AN EVALUATION OF THE PERCEPTION OF DEMOCRACY AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS THROUGH THE USE OF METAPHORS

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ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to demonstrate the perceptions of students regarding democracy through the use of metaphors. The participants of the study are the students attending Yalova Community College and the mentioned study held while the Spring semester of the 2012-2013 academic year. The students were requested to provide answers to the questions "If you were asked to compare democracy with anything, what would you compare it to?", and "Would you please explain?". Responses by the students were provided in the format "I think democracy is similar to .... because.....................".

According to the results of the content analyses performed during the study, a total of 101 valid metaphors described by the   students were organized into 10 different categories of cognitive metaphors. These cognitive metaphors were "democracy is equality", "democracy is a vital and obligatory requirement for societies", "democracy is a valuable asset that requires a constant effort to sustain", "democracy is freedom", "democracy is deceptive", "democracy is nothing but wishful thinking", "democracy varies and changes according to circumstances and individuals", "democracy is pluralism", "democracy is justice", and "democracy is safety". The cognitive metaphor most commonly described by the students is "democracy is equality", while the least common described is "democracy is safety". A review of the metaphors provided by the students revealed that 69% had a positive perception of the concept of democracy, while 31% had a negative perception of the concept of democracy.

Key words: Democracy, Metaphor, University Students, Perception of Democracy

INTRODUCTION

We use metaphors to understand and interpret the external world through cognitive processes and utilize tools such as comparisons, analogies, similitudes and similes to picture various entities and concepts in our minds. However, considering a metaphor as a simple expression of language or style would be a mistake. This is because rather than just describing one concept by using another, metaphors involve the process of attributing deeper and more significant meanings and values to a concept. Metaphors focus on how an entity is perceived and interpreted, rather than its actual characteristics. Although different individuals may look at the same entity or concept, the meanings and values they attribute to them might be different for a variety of reasons (age, beliefs, ideology, or education).

Although regimes based on popular sovereignty are called democracies, this characteristic can only be considered as the starting point of what defines a democracy in the present day. In our day and age, democracy encompasses a far wider meaning and ideal; it includes individual liberties, self-improvement, and the provision of necessary means for achieving these. Democracy continues to remain a desirable ideal in the present-day world. On the other hand, certain ideologies oppose and

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criticize the concept of democracy, along with those who believe themselves to be vulnerable and unprotected within the context of democracy.

The main purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of university students regarding the concept of "democracy" through the use of metaphors. The participants of this study included the students from Yalova Community College during the second semester of the 2012-2013 academic year. The students were requested to provide answers to the questions "If you were asked to compare democracy with anything, what would you compare it to?", and "Would you please explain why?". Responses by the students were provided in the format "I think democracy is similar to .... because................................".

In this context, a metaphor questionnaire that included these open-ended questions is administered to 139 students. The age average of the participants is 20 years. The responses to the questionnaires were subject to content analysis; 38 questionnaires were not evaluated on the grounds that they did not provide metaphors, and the study evaluations were hence performed on 101 questionnaires. The purpose, methods, and procedures of the study are presented below, and the obtained results are provided together with tables and relevant data.

1. The Method Applied in the Study
1.1 Purpose of the Study
The purpose of the study is to demonstrate the cognitive perception of democracy among students studying at a Community College through the use of metaphors.

1.2. The Participants
The participants of this study consisted of students from Community College during the second semester of the 2012-2013 academic year. The total number of study participants is 139. The average age of the students is 20 years.

1.3. Data Collection
An open-ended questionnaire is used during this study conducted with 139 participants. The students were requested to provide answers to the questions "If you were asked to compare democracy with anything, what would you compare it to?", and "Would you please explain why?". Responses by the students were provided in the format "I think democracy is similar to .... because................................".. Students were told that comparisons could be made with anything (vehicles, symbols, signs, objects, animals, plants, etc…). They were also asked to explain the reasons for their comparisons. Data obtained from the students constituted the data source of this study.

1.4. Data Analysis
The metaphors provided by the participants in their responses were subject to content analysis. Among 139 questionnaires, 38 were excluded on grounds that they did not provide valid metaphors, and the study analysis is performed on the 101 questionnaires with valid metaphors. The metaphors provided for democracy, and the explanations describing why these metaphors were used, were transferred to a computer to obtain raw data texts. Subsequently, metaphors with similar characteristics in the raw data were organized together to form cognitive metaphor categories. Furthermore, to increase the internal reliability of the results obtained during the study, quotes of the metaphors and explanations provided by the participants to describe their perceptions were also provided.

2. Metaphor

Metaphors represent a form of language that is not part of the individuals' ordinary lexicon, and which make use of comparisons, analogies, similitudes, and similes and other similar tools. Metaphors have traditionally been considered an area of interest within literature, and they have been evaluated as a feature of language and style. Prior to the 1980s, studies on metaphors were limited to literature. Following Lakoff and Johnson's studies, the concept of metaphors has been used in cognitive semantics and interdisciplinary studies.

Lakoff and Johnson's work entitled "Metaphors We Live By", published in 1980, described the "Modern Metaphor Theory". According to the modern metaphor theory, the purpose of a metaphor is to understand and experience a phenomenon/event in terms of another phenomenon/event (Lakoff and Johnson, 2005: 27). Individuals use metaphors to acquire a more concrete and tangible understanding of entities and concepts they have limited knowledge of. Thus, metaphors facilitate the learning of new information.

According to the modern metaphor theory, it is erroneous to consider metaphors as a simple element of language and style. The modern metaphor theory describes that metaphors are not solely an element of language, but that they also represent one of the fundamental ways in which the human mind functions. Lakoff and Johnson describe that cognitive metaphors have central importance in the understanding of natural language (Lakoff, G. and M. Johnson, 1980). Metaphors are also an expression of individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and values.

Lakoff and Johnson have drawn a distinction between linguistic metaphors (comparisons, analogies, similitudes, similes, and metaphorical expressions) and cognitive metaphors (conceptual metaphors and metaphorical concepts). Conceptual metaphors represent the manner in which the basic experiences of individuals are structured in their minds, and also the manner in which they perceive the world. According to Lakoff and Johnson, an understanding of linguistic metaphors is possible by seeing them as expressions of cognitive metaphors within the individual's mind. The meaning of linguistic metaphors is actually associated with the cognitive metaphors in the individual's mind; as such, an understanding of linguistic metaphors is not possible without a consideration of cognitive metaphors.

Linguistic metaphors constitute the visible surfaces of conceptual metaphors. In other words, linguistic metaphors are expressions that render abstract ideas tangible and understandable. For example, the phrase "Democracy is like water" is a linguistic metaphor. The linguistic metaphor rests on the abstract notion that "water is the source of life", which represents a cognitive metaphor. Thus, the individual conceptualizes democracy together with "water".

3. Democracy

Democracy first appeared on the political stage in ancient Greece nearly 2500 years ago. However, in the time period between ancient Greece and the present day, it is not possible to identify a commonly accepted definition regarding democracy. Although ancient Greece provides us with insight regarding the political origins of democracy, the past 2500-year period does not provide a direct understanding of democracy from an individual, social, and cultural perspective. Values and behaviors normally associated with democracy have existed since the first human societies appeared; yet, the transformation of democracy into the popular ideal that it is today is a development characteristic of the 20th century.

Democracy cannot be described solely as a social structure or a form of government (Ranciere, 2006: 52). To allow the establishment and development of democracy within a society, certain political, individual, and social elements must also be present. The purpose of democracy is to ensure that individuals live and thrive freely. It is an ideal based on the principle of the well-being

of individuals and good governance. One distinguishing feature of democracy is the expectation of individuals to achieve their own well-being through the exercise of their free will; it also does not discriminate between individuals according to language, religion, or race.

When considered as a form of government, it can be noted that democracies are marked by regulations regarding the exercise of power, and also by a clearly stipulated separation of powers. The matter of who will govern society, and how this entity/person will exercise power has always been a critically important subject for societies. In this context, history is generally shaped by the political struggle between different factions for power. In democracies, the source of legitimacy for the governing body is the people. Democracies hence represent a form of government in which political decisions are made with the participation of people and by majority vote; it represents a system in which the government is used by the people to serve the people. In democracies, the preeminence of the elected is of central: political authority is wielded by elected individuals chosen by the people. Basic and general decisions regarding governance are made by elected individuals and institutions. The state bureaucracy is subordinate to these elected individuals.

Ensuring the continuity of a democracy rests on the condition that the government, whose legitimacy is determined by the people, rules only for a certain predetermined period of time. The government's authority to exercise political power is limited to a period of time during which the government can implement its policies, and in which the electorate can reform their opinions. This is because, as described by Sartori, guaranteeing the continuity of a democracy depends on ensuring that "the majority becomes the minority, and that the minority also reciprocally becomes the majority" (Sartori, 1993: 26).

Governmental authority, which ultimately rests on the will of the people, is limited by the fundamental rights and freedoms that every individual possesses from birth. Governance is based on the rule of the majority; however, this rule of the majority is implemented on the condition of observing and respecting the rights of individuals and minorities. The civil and political rights of individuals within society are guaranteed by the state and its laws. The recognition and acknowledgement of political and sociological pluralism, along with the absence of an official ideology and of political influences that impose a standard/uniform political and social identity on individuals, also represent inextricable aspects of democracy.

3.1. Democracy and Its Social Aspect

The main characteristics of democracy are the political representation of the people, and the exercise, as well as the limitation, of governmental authority. However, democracies also include various social and economic elements. This is a because without an economic system compatible with democracy, a culture of democracy is not sufficient on its own for ensuring the existence, functioning, and continuity of democratic institutions and systems.

With its various aspects that affect the individual and society as a whole, democracy is more than a merely a form of government: it also represents a way thinking and its associated lifestyle. To exist, democracies require individuals who do not see their own views and beliefs as absolute truths, and who are accepting of the fact that each individual may harbor different world-views. However, individuals are not born with an inherent grasp of fundamental democratic values such as liberty, equality, tolerance, conciliation, and human rights. Yet, the continuation of democracies necessitates that these values are learned and adopted by individuals, and also that an environment suitable for nurturing these values is allowed to exist.

Is there a measure of how democratic a country is? What are the characteristics of countries with democracies? The answers to these questions have always been interesting for those wishing to achieve the ideals of democracy.

In 1980, Lijpart listed a set of criteria according to which a political system can be described as democratic and undemocratic; he also described characteristics that illustrate the extent to which a political system has achieved and fulfilled the ideals of democracy. As such, the common socio-economic and cultural characteristics of 21 countries that had continuous democracies as of 1980 were listed as follows by Lijpart:

- Democratic countries are comparatively more prosperous than countries without democracies.

- The share of the agricultural sector in these counties is small, and the large majority of workers are employed in the industry and service sectors.

- Their cultural characteristics are very similar to one another's; with the exception of Japan, they are all part of the broader Judeo-Christian culture.

- They are geographically concentrated on the Northern Atlantic region of the World (Lijpart, 1989: 23-28).

Duverger has also reached similar conclusions, describing democracy as a mainly "Western System". He listed the common features of countries within the Western System as follows:

- They are economically prosperous,

- They are of Christian belief, and

- Their predominant culture is a humanist culture based on the ancient Greek civilization (Duverger, 1977: 11-12).

In the study on countries continuously governed by democracies, as well as countries whose democratic systems have been interrupted in the past, Huntington identified the features that allow the existence of democracies as follows:

- A high level of modernity,

- The presence of a developed market economy,

- A high level of prosperity,

- The existence of a strong bourgeoisie, without there being any large income gaps within the society,

- The existence of a strong middle-class,

- A high level of education,

- Previous history of feudalism,

- Protestantism,

- Social pluralism, and

- A culture of tolerance and conciliation, respect for the law and individual rights, and the existence of politicians who adhere to and respect the values of democracy (Huntington, 1993: 29-39).

All these studies indicate that democracy is a multi-faceted concept, and that any analysis and study of democracy should consider not only institutional criteria, but also many social, cultural, historic, and economic factors. Indeed, a society first builds its democracy by establishing its own institutions; it then continues its activities by deepening its democratic experience. What is important in this context is ensuring the continuity of open society. Furthermore, democracies do not have inherent mechanisms to compel, of their own, advances and developments in fundamental human rights and social rights: democracy only describes a set abstract principles, and it is up to individuals to follow and achieve their own individual path in accordance with these principles.

 4. Findings
The findings obtained are illustrated in the tables shown below.

Table 1: Linguistic Metaphors Provided by the Participants

Metaphor	(f)	Metaphor	(f)	Metaphor	(f)	Metaphor	(f)
Scales	10	Foreign	1	Tree	1	The Sky	1
Utopia	4		1	Pizza	1	Gold at the Jewelry Store	
Water	3	Sycamore	1	Music	1	Believing what you want to believe	1
Fairytale	3	Şahmeran (a creature from Anatolian Mythology)	1	Hypocrisy	1	Inequality	1
Alice in Wonderland	2	Theater	1	Family Structure	1	Committing Fraud	1
Chameleon	2	Lion		Toys		Black Box	
Mother's Love	2	Money	1	The Wind	1	Color	1
Family	2	Fruitful Tree	1	Believing what you want to believe	1	The Mind	1
Two Halves of an Apple	2	Imagination	1	Pomegranate	1	Health	1
The Foundation of a Building	2	Orchid	1	Mardin	1	Arbitrator	1
Food	2	Snowdrop	1	Choice	1	The Scales of Justice	1
Speaking	2	Rose	1	Life-style	1	Electronic Scale	1
GSM rates	2	Painting	1	The Heart	1	House	1
The Sun	2	Teeterboard	1	Religious Principles	1	Life	1
The Forest	2	Stars	1	Islam	1	Turtle Shell	1
University Department	1	Rain	1	Wheel	1	Father	1
Paint	1	Ruler	1	The Sea	1	Pencil	1
Poverty	1	Child's Game	1	Wheel	1	Plastic	1
Book	1	Ship	1	Internet	1	Lamp	1

Table 2a: Categories of Positive Cognitive Metaphors Regarding Democracy
(Number of Metaphors: 70, Ratio: 69.30%)

Cognitive Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Metaphors
Democracy is equality.	23	22.77%	Scales (10), Mother's Love (2), Two Halves of an Apple (2), Family (2), University Department (1), Paint (1), Star (1), Rain (1), Ruler (1), Islam (1), Religious Principles (1)
Democracy is vital and obligatory requirement for societies.	13	12.87%	Water (3), Food (2), The Foundation of a Building (2), Wheel (1), The Mind (1), Father (1), Health (1), Life (1), The Heart (1)
Democracy is a valuable asset that requires efforts to sustain.	12	11.88%	Tree (1), The Sky (1), Foreign Music (1), Teeterboard (1), Fruitful Tree (1), Money (1), Sycamore (1), Imagination (1), Orchid (1), Snowdrop (1), Rose (1), Painting (1)
Democracy is freedom.	11	10.89%	Speaking (2), GSM Rate (2), Believing what you want to believe (1), Color (1), Choice (1), The Wind (1), The Sea (1), Life-Style (1), Believing what you want to believe (1)
Democracy is pluralism.	6	5.94%	The Sun (2), The Forest (2), Mardin (1), Pomegranate (1)
Democracy is justice.	3	2.97%	Arbitrator (1), The Scales of Justice (1), Electronic Scale (1),
Democracy is safety.	2	1.98%	House (1), Turtle shell (1),

Table 2b: Categories of Negative Cognitive Metaphors Regarding Democracy (Number of Metaphors: 31, Ratio: 30.70%)

Cognitive Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Metaphor
Democracy is deceptive.	11	10.89%	Şahmeran (1), Theater (1), Black Box (1), Toy (1), Lion (1), Committing Fraud (1), Family Structure (1), Hypocrisy (1), Inequality (1), Pizza (1), Gold at the Jewelry Store (1)
Democracy is nothing but wishful thinking.	11	10.89%	Utopia (4), Fairytales (3), Alice in Wonderland (2), Poverty (1), Child's Game (1),
Democracy changes and varies according to circumstances and individuals.	9	8.91%	Chameleon (2), The Wheel (1), Plastic (1), Book (1), Ship (1), Internet (1), Lamp (1), Pencil (1),

Table 3: The Underlying Reasons for the Cognitive Metaphors

Cognitive Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Reason
Democracy is equality	23	22.77%	- Because it considers all hues as being the same - Because every group and every race within society is treated as equals - Because everyone is equal, regardless of whether they are rich, poor, ignorant, or cultured - Because it grants the right to elect and be elected - Because it maintains a fair and equal stance towards everyone, without favoring or disfavoring anyone - Because it contributes to everyone equally - Because it measures everything equally - Because it invites everyone to treat each other as equals - Because its respects the opinion of every member of society - Because it grants everyone equal rights and the right to speak - Because it embraces everyone equally - Because all citizens are equal - Because it is compatible with human nature - Because wherever you go in this world, it does not change or treat you differently
Democracy is a vital and obligatory requirement for societies	13	12.87%	- Because it represents one of the obligatory requirements of societies. - Because there can be no national unity without democracy - Because it is a fundamental system that allows individuals to live humanely - Because I would not want to live in a country without democracy - Because we do not fully appreciate it when it exists, yet do everything possible to acquire it when it does not exist - Because the people cannot live without democracy - Because democracy is what keeps society on its feet

Democracy is a valuable asset that requires a constant effort to sustain	12	11.88%	- Because everyone talks about it, but not many understands its value - Because it requires constant care and effort to sustain - Because acquiring it requires an effort - Because not everyone is able to acquire it - Because it is a rare asset - Because it might, at any time, run into various problems - Because it is not something that everyone can achieve - Because it can never be achieved with politicians/rulers who are inept
Democracy is freedom	11	10.89%	- Because it allows people to choose how they want to live - Because it allows the individual to live without restricting his/her freedoms - Because it acknowledges the personal choices and preferences of individuals - Because it allows you to make the choices you like - Because it allows everyone to live freely according to their beliefs - Because it allow individuals to choose what is in their interest - Because it grants everyone the right to speech, and speech is freedom
Democracy is pluralism	6	5.94%	- Because it is inherent to all individuals - Because it allows the coexistence of individuals of different races and faiths - Because it allows everyone to live as they please - Because it harbors and nurtures everyone - Because it unites everyone around a common denominator
Democracy is justice	3	2.97%	- Because democracies are impartial - Because democracy is based on justice - Because it weighs everything at its worth
Democracy is safety	2	1.98%	- Because it allows us to feel safe - Because it protects our rights and freedoms - Because it protects us against all threats
Democracy is deceptive	11	10.89%	- Because it takes a different shape when looked at from different angles - Because it is a system in which the unjust pretend and appear to be just - Because it is a game used to deceive the people - Because it is the main gate through which corruption takes place - Because people are unable to demand justice - Because unseen mechanisms of pressure and restraint continue to be exercised - Because it exist only in theory - Because inequality continues to exist - Because only those with money actually benefit from it
Democracy is just wishful thinking	11	10.89%	- Because it exists only in name (not in practice) - Because it is nothing more than a product of the imagination - Because it is nothing more than a game - Because it cannot be properly implemented in the real world - Because it cannot be fully implemented across the world
Democracy changes and varies according to circumstances and	9	8.91%	- Because it takes any color that seems convenient at the moment - Because it you can give it any shape - Because it goes in any direction we orient it

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individuals			- Because it is interpreted and accepted differently by each individual - Because we determine its course - Because we can choose to establish or abolish it. - Because it depends too much on the will of individuals - Because it can be misused

According to the results of the content analyses performed during the study, a total of 101 valid metaphors described by the students were organized under 10 different cognitive metaphor categories. These cognitive metaphors were "democracy is equality", "democracy is a vital and obligatory requirement for societies", "democracy is a valuable entity that requires a constant effort to sustain", "democracy is freedom", "democracy is deceptive", "democracy is nothing but wishful thinking", "democracy changes and varies according to circumstances and individuals", "democracy is pluralism", "democracy is justice", and "democracy is safety". As can be seen in Table 2a and 2b, the cognitive metaphor most commonly described by the students is "democracy is equality" (22.77%), while the least common cognitive metaphor is "democracy is safety" (1.98%).

A review of the provided metaphors demonstrated that nearly 70% of the students had a positive perception towards democracy. These positive cognitive metaphors were "democratic equality" (23%), "democracy is a vital and obligatory requirement for societies" (13%), "democracy is a valuable entity that requires a constant effort to sustain" (12%), "democracy is freedom" (11%), "democracy is pluralism" (6%), "democracy is justice" (3%), and "democracy is safety" (2%) (Total: 70 metaphors, 69.30%). A review of the metaphors demonstrated that nearly 31% of the students had a negative perception towards democracy. These negative cognitive metaphors were "democracy is deceptive" (11%), "democracy is nothing but wishful thinking" (11%), and "democracy changes and varies according to circumstances and individuals" (9%) (Total: 31 metaphors, 30.69%).

A review of the student's metaphors revealed that instead of describing democracy as a form of government, the students mainly provided metaphors regarding the individual and social aspects of democracy, such as equality, freedom, justice, pluralism, and safety. Based on this observation, it is concluded that students with a positive perception of democracy considered it as a valuable and indispensable element for the individuals and society.

A review of the reasons and explanations provided by students that formed negative metaphors revealed that they mainly perceived democracy as a form of government. Negative perceptions regarding the concept of democracy were categorized as "deceptive", "wishful thinking" and "changes and varies according to circumstances and individuals". Some of the students who provided negative metaphors regarding democracy were of the opinion that the implementation of democracy is different than what it is in theory. In other words, democracy is actually different than what it is supposed to be, according to these students. Thus, democracy is perceived as a system in which inequality and injustice prevails, and which is used by those in power for their own ends.

It is similar to Şahmeran, because it takes a different appearance according to the position.
It is similar to hypocrisy, because it is a system in which the unjust pretend and appear to be just.
It is similar to a black box, because it is the main gate through which corruption takes place.
It is similar to the family structure, because everything appears on the outside to be based on equality.

> *It is similar to lion, because the lion lives as a king, but owes his kinship to unseen*
> *pressures and restraints.*

Certain students, on the other hand, are of the opinion that democracy may never be properly implemented. According to these students, democracy is nothing but wishful thinking.

> *It is similar to a child's games, because, like a child, you play a game by believing that*
> *is actually real.*
> *It is similar to Alice in Wonderland, because it cannot be properly implemented in the*
> *real world. It looks very nice from afar and in theory; but it cannot be implemented in*
> *real life.*

Instead of a body of principles and ideals, some students considered democracy as a variable and malleable concept that certain individuals could mold, interpret, and use according to their own ends. According to these students, the implementation of democracy changes and varies according to circumstances and individuals.

> *It is similar to plastic, because you can give it any shape.*
> *It is similar to a chameleon, because it constantly adapts to its environment. It takes any*
> *color that seems convenient at the moment.*
> *It is similar to a wheel, because it goes in any direction we orient it.*

Among the students, the fact that the loss of confidence and belief towards democracy is at such a high level (31%) carries with it the risk of "political estrangement", which represents a significant potential problem for societies. Political estrangement describes the existence of a contradiction between the values of the individual and the values of the political system; it is accompanied with the feeling, on the individual's part, that this contradiction cannot be resolved by either the individual or the political system (Ergil and Alkan, 1980:24). Political estrangement represents a situation in which the political system has no meaning for the individual, and fails to respond to the needs and demands of the individuals, while also preventing the individuals from fulfilling their own needs and demands; it hence reflects the effective dissociation of individuals from the political system (Çukurcay r, 2002:71). There is always the potential for politically estranged individuals to act outside of the normal boundaries and methods of political participation.

There are many factors that affect political participation. However, a review of the negative metaphors provided by the students reveals that the loss of belief and confidence towards the system stems mainly from anomie and the loss of a sense of effectiveness and relevance. An example is provided below:

> *Democracy is similar to the gold at jewelry store, because everyone can see it, but only*
> *those having sufficient money can benefit from it.*

In this metaphor, democracy is described as a concept from which only those with certain privileges can benefit from. As such, it is not possible for those lacking these privileges to benefit from democracy (in other words, to be able to have an effect on democracy by participating in the system).

> *Democracy is like a chameleon, because it constantly adapts to its environment. It takes*
> *any color that seems convenient at the moment.*

In the mentioned metaphor; democracy is described as a state of anomie lacking principles and values. Anomie is one of the main reasons for political estrangement. In a state of anomie, the individual loses his/her values, beliefs, and goals. The individual loses any hope of influencing events. Anomie involves a combination of powerlessness and normlessness (Baykal, 1970:103). Due to feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness, individuals affected by anomie appear unable to participate either actively or passively in political life (Baykal, 1970:104). The loss of values and

norms that serve as a frame of reference in relationships with others may lead to a state of normlessness for the individuals as well.

The sense of political effectiveness and relevance is one of the preconditions of a democratic political system. According to Kalaycıoğlu, the most important psychological variables in political participation is the sense of political effectiveness. Political effectiveness represents the individual's belief that he/she may benefit from the existing political system by having an influence on it (Kalaycıoğlu, 1983:39). In addition to ensuring political participation on the part of individuals, the sense of political effectiveness can also serve as a basic motive that encourages individuals to be politically interested and knowledgeable. It is possible to say that individuals' regular following of political events and interest in the functioning of the political system will allow them to become more knowledgeable on these subjects (Kalaycıoğlu, 1983: 40).

Every individual wishes to benefit from the political system. Individuals will direct their political participation towards areas that will allow them to achieve this demand. Their political participation will increase to the extent that their political demands can be satisfied. Individuals who realize that they will be unable to benefit from the opportunities and means presented by democracy will lose their sense of effectiveness. Ensuring the continuity of this sense of effectiveness depends on individuals' belief in their ability to change their environment with their own actions and behaviors, to influence events and developments, and to shape their own future through their activities. Individuals who believe they can influence and monitor their environment tend to show greater participation to all types of social activities. Individuals with a culture of political participation have a stronger sense of political effectiveness.

Anomie can lead individuals who have lost their sense of effectiveness, or who have become estranged from the system for other reasons, to seek unusual methods of political participation: boycotts, occupation activities, obstruction of traffic, building barricades, damaging public property, or even engaging in armed attacks represent the type of activities that individuals who have lost their belief in the political system may have recourse to. On the other hand, ordinary methods of political participation reinforce individuals' belief in democracy, while also providing them with an education of the types of democratic values, reinforcing the solidarity and understanding between individuals, allowing the development of a sense tolerance and equality, and contributing to the formation of common values. Similarly, ordinary methods of political participation also enable the transformation of bureaucratic institutions with which the individuals interact, ensuring that they become organizations that are more responsive to the demands of individuals and of society.

Conclusion

Regarding democracy, 69% of the students provided positive metaphors, while 31% provided negative metaphors. A rate of 31% is a considerably high ratio for a country with a developing democracy like Turkey. A review of the negative metaphors revealed that the students considered the essential principles of democracy such as equality, justice, liberty, and the rule of law were being used as instruments, and that the rules of democracy were not being implemented equally for everyone. In a democracy that is perceived exclusively as being the system of those in power, it is inevitable for the legitimacy of the existing political order to be eventually questioned. Questions of legitimacy will also lead to a questioning of individuals' sense of belonging to the political and social system. This, in turn, will lead to the estrangement of the individuals from the system, and of the system from the individual.

For individuals to assume a democratic attitude towards one another, it is important that they possess a sense of respect and tolerance towards others, that they communicate openly with each other, and also that they endeavor to reach a common understanding. From an institutional

perspective, the communication and understanding between individuals and institutions is equally important. Every individual has a set of beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, judgments, and expectations regarding the political and social system he/she lives in. The values and expectations of the individual are not always the same as the values and rules of a democratic system. Such a situation may inevitably lead to a conflict of sorts. In case of such conflict, the individual may follow one of two different paths: either the individual will lose interest towards social and political problems, and became politically estranged by losing all hope; or the individual will participate in the system by attempting to have an effect on it, and endeavor to satisfy his/her own demands and requests in the process.

In democracies, it is certainly expected that individuals participate in political processes. Participation should be considered as a means to a solution in many instances. The government should always be open to participation, and means for further increasing political participation should be developed. Individuals with a culture of political participation have a stronger sense of political effectiveness, and this sense of political effectiveness is one of the preconditions of a democratic political system.

This study reported no indication that students with a negative perception of democracy had any demands for an alternative political system other than democracy. This might illustrates that rather than being based on a categorical opposition to democracy, their perception stems from a lack of knowledge about democracy, from a criticism of wrong policies they observe within the democratic system, or from their current socio-psychological situation. The establishment of a democracy in a society, as well as its continuation, rests on the ability of individuals to understand democracy and to live with it. People do not possess democratic values from birth. The most important factor that undoubtedly allows the adoption and implementation of democratic rights and responsibilities by individuals is education. Hence, emphasis should be placed on ensuring that these values are acquired through education.

A fully democratic form of government requires certain standards to be followed. However, it would not be realistic to assume that every society will be capable of implementing these standards in a flawless manner, and to ensure perfectly democratic governance. Democracy is also a multi-faceted concept which, itself, needs to undergo democratization. As with all political systems, democracies may always encounter crises related to legitimacy and representation, or problems such as injustice and corruption. From this perspective, the most important quality that renders democracy a preferable form of government is its capacity to produce solutions to its own crises and problems.

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