Bu İş Çocuk Oyuncakı Değil*" which aims to prevent child labor is coordinated by *Hayata Destek* NGO (Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Çocuk

Meclisi, Facebook: Kadıköy Kent Konseyi Çocuk Meclisi). Despite to remarkable projects, suggestions and decisions of Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly are not reflected in Kadıköy Municipality Council agenda and decisions between January 6, 2014 and December 5, 2014 (Kadıköy Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları).

To sum up, Kadıköy City Council focuses on development of a civil and democratic culture concerning public participation in Kadıköy, a multi-partner and a multi-actor governance model, preparation of Kadıköy City Action Plan, and opportunities to the children, youth, women and disabled persons in order to take an active role in local decision-making processes. Kadıköy City Council is transparent regarding provision of the executive board and general assembly meeting reports. Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly encounters the role to make widespread the awareness of democracy on the basis of participation, to make women follow the national and international developments on women rights, to raise awareness about women problems and to create policies, to struggle with gender inequality and violence against women, to support women in order to be researcher, entrepreneurs, and productive (Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly Working Guideline). Kadıköy City Council and Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly emphasize governance principles regarding equity, participation, pluralism, transparency and accountability. Both organized and unorganized women participate in Kadıköy City Council Women's Assembly. They aim to reach decision-making position by the working group of Ensure Involvement of Women in Decision-Making Processes. The activities of women's assembly mainly based on common works with KA-DER in order to make women powerful working in NGOs. Other activities are participations to "Women's Assembly Summit", workshops, panels and symposiums on women issues. Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly emphasizes to develop a democracy culture by child participation to the city management processes in Kadıköy which is compatible with governance approach. It is significant to have a consultant working group that is functional to carry up children's needs. The projects are mainly about social issues such as child labor, child brides or meet the holiday dress needs of children. The research indicates that Kadıköy City Council Women's and Children's Assemblies seem to be active according to documents and reports but there is no any clue about their effect on passed decisions on Kadıköy Municipality Council between January 6, 2014 and December 5, 2014.

3.1.4. Bahçelievler City Council

Bahçelievler City Council is established in 2007. Bahçelievler City Council president is also the deputy mayor in Bahçelievler Municipality. The aim of Bahçelievler City Council according to Regulation on Bahçelievler City Council *Bahçelievler Kent Konseyi Tüzüğü* Article 2 is “to provide participation opportunity to the local decision-making processes, to act as a local control mechanism, to govern Bahçelievler district together without any discrimination and to create a modern and participatory structure”. The president of Bahçelievler City Council Uyan describes the role of Bahçelievler City Council as “having a significant role in participation because governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations come together and transfer their ideas about the town in decision-making processes under the city council mechanism which could be called as umbrella platform”. Accordingly, the aims of Bahçelievler City Council have implications of UN good governance principles: “[...] equity, participation, pluralism, transparency [...]” (United Nations, Governance). Uyan asserts that “Bahçelievler municipality gives importance to the city council formation and supports the work and activities of city council by providing a working office, eliminating the needs, and giving support as financially.” It is also significant for Bahçelievler City Council president who has also a position as the deputy mayor in Bahçelievler Municipality in terms of coordinating between units and implementation of projects. In this respect, Bahçelievler Municipality 2010-2014 Strategic Plan indicates the significance of city council for the municipality. Bahçelievler City Council takes place as a stakeholder in the Strategic Plan and Bahçelievler Municipality organizes consultant meetings with city councils between the periods of 2010 and 2014 (Bahçelievler Belediyesi, Bahçelievler Belediyesi 2010-2014 Stratejik Planı 64). One of the significant role of Bahçelievler City Council in Article 6 in the Regulation on Bahçelievler City Council composes of to make children, women, youth and disabled people take an effective role in the local decision-making processes. However, according to exploration of Bahçelievler Municipality Council decisions between January 6, 2014 and December 1, 2014, the name of city council did not pass in any document (Bahçelievler Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). Contrary to the findings, Uyan says that “projects of city councils are implemented after they have passed on the municipality council”. The members of

the Bahçelievler City Council are Bahçelievler governor or deputy governor, Bahçelievler mayor or the representative, public institutions and organizations representatives, neighborhood headmen, the representatives of political parties, representatives from universities, unions, notaries, bar associations, associations and foundations as well as the representatives of Bahçelievler City Council working groups and assemblies (Regulation on Bahçelievler City Council). The organs of the Bahçelievler City Council are general board, executive board, city council president, general secretary, assemblies and working groups (Regulation on Bahçelievler City Council). The data concerning working group commissions is obtained by e-mail in the June 19, 2014 from Bahçelievler Municipality which states their names as “education and teaching working group, economy and social studies working group, law and human rights working group, reconstruction and urban planning working group, disabled people working group, health working group, culture, art and historical inheritance working group, youth and sport working group, traffic and safety working group, disaster and crises management working group and environment working group, European Union acquis monitoring commission” (Bahçelievler Belediyesi, Re: Bahçelievler Belediyesi Bilgi Edinme Birimi). The projects and activities of working groups include “the seminars on citizenship rights, the projects of women reading areas, education on sign language to public employees, “Youth Development Semposium” “*Genç Gelişim Sempozyumu*” and seminars of “Youth Development Academy” “*Genç Gelişim Akademisi*” (Uyan). Bahçelievler Municipality also joins to the project which is supported by EU “Strategic Local Governance Project” “*Stratejik Yerel Yönetişim Projesi*”. The aim is to strengthen participatory strategic governance at the local level (Stratejik Yerel Yönetişim Projesi). Bahçelievler City Council meetings occur regularly. Bahçelievler City Council consists of youth assembly and women’s assembly. The reason of lack of children’s assembly is the concern of Bahçelievler Municipality on children within the municipality working groups. Moreover, city council working groups emphasize issues regarding children.

Bahçelievler City Council Women’s Assembly is established in 2011 (Çınar). The president of Bahçelievler City Council Women’s Assembly Çınar stated the reasons of active participation to the women’s assembly as “to become close to the public and listen to their problems in order to help”. The active organs of the

women's assembly are presidency, plenary board, coordination board, executive board and working groups such as education, social solidary welfare, law and human rights, disable people, seniors, environment and district problems, culture and art, sport, women problems, and health working groups. They make studies about what can be done in the district and produce projects accordingly. The number of members is stated as 8000 but only 210 members are active (Çınar). The member profile is compatible with Regulation on Citizens' Assembly. Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly could function in Bahçelievler Women's Assembly Center which is provided by Bahçelievler Municipality (Çınar). The members make activities to advertise women's assembly in stands of municipality to increase the members of the assembly. They also visit women home to home in order to introduce women's assembly. Local and social media become effective in member collection. NGO's works, friend or neighbor ideas become effective in promotional activities (Çınar). The objectives of Bahçelievler Women's Assembly is asserted by Çınar as: "to support women who could grow their children with moral values, to support women as morally, psychologically and financially, to support in health issues such as test-tube baby, seminars such as diction, to provide consulting lawyers, to give support in political life, to make them participate in decision-making processes and to encourage them to be a member of the provincial council and to organize seminars on political issues". However, concerning decision-making processes, there is not any indication of Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly suggestions or decisions in Bahçelievler Municipality Council decisions between January 6, 2014 and December 1, 2014 (Bahçelievler Belediyesi, Meclis Kararları). According to the statement of Çınar, Bahçelievler City Council supports women's assembly by organizing seminars, confirming their projects and solving the problems about playgrounds. Women's assembly become active in the treatment of serious health problems of public. Associations that give support to Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly could be stated as, Bahçelievler municipality, hospitals, schools, volunteer lawyers and psychologists. Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly celebrates regular days such as International Women's Day in March 8 by coordinating seminar programs during one week with Bahçelievler Municipality. One of the most significant project is "Handwork Assessment Centers" "*El Emegi Değerlendirme Merkezleri*" in Bahçelievler. The aim is to provide opportunities for women to sell their own products. The projects continue with cooperative works of

governorship such as determining needy families and directing them to governorship. By the support of hospitals, health screenings of public occurs (Çınar). Bahçelievler Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly organizes a special day that is named "23 April Children's Day" "23 Nisan Çocuk Günü" with cooperation of district schools which also provide seminars to parents as a project of the assembly. NGO's such as Duygu Association *Duygu Derneği*, Working Women Association *Çalışan Kadınlar Derneği* (ÇABADER), and Yeşilay coordinated with Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly. Other studies are the project of "Women Deserve the Best" "*Kadın En İyisine Layıktır*" and awareness seminars concerning children. Bahçelievler Women's Assembly also prepares projects for International Developmental Agency in the name of "The World is in the Handful of Women" "*Dünya Kadınların Avucunda*" in order to make women adopt to society and to support them economically (Çınar). Due to lack of legal entity of women's assemblies, official institutions will be sponsored to the projects. Bahçelievler Women's Assembly develops a partnership approach in a wide range of institutions which is compatible with governance concept. In order to have a more powerful and effective women's assembly, Çınar said that, "it is required to make cooperation with other district and city councils, to share ideas and to listen their problems, to keep high the motivation of active members, to make women participate with different ideas and to make improvements on Regulation on Citizens' Assembly."

To be concluded, Bahçelievler City Council and Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly provide an appropriate structure according to Regulation On Citizens' Assembly. Moreover, Bahçelievler City Council have implications of governance approach concerning participation, pluralism and transparency whereas Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly has implications of partnership with local government, private sector and NGOs. As interviews indicate, women's assembly is functional in meeting urgent needs of women in social life in terms of health and financial issues. Although support of Bahçelievler Municipality on works of Bahçelievler City Council and Bahçelievler Women's Assembly, general council meeting decisions of those mechanisms are not achieved in research concerning Bahçelievler Municipality Council meeting decision reports.

3.2.The Evaluation of City Councils Concerning Women’s and Children’s Assembly

According to the results of research concerning Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Council and their women’s and children’s assemblies, they are established appropriate to the Regulation on Citizens’ Assembly by assistance of municipalities. Accordingly, each of city councils and assemblies have their own regulations and working guidelines which determines their purpose, duties, working principles, membership status and organs. According to analysis, their aim is compatible with governance approach which “[...] gives importance to democracy, the principles of the rule of law and human rights, participation, effectiveness and efficiency, local administration, openness, transparency and accountability, quality and competence [...] (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, Kamuda İyi Yönetişim Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu 5). According to the Güler, the main problem related to the legal processes is derived from the Regulation on Citizens’ Assembly because although changes in 2009, the structure of the regulation includes contradictory articles (Güler). Although Article 4/A in Regulation on Citizens’ Assembly provides responsibility to municipalities to assist and support city councils in the establishment process, Article 16/A in the regulation makes municipalities responsible to provide “[...] in-kind and cash aid and support to citizens’ assemblies by allocating funds from their budgets.” (T.C. Resmi Gazete, No.26313). On the other hand, Güneş and Beyazıt argues lack of legal entity makes city councils depend on municipalities concerning supply of personnel and possession of budget (150). Özdemir argues that city councils should have its own budget, personnel and instruments similar to public institutions (47). However, Ateş says in the interview that “I support the current state of city councils about the arguments on having independent budget from municipality. If city council become independent, it may be misperceived as becoming an independent and a rival institution to municipality. Thus, it creates problems about the function of city councils.” According to the interview with Güler, “municipalities do not make any cash assistance to any institution however they accept the demands and provide facilities as place, personnel and material in order to support the activities and projects” (Güler). As fieldwork indicates, many city councils and assemblies are also behind getting use of international and domestic projects fundings except Zeytinburnu City Council which gets support of İstanbul Development Agency. In one of the other context, legal problematic area cause city councils to depend on

municipality in order to get support. Güler states in the interview Regulation on Citizens' Assembly articles could make city councils to depend on mayor's conscience to be supported (Güler). Thus, according to Güneş and Beyazıt city councils feel control mechanism of municipalities (150). However, governance approach ensures a democracy model which functions in a participatory and pluralist manner (Kalfa and Ataay 236). By the governance approach, administrators and public people affects each other in a systematic way. On the other hand, Bozkurt asserts that city councils could be perceived as a sub-unit of municipalities or a unit functioned on top of the municipalities (237). A critical issue supporting this assumption is that city council perception constitutes an institution depending on municipality. However, city councils have an effort to explain themselves as mechanisms do not connect to the municipality directly but a mechanism that accept the services of municipality (Güler). Another issue related to perceptions is the development of participation consciousness of public (Güneş and Beyazıt 150). Ateş says that "Zeytinburnu City Council explores practical solution methods to ensure participation by cooperation of NGOs". The data is obtained from observations in the fieldwork indicates that in ordinary general assembly meeting for instance, public perceives participation as a process problems raised and solved by authorities. In this respect, public in general focus on the results therefore the demand for participation in decision-making processes decreases. In this perspective, Belli & Aydın asserts that public whose decisions are not considered by local governments would not participate in meetings (146). In this context, taken decisions of city councils, assemblies and municipality councils should be accessible. It is significant in terms of accountability principle of governance approach. Therefore, Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece and Kadıköy City Councils constitute a more transparent value by publishing ordinary general meeting reports in their web pages. Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils state their aims in the same respect with the Regulations on Citizens' Assembly concerning democracy and participation at the local level with a partnership approach which comply with governance approach. Bahçelievler City Council emphasizes the role of umbrella platform whereas Kadıköy, Zeytinburnu and Küçükçekmece City Council points out the role of collective wisdom platform of city councils. The member structures of Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils are appropriate to the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly. In the context of working

groups, a similarity exists in working groups of Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, and Bahçelievler City Councils mainly in the subject of education, environment, health, youth and sport. However, striking differences exist regarding economic and public relations issues in Küçükçekmece City Council; NGO capacity issue in Zeytinburnu City Council; historical cultural heritage, city memory and social services issues in Kadıköy City Council and European Union, law, human rights and traffic issues in Bahçelievler City Council. A wide variety of working groups is an implication of features of governance such as responsibility, participation and responsiveness (to the needs of the people). The four city councils have the general board, the president of the city council, commissions or working groups, executive board and general secretary. The difference came about the assemblies. Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece and Kadıköy City Councils include assemblies of youth, women, children and disabled persons. Kadıköy City Council adds also assembly of senior citizens. On the other hand, Bahçelievler City Council, have only two assemblies consisting of women's and youth assemblies. Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Bahçelievler and Kadıköy city councils and their women's and children's assemblies use their social media accounts actively in order to communicate. On the other hand, the claim of Güneş & Beyazıt; and the assumptions of Özden concerning non participation of city councils in the strategic planning processs of municipalities is denied by Küçükçekmece City Council General Secretary Güler who assumes that the municipality includes city council in their district in the preparation of strategic plan. In addition, according to reports, Kadıköy City Council collaborates with municipality in order to prepare strategic plan of their town and takes play in the Kadıköy Strategic Plan of 2010-2014. Küçükçekmece Municipality strategic plan preparing committee includes Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly within the process. In this respect, Bahçelievler Municipality consults with Bahçelievler City Council in strategic plan of 2010-2014. Zeytinburnu Municipality also reports the importance of public participation in decision-making process by stating the establishment of city councils. In this respect, participation to planning process adds a value to decision-making processes in democracies at the local level. By comparing four city councils in terms of their member structures, although most of the authorities of city councils, women's assemblies and children's assemblies have also a position in municipalities, in district governorship or other public agencies in different levels, they contribute much to the communication between city

councils and public agencies in which they work. Although Güneş and Beyazıt asserts that mayors have a desire for a supportive city council structure rather than an opponent one, this research indicates that representatives of municipalities in city councils and assemblies have a positive effect on activities of city councils and their assemblies (150). As fieldwork indicates, their position facilitates the support of municipality to city council mechanism. Uyan also indicates that the coordination is ensured between city councils and municipality. In this respect, it does not put a damage on neutral structure of city councils in terms of political ideas as Özdemir claims because city council mechanisms and their assemblies in the samples of this thesis include every representative of different political parties in the district (49). Beyond member structure arguments, the four city councils provide opportunities to the public people in working groups, commissions and assemblies to become active in social, economic and political life beyond voting elections. However, participation to decision-making processes concerning democracy at the local level becomes ineffective as a result of explored municipality council meeting agenda and their council decision reports in each district. It is difficult to find any reflection of city council decisions on municipality council decisions between predetermined years. It is an indication of the claims about lack of enforcement power of city council mechanisms to be effective in decisions taken in the municipality councils. It is not compatible with European Charter of Local Self-government which provides its purpose as “[...] local authorities, which are closest to the citizen and give him the opportunity of participating effectively in the making of decisions affecting his everyday environment” (Council of Europe, European Charter of Local Self-Government Explanatory Report 29). The possible reason of lack of city council decisions in municipality council documents could be as Güneş and Beyazıt argues, unbiding structure of city council decisions which are perceived as recommendation and excluded in municipality council meeting agendas. In this respect, Küçükçekmece City Council General Secretary Güler reports the process in the personal communication that the decisions taken by Küçükçekmece City Council are sent to the municipality to be taken into the agenda of the municipality council meetings, the results are reported back to the city council which follows up the process. Çınar states that “the decisions of the city councils are advisory rather than binding.” Accordingly, advisory level decision of city councils could damage the comprehension about contribution of city councils to the participatory democracy.

Accordingly, B. Şahin assumes that lack of reflection of city council and assembly suggestions and decisions in published municipality council decisions causes a city council perception to be established only on paper (1001). However, European Charter of Local Self-Government in the Article 3 signifies that strong binds should exist between “[...] assemblies of citizens, referendums, or any other form of direct citizen participation where it is permitted by statute “ and elected local decision making units (Council of Europe, European Charter of Local Self-Government 3). According to fieldwork analysis, Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Bahçelievler and Kadıköy City Councils and their assemblies are active mechanisms functioning in accordance with regulation despite to lack of their sanction power.

In order to explore works and function of women’s assembly structures in four district this thesis provides interviews with the presidents of Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece and Bahçelievler City Councils Women’s Assemblies except Kadıköy as well as resources regarding their activity reports. Each of the presidents answers to the question about reasons of their active participation to women’s assemblies in a specific manner. Similar components in their answers constitute to be sensitive to women issues by listening their problems and contributing in solutions. It is compatible with the governance approach of responsibility and responsiveness to the needs of the people. Zeytinburnu City Council Women’s Assembly emphasizes contribution to the women point of view, Küçükçekmece City Council Women’s Assembly stresses the contribution to acquisition of problem solving skills, Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly focuses on awareness of democracy on the basis of participation and Bahçelievler City Council Women’s Assembly points out meeting urgent needs of women in social life. Women’s assemblies of Küçükçekmece and Zeytinburnu City Councils emphasize to prepare women in labor market and to make them active in business life as objectives of the women’s assembly. Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly, on the other hand supports women not only become productive but also become a researcher and entrepreneurs. City Council women’s assemblies differ in sub-working groups and commissions which constitute platforms of discussions, development of ideas and a consensus atmosphere in order to solve problems of women in different areas. Those differences indicate that women contribute to assemblies according to their interest areas. One of the significant working groups is under the Kadıköy City Council Women’s Assembly named

“Ensure Involvement of Women in Decision-Making Processes” signifies the opportunity to the women in democratic participation processes. This group ensures governance approach in women’s assembly. The main activities of women’s assemblies in the research consist of seminars, conferences, symposiums, workshops, sport competitions, projects, visits, health screenings, campaigns and consultation in issues such as legal problems and women’s rights. Representatives from entities regarding the central government, local governments, public professional organizations and civil society with a partnership approach in the district coordinate joint projects with each of the women’s assembly. This process reflects governance approach in which problem solving and decision-making is ensured by all sectors of society with a partnership of central governments, local governments, business environment, workers, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, scientists, women, children, youth and indigenous people. According to assumption of Özden the awareness about city councils in the society is limited (8). Moreover, F. Şahin claims that the aims of women’s assemblies is misperceived as to fulfill the leisure time (106). However, the fieldwork indicates that all of the four women’s assemblies use social media effectively in order to communicate and present their purposes. Other techniques of increase awareness of women’s assemblies are meetings, home visits, stands, brochures, local media, neighbor and friends. Küçükçekmece City Council Women’s Assembly facilitates the membership process by making women first to become a member of facebook page of Küçükçekmece City Council Women’s Assembly. It seems to increase the number of members as Küçükçekmece City Council Women’s Assembly president indicates. The existence of support of municipalities to women’s assembly in three districts are reported by the presidents of Küçükçekmece and Bahçelievler City Council Women’s Assemblies as well as former Zeytinburnu City Council Women’s Assembly president. One of the significant point is that political participation of women are encouraged by Zeytinburnu and Küçükçekmece City Council Women’s Assemblies by providing seminars and educations on “Women Politics School” “*Kadın Siyaset Okulu*”. Bahçelievler, Zeytinburnu and Küçükçekmece City Council Women’s Assemblies encourage their members to participate in political life as well as support to other women candidates at the local elections. Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Zeytinburnu City Council Women’s Assemblies provide an annual activity report but Bahçelievler City Council Women’s Assembly does not have. In order to get a

stronger women's assembly, the presidents of Küçükçekmece, Bahçelievler and Zeytinburnu City Council Women's Assemblies argue that local government should continue its support on women's assembly in an increasing manner. Küçükçekmece City Council Women's Assembly emphasizes lack of legal entity of women's assemblies which is resulted in disadvantages in acquiring EU and developmental agent funds. According to president of Bahçelievler City Council Women's Assembly, lack of legal entity causes women's assembly to depend on municipalities in all actions. In this respect, there is a demand for women's assemblies to have their own budget. Dependency would compel women's assemblies to support the political view of municipalities. It could decrease the voluntary aspects of women's assemblies and could make them institutions that serve the political purposes of municipalities. As a result, women's assemblies would depend on the mayor in decision-making processes. This process does not comply with governance approach which Kooiman asserts requires the features of dynamic, complex and mutual interaction between state and citizens (3).

Although women's assemblies exist in many city council mechanisms, children's assemblies are disregarded by city councils. The reasons of lack of children's assembly constitutes the presence of alternative mechanisms such as school assemblies in the district, existence of children's assemblies under the municipality structures and the work of working groups in municipalities concerning children. The main aims of Küçükçekmece and Kadıköy City Councils Children's Assemblies is to develop sensitivity to the child issues, awareness of democracy as well as to represent children in their own district. Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly is also a democratic platform which aims children to be able to voice their demands and proposals. Governance approach has implications in aims of children's assembly by emphasizing responsibility, participation and responsiveness (to the needs of the people). Member structures of children's assemblies constitute elementary school children up to age level of fifteen. Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly provides a wider perspective by consisting the members not only elementary school representatives but also representatives of foundations and associations worked for children as well as representatives from social services. On the other hand, Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly starts its function by children who attend to Zeytinburnu Learning Centers *Zeytinburnu Bilgi Evleri*. One

of the difference concerning organs of children's assemblies is the consultant group which becomes sensitive to the needs of children in Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly. In activities of the assemblies, Küçükçekmece City Council Children's Assembly appears to produce its own projects but Kadıköy City Council Children's Assembly follows and supports the projects of different organizations beside its own projects. On the other hand, Zeytinburnu City Council Children's Assembly creates groups who produce projects. The activities of children's assemblies with the sensitivity and awareness on social issues diversifies as environmental and health issues, children's rights, campaigns and seminars, child labor, violence to children, the problem of street children and child brides.

City council children's assemblies are criticized by authorities in terms of their function. Değirmencioglu claims that concerning future, LA21 model does not promise hope in terms of participation of children (385). Erbay states that children are not aware of works of children's assemblies which are perceived for show only and dysfunctional by adults (Çocuk Hakları 109). Moreover, children's assemblies act as if student clubs which organize visits and activities to make children active in the social life. At the institutional level, participation of children and youth is restricted to the determined activities which are perceived as level of participation (Karataş and Acar 37-38).

To be concluded, Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu, Bahçelievler and Kadıköy City Councils aim to develop democracy at the local level by following a multi-actor government model emphasizing a partnership approach with the central government, local government, professions' chambers and civil society with an emphasize on governance approach. Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Council platforms provide opportunities to disadvantaged groups to be active agents in the society by assemblies. A strong bind exists between women's assemblies and city council as interviews, activity reports and general meeting reports indicate. This thesis explores the structure and functionality of city councils, their women's assemblies and children's assemblies with respect to their role in participation to decision-making processes at the local level. In this respect, the fieldwork indicates that city councils and assemblies do not have a legal entity. Therefore, they get support of municipality regarding financial issues, working offices, material, and

personnel. Although many city councils and their assemblies express their satisfaction about support of municipalities, women's assemblies have an increasing demand on independence from municipalities concerning their budget. However, some of the city councils prefer to keep the current position of city councils due to continue functions more effectively. According to fieldwork analysis, under the city council mechanisms, women and children's assemblies provide opportunities to women and children to be active in every level of social life and participate in problem solving processes by different ways. However, both women and children are ineffective regarding decision-making processes at the local level as an evidence of municipality council decisions which exclude city council decisions and reflection of women's and children's assemblies in their reports. In this respect, it constitutes a participation opportunity for city councils to be included in strategic planning process of Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler municipalities. According to explored documents of working guidelines and activity reports, children's assemblies are less functional compared to women's assemblies in the participation process. According to assumptions on LA21 model as Değirmencioğlu claims this model does not promise hope with respect to participation of children (385). Erbay states that children are unaware of works of children's assemblies which are found for show only and dysfunctional by adults (Çocuk Hakları 109). In this respect, children's assemblies act as student clubs. Accordingly, children's assemblies are effective in raising awareness of children to the social issues but it should go beyond and should be effective in making children active agents in the decision-making processes concerning the issues related to children in the city management.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Research Findings

The principle aim of this thesis is to take a step further in understanding the classical methods of participation in the democracies at the local level in the Turkish context. The purpose of this research is to attach the importance to democracy and participation at the local level and to explore the role of city councils which aim to provide active and effective participation to public people in decision-making processes in Turkey. The present research examines the role of city councils and its women's and children's assemblies in democracy and participation at the local level beyond theory. In this thesis, the main research question is "what kind of role, if any, does city councils play in democracy and participation at the local level in the Turkish context?". The contribution of this thesis in earlier works is significant by focusing on the structure, activity and functionality of city councils regarding its role in participation of public through women's and children's assemblies at the local level with respect to encountered problems, Accordingly, most of the previous research findings emphasize the significance of the city council mechanisms at the local level regarding their structures, functions and problems. In respect of participation function of city councils, more disadvantaged groups in the society such as women, children, youth and disabled people acquire significance in Turkey. Therefore, different research investigate separately women, children, youth and disabled people in the context of assemblies in city councils. In order to analyze the issue in detail, different from previous works, this thesis makes observations and interviews in the fieldwork regarding both women's and children's assembly. Accordingly, this research focuses specifically on women and children in order to display how two significant figures of society struggle in order to participate to the social and political life under the city council mechanisms. Although women acquire capability to participate more effectively to the political life, children should take a long way to get enough competence and opportunity of participation. In order to

emphasize participation status of women and children in city councils, this thesis concerns with women's assemblies and children's assemblies. In this respect, this research asks the first sub-question of "what are the aims of establishment of city councils in Turkey" in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of city councils and assemblies as a participatory mechanism. The second sub-question analysis what kind of role women's and children's assemblies have in the participation of women and children by asking "how do women's and children's assemblies contribute to participation process at the local level in Turkey?". The final sub-question explores the kinds of problems city councils encounter at the local level by asking "what are the problems of city councils concerning democracy and participation process at the local level in the Turkish context?" The detailed investigation of the issue would enable a better understanding of the problems city councils encounter in practice concerning democratic participation of public emphasizing women and children at the local level beyond theoretical perspectives. City council perception in this thesis is on the further side of being a simple mechanism that function at the local level. Rather, by the ways of women's and children's assemblies, the functionality of city council platforms regarding democracy and participation of public to decision-making processes at the local level is analyzed considering chosen samples in İstanbul.

Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils and their women's and children's assemblies constitute sample of this thesis. In order to address the forementioned research questions, the instruments of ethnographic observations and semi-structured interviews are used. City councils are accepted as functional according to their activities, reports on activities, relevant records of meetings and information on continuous organizations of assemblies (B. Şahin 998). The fieldwork is instrumental for addressing the main research question not only because it provides a projection of the current state of those structures at the local level in Turkey regarding the role attributed them in democracy and participation but also it illuminates the difficulties that city councils and their women's and children's assemblies encounter regarding participation at the local level. The first important conclusion is that city councils function in an active manner at the local level concerning their activity reports, general assembly meeting reports and studies of their assemblies. However, they are required to make more effort concerning public

participation to decision-making processes at the local level. In this respect, European Commission concerning Turkey 2008 Progress Reports described city councils as platforms which are provided to ensure citizens' participation in local units (8). European Commission reported functionality of city councils which existed effectively in only a limited number of cities (European Commission, Turkey 2012 Progress Report 11). Although dissatisfaction regarding their functionality in decision-making processes, city councils constitute unique structures at the local level by providing participatory units to women and children in the Turkish context. City councils in theory coincide with the philosophy of Council of Europe that emphasizes "[...] the use of citizens' assemblies, local referendums and all forms of direct citizen participation." (Council of Europe, European Urban Charter II:Manifesto for a new urbanity 7). Although city council mechanisms coincide with European Urban Charter, European Charter of Local Self Government and European Urban Charter II in theoretical sense, city council structures do not serve in practice to the philosophy of those charters which emphasize public participation to decision-making processes. On the other hand, the four city councils in this thesis have been established appropriate to the Regulation on Citizens' Assembly and provide participatory units such as working groups and assemblies. It is also significant to note that they consider the interests, needs and demands of public at the local level based on governance approach. However, the findings of the fieldwork prevail that the four city councils lack of accountability feature which has a base on governance approach could be achieved by participating and contributing effectively to decision-making processes and reviewing the taken decisions of the local units. The findings of this research concerning powering participation are in the same direction with 2010 European Commission Progress Report which indicated to strengthen "transparency, accountability and participatory mechanisms" in local government (European Commission, Turkey 2010 Progress Report 9). In this respect, regarding mechanism of transparency, accountability and participation, lack of city council proposals and decisions in the published reports of municipality council meeting agenda and decisions cause exclusion of women's and children's assemblies in decision-making processes. One of the significant inclusion of public in participatory mechanisms constitutes coordination between city councils and municipalities in preparation of strategic plan. However, the data does not show how much effective the inclusion process in participation of women and children to decision-making

processes. Although women's assemblies work in an active manner by supporting women in every aspect of life, they achieve partially to the previously listed purposes due to exclusion of their proposals in reported municipality council decisions.

This research also prevails the superiority of women's assemblies on children's assemblies. The data which is obtained from official sources indicate that although women's assemblies exist in many city council mechanisms in Turkey, children's assemblies are disregarded and stays low in numbers. The reasons could be asserted as similar units such as school assemblies, existence of children's assemblies of municipalities and activities of working groups in municipalities concerning children. In addition, children's assemblies are less in number and function in comparison to the women's assembly due to the basement on social perceptions of children in the society. Children are found to be incapable to act in the community as individual and their activities and decisions are up to adult initiative. Children are far away from being participatory actors in the society although children's participation constitutes one of the key elements of children's rights regarding UNCRC which Turkey signed on September 14, 1990. Based on the assumption of UNCRC Committee that family, school environment and media should prioritize the participation regarding sustainable development and general policy decisions (Erbay, *Çocukların Katılım Hakkı Üzerine Bir Türkiye Değerlendirmesi* 40). Acar claims that although establishment of associations concerning children's rights, participation level of children are found insufficient (11). Although children's assemblies have a role to offer significant opportunity and tool for local child participation and opportunity for children to be active agents in the society, they function as if social activity groups rather than a participatory unit of decision-making processes at the local level. Erbay assumes that although distinctive features of children's assemblies, children do not know well works of assemblies and adults percieve them as for show and dysfunctional (*Çocuk Hakları* 109). Değirmencioğlu asserts that LA21 model does not promise hope for future regarding participation (385). At the institutional level, this model constitutes a misperception to measure participation level of children and youth by activities (Karataş and Acar 37-38).

Social drawbacks especially for women in the community also cause restriction for participation. Women could not establish ties with the political systems due to value judgments and legal restrictions in the past. After they get the right to vote, they broaden their angles to effect the decisions taken regarding themselves by participating local units. One of the expectations from city councils is to include women in decision-making processes by women's assemblies in order to create sensitivity to women issues at the local units. The fieldwork of this thesis displays that women's assemblies of Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler broaden the horizons of women and provide them opportunity to be active agents in the society by their sub-units and commissions. A strong bind is found between women's assemblies and city council according to indication of interviews, activity and general meeting reports. Accordingly, women's assemblies of four districts support the assumptions of Emrealp who claims that women's assemblies make powerful the representation of women in city councils as well as provide priority to gender issues (Türkiye'nin Katılımcı-Demokratik Yerel Yönetişim Modeli Olarak Dünyaya Armağanı: Kent Konseyleri 31). Those structures involve women in policy-making concerning women point of view. However, as F.Şahin claims level of women's participation concerning decision-making, planning and implementation processes is insufficient (38). Accordingly, Council of Europe indicates that local governments are closer units to citizen and "[...] give him the opportunity of participating effectively in the making of decisions affecting his everyday environment" (Council of Europe, European Charter of Local Self-Government and Explanatory Report 29). In order to have a more effective role in decision-making processes at the local level, decisions of women's assemblies should be included in the administrative level basically in municipality council decisions by municipalities.

According to assumption of Güneş and Beyazıt, four problematic areas related to city councils in Turkey exist with respect to the relationship between city council and municipality; relationship between public people and NGOs as well as problems in legal, administrative and organizational areas (150). According to data obtained in the fieldwork, city councils, their working groups and women's assemblies have an internal dynamic contrary to the claim of Güneş and Beyazıt. In this respect, Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Council Women's

Assemblies help women to become active agents in the social and political life by the ways of involving women in working groups, commissions, projects and meetings of city councils as well as supporting them regarding political activities. Accordingly, women's assemblies of Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils make its members be aware of gender issues and problems and involves them in policy-making concerning women point of view. Although efforts of women's assemblies to make women active agents in the social and political life, their proposals in the decision-making processes do not exist in municipality councils decision reports. On the other hand, European Charter of Local Self-Government in Article 3 recommends a strong relationship between "[...] assemblies of citizens, referendums, or any other form of direct citizen participation where it is permitted by statute" and local decision-making units which are elected (Council of Europe, European Charter of Local Self-Government 3). The findings of this thesis supports the assumption of Güneş and Beyazıt regarding lack of legal entity results in city councils dependence on municipalities concerning supply of personnel and possession of budget. As fieldwork indicates, many of the city councils and assemblies are also behind getting use of international and domestic projects fundings due to lack of legal entity. The support mainly is obtained from municipalities, private institutions and NGOs. Most of the women's assemblies in this research report that they get enough support from municipality as material and working office but they have also a demand regarding continuity of this support. Due to being bind to municipality regarding financial support, women's assemblies are inclined to depend on the initiative of municipalities in decision-making processes. In this respect, it is claimed by Güneş and Beyazıt that mayors demand for a supportive city council structure rather than an opponent one. Therefore, in many city council mechanism in this thesis, participants are also have a position in municipalities or other public institutions. On the other hand, position of city council participants in municipalities facilitates the works of city councils as well as achievement to the sources. One of the observed significant contribution of city councils could be stated as to provide participation opportunities to the public people beyond voting elections to become active in social, economic and political life. However, Güneş and Beyazıt argue the existence of insufficient participation conciousness of local people to the participatory mechanisms. As a result of observations in the fieldwork, public percieve participation as a process problems

raised and solved by authorities. Therefore the demand for participation in decision-making processes in the real purpose declines. It is also a significant point that Belli and Aydın argue, public whose decisions are not considered by local governments would not participate in meetings (146). At this point, it is effective to make visible the taken decisions of city councils and assemblies. It is also significant to make visible the name of city councils and their assemblies in municipality council decision reports. Although some of the documents constitute evidence for city council decisions which are sent to municipality council in order to be taken into account, those decisions do not take place in the reports of municipality council decisions. In this respect, Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece and Kadıköy City Councils have a more transparent value considering governance approach by publishing ordinary general meeting reports in their web pages. Moreover, municipalities also are transparent in publishing municipality council decisions of specific years. However, based on Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler municipality council reports, there is no any sign of decisions regarding city councils except one decision of Kadıköy Municipality regarding election of a representative of municipality for Kadıköy City Council. In addition, although Zeytinburnu Municipality council decisions do not reflect proposal and decisions of city council in 2014, Zeytinburnu Municipality sent a list of accepted municipality council proposals and decisions regarding city council prior to the year of 2012. However, decisions belong to previous years do not take place on the web page of municipality. Accordingly, lack of reflection of city council and assembly decisions in published municipality council meeting agenda and decisions should result in damage on accountability feature of governance approach. Moreover, B. Şahin claims that it will cause a wrong city council perception as if to be established only on paper (1001). According to fieldwork analysis, Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils and their assemblies of women have active structures and have been functioning in accordance with regulation although lack of their sanction power. On the other hand, referring the claim of Güneş and Beyazıt concerning exclusion of city councils in the strategic planning process by municipalities is denied by authorities in the field. Moreover, Zeytinburnu, Küçükçekmece, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler Municipality strategic plans are explored and evidences regarding city council and municipality partnership are founded. This process considers an evidence of achievement of the aims of city councils in

providing participation opportunities to public in order to effect the planning process related to the urban life. Although the attempt of Küçükçekmece, Zeytinburnu, Kadıköy and Bahçelievler City Councils to introduce women's and children's assemblies to the public by different ways such as social media, representation in ordinary general meetings, stands and brochures, the active members of the assemblies stay at the low levels according to observations in working offices and general ordinary meetings of city councils. Güneş and Beyazıt explain that uncertainty in the city council concept in the public minds arouse from legal status cause minimal participation. The place of city councils in the participation process is not clear and municipality councils do not put the decisions of city councils into their own agenda. It is also controversial that city council decisions are lack of their sanctions. It could be a reason of lack of the sing of city councils decisions in municipality council decisions. The data also indicates that Regulation on Citizens' Assembly has self-contradictory articles which result in city council mechanism depend on mayor's initiative to be supported due to lack of legal personality. By a complete description, city councils should be made more functional in decision-making processes by municipalities in accordance with governance approach at the local level in the Turkish context.

Although the findings of research concerning city council which function ineffectively in contradistinction to the role they are expected to have at the time of establishment regarding decision-making processes, city councils constitute unique structures at the local level by providing active agents for women and children. According to authorities, participation of citizens enhances democracy (Langton; Rosenbaum; Checkoway and Van Til). Moreover, Çukurçayır asserts that participation to city councils contributes to individual freedom, provides equal opportunities to different social groups and makes democracy more functional at the local level (Siyasal Katılma ve Yerel Demokrasi 26-33). In this respect, the process of consultation with city council regarding municipality strategic plan constitutes one of the benefits of participation. City council assemblies and working groups develop projects concerning problems related to specific disadvantaged groups. Moreover, participation help to provide effective decisions concerning finding a solution to conflicts (Thomas 180). In this respect, disadvantaged groups in city councils

become more receptive regarding specification of their own problems with effective approaches.

To be concluded, the period in which the concepts of sustainable development, participation, transparency, accountability, responsibility and pluralism concerning the governance approach gain importance. In this respect, city councils acquire the most significant means of local democratic governance despite all the problems arising from implementation. The fieldwork displays that city council mechanisms do not bring about all expected outcomes in Turkey. In this respect, although city council mechanisms and assembly implications concerning women and children have a limited role in participation to decision-making processes concerning democracy at the local level in the Turkish context, they are platforms for social groups which have disadvantaged position in the society such as women, children, youth and disabled people come together and form an interaction mechanism. City councils with the vision and experience concerning women's and children's assemblies constitute one of the unique participatory units at the local level. City councils provide a mission to develop democracy by ensuring participation of women and children at the local level. City councils and assemblies should achieve the solutions regarding four problematic areas of city council structures: the area of the relationship between city council and municipality; the area of relationship between public people and NGOs; problems in legal areas; problems in administrative and organizational areas. By the development of local capacity concerning participatory city administration, city councils and its organs of women's and children's assemblies could be more effective and functional units in the context of performance of the governance. As T. Bulut asserts, the period in which participation and transparency is required by sustainable development and the concept of governance is emphasized, city councils will continue to be the significant means of local democratic governance despite encountered problems (167).

Future Research

This thesis argues that the role of city councils is limited in political participation concerning democracy at the local level due to problems encountered in the implementation. In this respect, the conclusion of this thesis points to areas that

could be investigated to advance this research. One implication for future research is to make comparative analysis of city councils according to municipalities of different political parties. This thesis does not include the political party dimension of municipalities and their effect on city council implementations. The reason of exclusion of party dimension is to exceed the aim of the research. Another aspect is to make a comparative analysis of city councils in Turkey with same implications in the abroad. In this respect, this research does not provide a comparative framework with respect to city councils in abroad because the work required to include any such comparison would exceed the limits of one thesis. In particular, a comparison of the city councils in Turkish context with a country having a similar structure of city councils would be valuable.

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APPENDIX A

KADIN MECLİSİ BAŞKANI GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. Eđer alıřıyor iseniz mesleđiniz nedir?
2. alıřma hayatında bulunma sureniz ve alıřma hayatında bulunduđunuz sektr nedir?
3. yesi olduđunuz ya da aktif olarak grev aldıđımız bir siyasi parti var mı? Partinin hangi kademesinde grev almaktasınız?
4. yesi olduđunuz sivil toplum kuruluşları var mı? ye olduđunuz sre nedir?
5. Kent konseyiniz ve kadın meclisiniz hangi tarihte kuruldu?
6. Kent konseyinizde yer alan meclisler nelerdir?
7. Kadın meclisi bařkanı olarak bulunduđunuz sre nedir?
8. Kadın meclisinde aktif olarak grev almaya sizi ynlendiren temel neden nedir?
9. Kadın meclisi olarak hedefleriniz nelerdir? Bu hedeflere ulařmak iin alıřmalarınız nelerdir?
10. Kadın meclisinin hangi organları meclisiniz bnyesinde aktif olarak yer almaktadır?
11. Kadın meclisinin alt alıřma gurupları/komisyonları var mı? Varsa nelerdir? alıřmaları hakkında bilgilendirir misiniz?
12. Kadın meclisi ye sayınız ve ye profiliniz nedir?
13. yelik sreciniz nasıl gerekleřmektedir?
14. yeler kadın meclisinden nasıl haberdar oluyorlardır? Tanıtım alıřmalarınız var mı? Varsa nelerdir?
15. Kadınların siyasi yařama ve karar verme srelerine katılımını sađlamak adına kadın meclisinizin roln ve yapılan alıřmaları aıklar mısınız?
16. Kadın meclisi ne tr konuları kent konseyine tařımıřtır? Bu konulardan ne kadarı dikkate alınıp yerel ynetim tarafından zme ulařtırılmıřtır?
17. alıřmalarınız iin desteđi nereden alıyorsunuz? Belediye kurumu yeterli dzeyde destek sađlıyor mu?
18. Hangi kurum ya da kuruluşlarla ortak alıřma, proje ve iřbirlikleriniz vardır? Kısaca bahseder misiniz? İleriye ynelik iřbirliđi planlarınız nelerdir?
19. Kurumsallařma adına ne tr alıřmalarınız oldu? Ulusal kadın parlamentosu oluřturma gibi bir giriřiminiz oldu mu?
20. Kadın meclislerinin daha gcl olması adına neler yapılabilir?

APPENDIX B

KENT KONSEYİ TEMSİLCİSİ GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. Kent konseyinin kuruluş tarihi nedir?
2. Kent konseyi olarak vizyon ve misyonunuz nedir?
3. Kent konseyini nasıl tanımlarsınız?
4. Kent konseyi çalışmalarına katılma nedeniniz nedir? Ne kadar süredir bu sistemin içerisindesiniz?
5. Üye yapısı, sayısı ve üye olma şartları nedir?
6. Genel Kurul raporlarında ele alınan konular ve alınan kararlar nelerdir?
7. Kent konseyi genel kurulunda yer alıp belediye meclisinde kabul gören konular nelerdir?
8. Projeleriniz ve çalışmalarınız nelerdir? (uygulanan ve planlanan)
9. İşbirliği yapılan kurumlar hangileridir?
10. Belediyeden hangi konularda destek alıyorsunuz? Yapılan desteği nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?
11. Kent konseyinin karşılaştığı sorunlar nelerdir?
12. Katılımı sağlama konusunda kent konseylerinin işlevi nedir? Yerel düzeyde katılımı sağlama konusunda etkili olduğunu ve amacına ulaştığını düşünüyor musunuz?

APPENDIX C

KENT KONSEYİ ÇOCUK MECLİSİ TEMSİLCİSİ GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. Çocuk meclisi bünyesinde göreviniz nedir?
2. Çocuk meclisinizin kuruluş tarihi nedir?
3. Çocuk meclisinizin üye sayısı nedir?
4. Çocuk meclisiniz hangi yaş gruplarından oluşmaktadır?
5. Çocuk meclisinize üye seçiminiz ne şekilde olmaktadır?
6. Çocuk meclisinizin amacı nedir?
7. Çocuk meclisinizin çalışma komisyonları nelerdir?
8. Çocuk meclisinizde yapılan çalışmalar nelerdir?
9. Belediye çalışmalarınıza ne şekilde destek olmaktadır?
10. Çocuk meclisinizin tanıtımı için neler yapmaktasınız?