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RESEARCH ARTICLE / ARAŞTIRMA YAZISI

The Costs and Benefits of Political Polarization in Türkiye in the context of Voting for Elections and Well-Being

Türkiye'de Seçimlerde Oy Verme ve Refah Bağlamında Siyasal Kutuplaşmanın Olumsuz ve Olumlu Etkileri

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Abstract:

Türkiye has recently undergone an election process. During this period, differences among political groups and their varying positions have been observed, indicating a certain level of polarization among voters. These developments may be associated with individuals' emotion regulation, well-being, and motivation to participate in future elections. In this context, political environments characterized by divergence may influence how individuals interpret and respond to emotionally charged situations. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between affective polarization, well-being, and voting behavior among Turkish citizens, while considering the moderating role of emotion regulation strategies. The study employed moderation models to investigate the effects of affective polarization and trait reappraisal on voting likelihood and life satisfaction. Data were analyzed using established statistical procedures to explore both direct and interaction effects among variables. The findings indicate that higher levels of affective polarization are associated with a higher likelihood of voting and lower life satisfaction. Trait reappraisal did not demonstrate a significant moderating effect on the relationship between affective polarization and life satisfaction. However, trait reappraisal showed a significant moderating effect on the relationship between affective polarization and voting. Overall, this study contributes to the literature by highlighting the psychological processes underlying political participation and the role of emotion regulation in shaping these relationships.

Keywords: Affective polarization, life satisfaction, voting, emotion regulation, reappraisal.

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Öz:

Türkiye'de son dönemde gerçekleşen seçim süreci, siyasi gruplar arasındaki farklılıkların ve karşıt tutumların belirginleştiği bir döneme işaret etmektedir. Bu durum, seçmenler arasında belirli bir düzeyde duygusal kutuplaşmanın varlığına işaret ederken, bireylerin duygu düzenleme süreçleri, iyi oluş düzeyleri ve gelecekteki seçimlere katılım motivasyonları ile ilişkili olabileceği düşünülmektedir. Bu bağlamda, ayrışmanın yoğun olduğu siyasi ortamların bireylerin duygusal olarak yüklü durumları nasıl yorumladıkları ve bu durumlara nasıl tepki verdikleri üzerinde etkili olabileceği öne sürülmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'deki vatandaşlar arasında duygusal kutuplaşma, iyi oluş ve oy verme davranışı arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek ve bu ilişkilerde duygu düzenleme stratejilerinin (özellikle bilişsel yeniden değerlendirme) düzenleyici rolünü test etmektir. Araştırmada, duygusal kutuplaşma ve yeniden değerlendirme eğiliminin oy verme olasılığı ve yaşam doyumu üzerindeki etkileri moderasyon modelleri aracılığıyla analiz edilmiştir. Veriler, değişkenler arasındaki doğrudan ve etkileşim etkilerini ortaya koymak amacıyla uygun istatistiksel yöntemler kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular, duygusal kutuplaşma düzeyi arttıkça oy verme olasılığının arttığını, buna karşılık yaşam doyumunun azaldığını göstermektedir. Bilişsel yeniden değerlendirme değişkeni, duygusal kutuplaşma ile yaşam doyumu arasındaki ilişkide anlamlı bir düzenleyici etki göstermemiştir. Ancak, duygusal kutuplaşma ile oy verme davranışı arasındaki ilişkide anlamlı bir düzenleyici rol üstlendiği belirlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma siyasi katılımın psikolojik temellerine ve duygu düzenleme süreçlerinin bu ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisine ışık tutarak literatüre katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygusal kutuplaşma, yaşam doyumu, oy verme, duygu düzenleme, yeniden değerlendirme.

Introduction

Türkiye is considered a politically polarized context (Aydın Düzgit, 2019). In recent general elections, different political alliances have played a prominent role in shaping the political landscape. Political identity has increasingly become an important factor in individuals' preferences, sometimes extending beyond policy-based considerations (Yurdakul, 2020). Political polarization can be observed in various forms of public discourse and interaction, including media discussions and political communication (Yılmaz, 2017; Yurdakul, 2020).

Political polarization is not limited to party affiliation or ideological differences and may also be associated with individuals' mental and physical health. Nayak et al. (2021) emphasize that partisan polarization should be considered when examining public health outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and sleep-related problems. For example, research conducted in the United States introduced the concept of "election-related distress," which refers to increased anxiety and reduced well-being during election periods (Simchon et al., 2020). Similarly, political divisions have been associated with various health-related outcomes, including substance use and attitudes toward health-related behaviors (Panagopoulos et al., 2022). These findings suggest that polarized social contexts may be related to increased emotional and psychological strain.

In this context, individuals may use emotion regulation strategies to manage negative emotional responses to political events. Emotion regulation can support short-term mood improvement and help maintain psychological well-being during stressful situations (Bonanno et al., 2015). One commonly studied strategy is trait reappraisal, which involves cognitively reframing a situation in order to modify its emotional impact (Gross, 2002).

However, emotion regulation may also have indirect implications for political behavior. Negative emotions are often associated with increased engagement in collective or individual action. When individuals experience strong emotional responses to political events, they may be more likely to participate in related activities. Therefore, although reappraisal may reduce emotional distress, it may also be associated with lower levels of political engagement by attenuating emotional intensity.

Affective Polarization

Affective polarization refers to emotional divisions between political groups. Party identification structures the political landscape into an ingroup (one's preferred group) and an outgroup (opposing groups), which may lead to favorable attitudes toward the ingroup and less favorable attitudes toward the outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Previous research indicates that such attitudes toward opposing groups can become stable and emotionally intense over time (Iyengar & Westwood, 2014).

In the Turkish context, political divisions have been associated with ideological, cultural, and social differences (Aydın Düzgit, 2019). These divisions may reflect broader patterns of group-based identification and social differentiation. Recent developments in the political environment have also been discussed in relation to changes in institutional dynamics and power distribution, which may be associated with variations in the level of polarization (Laebens & Öztürk, 2020).

Electoral processes can further highlight existing differences among political groups and contribute to increased public engagement and emotional responses. Empirical reports and media analyses of recent election periods indicate that political events may intensify group-based attitudes and public reactions (Taşcı, 2023; The Guardian, 2023). In this regard, election periods may be considered important contexts in which affective polarization becomes more visible.

Affective Polarization and Well-Being

According to the World Happiness Report 2023, the Netherlands ranks as the fifth happiest country, while Türkiye ranks 106th. Furthermore, Türkiye shows a large gap in happiness between different social groups (Helliwell et al., 2023). Subjective well-being includes individuals' emotional responses, life satisfaction, and evaluations of life circumstances (Diener et al., 1999).

Studies conducted in Türkiye suggest that political orientation may influence well-being. Individuals with center-right political views often report higher life satisfaction, partly due to the positive role of religion in well-being (Myers, 2000; Selim, 2008). Other factors such as health, family relationships, and leisure activities also positively affect life satisfaction (Selim, 2008). Additionally, political attitudes may influence voting behavior and political participation (Filiztekin & Kent, 2023).

Affective Polarization and Voting

Previous research suggests that higher levels of affective polarization may be associated with increased political participation. For example, Şaşmaz et al. (2022) found that affective polarization is related to citizens' support for political institutions and their participation in elections. Similarly, cross-national research comparing the United States and Norway indicates that more polarized political environments may strengthen the association between affective polarization and voting behavior (Knudsen, 2020). In contrast, politically disengaged individuals who hold negative attitudes toward all parties tend to be less likely to vote (Klar et al., 2018)

Emotion Regulation Strategy - Reappraisal

Reappraisal refers to the process of reinterpreting an event in a way that modifies its emotional meaning, which may help reduce negative emotional reactions (Gross & Thompson, 2007). However, negative emotions may also have motivational functions, particularly in contexts where group identity plays a significant role (Gross & John, 2003).

Research suggests that individuals frequently use emotion regulation strategies to cope with negative emotions associated with political events (Ford et al., 2023). While reappraisal may support individuals' well-being, it may also be associated with reduced motivation to engage in political action by attenuating emotional responses to political issues.

The Objective of the Study

Although previous research has examined affective polarization, emotion regulation, and political participation separately, few studies have investigated how these factors interact. The present study aims to examine the relationship between affective polarization, life satisfaction, and voting behavior among Turkish citizens, as well as the moderating role of reappraisal.

This study sets out to test four hypotheses, of which the formulation is guided by the literature and objective of the study:

Hypothesis 1

Higher levels of affective polarization are associated with lower levels of well-being.

Hypothesis 2

The relationship between affective polarization and well-being is moderated by trait reappraisal (e.g. negative association is weak for individuals with higher levels of trait reappraisal).

Hypothesis 3

Higher levels of affective polarization are associated with a higher likelihood of voting.

Hypothesis 4

The relationship between affective polarization and voting is moderated by trait reappraisal (e.g. a positive association is weaker for individuals with higher levels of trait reapprailsal).

Methods

Participants

Of the 246 participants at the beginning, 38 individuals who gave incorrect answers to the attention questions added to increase the reliability and validity of the study were eliminated from this study.

A total of 208 Turkish citizens participated in this research study. A non-random sampling technique – self-select was adopted. Participants were recruited through posters and flyers displayed at many social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Linkedln were utilized to reach potential Turkish participants just before the general and presidental elections in Türkiye. Afterwards, people who expressed interest in the study were provided with detailed information about the research objectives, procedures, confidentiality, and their rights as participants. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before the commencement of data collection. The data collection was done on the online platform called Qualtrics. Before, participants filled the questionnaries, they were informed about the study's explanation and purpuse, provided with a contact information page of research and advisors if they felt discomfort by any of the questions or topics addressed during the reseach. Then, they completed the demographic questionnaire followed by the questions about their desicion to going poll and voting (YES, NO and MAYBE), Polarization Scale, CERQ-TR, and SLWS.

Materials and Data Collection

Ethics approval was obtained in 2021 from the Ethics Review Committee of the Maastricht University Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience (ERCPN-OZL_234_39_02_2021) prior to the commencement of the study.

Polarization Scale

To assess the level of polarization among Turkish participants, the Polarization Scale (Druckman et al., 2022) was translated and adapted for use in the Turkish context. The scale measures polarization through survey items that evaluate the level of closeness or distance individuals are comfortable having with members of opposing political groups, commonly referred to as social-distance measures.

These measures can be broadly categorized into different types. While social-distance items capture attitudes toward specific behavioral situations (e.g., willingness to engage in close social relationships with members of opposing groups), other measures such as feeling thermometers, trait ratings, and trust indicators assess more general attitudes toward political groups (Druckman & Levendusky, 2019). Among these, feeling thermometers are widely used to quantify affective polarization, as they capture how positively or negatively individuals evaluate their in-group and out-group (Lelkes, 2017).

Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnarie-(CERQ)

Turkish version of the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ- TR) was translated and adapted into Turkish culture by Cakmak and Cevik (2010). The original short version CERQ contains 18 items and two item subscales to measure emotion regulation strategies namely planning, positive refocusing, catastrophizing, other blame, focus on thought, reappraisal, perspective, acceptance and self-blame (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006). Participants indicated what they generally think when they

experience negative, stressful or threatening events on a five-point Likert-type scale (almost never = 1 to almost always =5). The scores for each subscale, which range from 4 to 20, are added up to create the individual subscale scores. The more often a particular cognitive technique is applied, the higher the subscale score is (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006).

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

The 5-item The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was translated to Turkish and conducted to measure participants' life satisfaction as a subcategory of well-being of participants. SWLS was developed by Diener et al. (2010) to measure overall life satisfaction among the numerous aspects of subjective well-being; it does not take into account related notions like positive affect or loneliness. Participants were requested to evaluate their life to measure their life satisfaction by using a 7-point scale (1 = "strongly disagree," 2 = "disagree," 3 = "neither agree nor disagree", 4= "agree" and 5 = "strongly agree"). And current study has recorded the original coding, hence, 5 rather than 7 categories. The sum of the points for each item results in the overall score. The conceivable score range is 5-35, with a score of 20 denoting the scale's neutral point. Scores between 5 and 9 show the respondent is very dissatisfied with life, whereas scores between 31 and 35 show the respondent is quite satisfied.

The assessment of political parties/alliances was measured using five variables, with each variable representing a different party (People's Alliance Supporters, Nation Alliance Supporters, Ancestral Alliance Supporters, Homeland Alliance Supporters and The Labor and Freedom Alliance Supporters). Participants were asked to indicate the party they like most or dislike most. Then, for each party indicated, participants were asked to rate it on a scale from 0 to 100 (0 indicating completely negative attitude and 100 indicating completely positive attitude). The difference between scores indicated the degree of polarization (0= no polarization, 100=full polarization).

Voting Behavior

Participants were asked about their likelihood of voting in future elections using the following options: 1=definitely not planning to vote, 2= not planning to vote, definitely planning, 3=neutral, 4= planning to vote and 5= definitely planning to vote.

Control Variables

The effects of several demographic variables were controlled for in the current analysis. Gender was measured as 1 = female, 2= male, 3= LGBTQIA+, and 4= other; participant's age was measured as indicator variables (1= 18-24 years, 2= 25-34 years, 3= 35-44 years, 4= 45-54 years, 5= 55-64 years, 6= 65 years and above). Participants' education was measured as 1= primary school, 2= high school, 3= two-year degree, 4= bachelor's degree, 5= master's degree, and 6= PhD. Participants' political views as a left and right were also included as a demographic variable, as they were asked to rate how right- or left-oriented they were, as 1 = extreme left to 10 = extreme right.

Data Analysis

SPSS 28.0 was used to conduct the analysis. Descriptive statistics (percentages, mean and standard deviation) were calculated first. Next, bivariate analysis between categorical variables was run using Spearman rank correlation coefficient. Bivariate analysis between the reappraisal variable and degree of polarization, however, was calculated using Pearson's r, since both variables were interval type.

Results

Most participants identified their identity as Turkish (96.2%), though only around 70% were residents in Türkiye at the time of the survey. Almost equal percentages of Turkish respondents lived in the Netherlands (12.0%) and Northern Cyprus (11.1%). 57,2% were female and 46,6% were students. Those with bachelor's degree made up around two-thirds (64,9%) of the sample. The age group with the highest percentage of representation was participants aged 18-24 (47,6%), followed by those aged 25-34. In terms of political leaning, the mean indicates that the sample is leaning mostly to the left. Full descriptive statistics showing demographic structure are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Demographic Structure of the Sample (n=208)*

Variable	M (SD)	Min-Max	Category	%
Nationality	1.12 (.68)	1-6	Turkish	96,2
			Turkish Cypriot	1,0
			Uzbek	0,5
			Bulgarian	1,0
			Albanian	1,4
Employment	2.23 (1.29)	1-5	Student	46,6
			Part-time worker	4,8
			Full-time worker	32,7
			Not working	10,1
			Retired	5,8
Education	3.99 (.90)	1-6	Primary school	0,5
			High school	10,6
			Two-year degree	3,4
			Bachelor's degree	64,9
			Master's degree	16,8
			PhD	3,8
Gender	1.46 (.56)	1-4	Female	57,2
			Male	40,4
			LGBTQIA+	1,9
			other	0,5
Age	2.13 (1.55)	1-6	18-24 ages	47,6
			25-34 ages	32,2
			45-54 ages	4,8
			55-64 ages	10,1
			65 age and above	5,3

Regarding political questions, the sample was dominated by those planning or planning to vote (M=4.84, SD=.51). The proportion of those interested in politics was slightly higher than those not interested or neutral (M=3.78, SD=.83). In percentage terms, the proportions of each response were as follows: not interested at all (1%), not interested (6,3%), neutral (23,6%), interested (51,9%) and very interested (17,3%). In terms of feeling thermometer, there were significant differences across parties, based on the mean and median scores (Table 2).

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for Feeling Thermometer Across Parties*

	People's Alliance Supporters	Nation Alliance Supporters	Ancestral Alliance Supporters	Homeland Alliance Supporters	The Labor and Freedom Alliance Supporters
Mean	9.18	74.46	35.17	27.47	38.57
Median	1.00	80.00	32.50	22.50	38.50
SD	20.06	23.20	31.28	27.38	33.9

As the polarisation question is an interval-type variable, a test of normality was conducted to see the distribution of values. Shapiro-Wilk test of normality ($p<0.001$) indicated a non-normal distribution, which was primarily caused by several respondents whose values were beyond the conventional z-score levels (±3). Only nine respondents had such values. They were kept in the further analysis. The mean score of 74.7 for the polarisation item indicated, the mean score between 50 and 100 means that the participants in the study feel more warm, in other words positive, towards the Nation Alliance supporters. On the other hand, results between 0 and 50 mean coldness, that is, negativity, while the participants feel colder towards the supporters of other alliances, but the fact that this rating is close to 50 means that negative feelings are not very strong.

A test of normality was conducted for the life satisfaction composite measure as well. Shapiro-Wilk test of normality ($p<0.001$) indicated a non-normal distribution. Only two respondents had values beyond the conventional z-score levels (±3). They were kept in the further analysis. The overall life satisfaction of the sample is medium (M=2.50, SD=.81).

As to the bivariate analysis between categorical variables (see on Table 3), there was a positive correlation between the level of education and intention to vote (r=.198, p=<0.001), though the effect size was low, as indicated by the Cohen d classification. The association between political leaning and gender was at the 0.001 level (r=.273) – female participants were more likely to be leaning to the left, compared to male and LGBTQIA+. No association was observed between the reappraisal variable and the degree of polarization when using Pearson's r (r=-0.06, p=.352). Nominal by interval Eta test indicated no significant difference along employment status (r=.171, p=.263), while gender showed statistical relevance with weak effect size (r=.152, p<.0.001).

Following the guidelines provided by (Khamis, 2008), as a measure of association between ordinal variables (level of education, interest in politics, political leaning, and intention to vote) and interval variable (life satisfaction), Kendall tau-b test was used, and no correlation was observed.

Table 3. *Table of Bivariate Analysis between Categorical Variables*

	Planning to vote	Gender	Employment	Education	Political leaning	Related to politics	Age	Reappraisal
Planning to vote	1	0,084	-0,049	.198**	-0,104	0,105	0	-.143*
Gender		1	-0,071	-0,074	.273**	0,106	-0,074	-0,038
Employment			1	0,043	-0,132	-0,065	.607**	0,076
Education				1	0,011	0,023	.200**	-0,093
Political leaning					1	-0,094	-0,07	0,054
Related to politics						1	-0,049	0,121
Age							1	.174*
Reappraisal								1

*** p <0.01 level (2-tailed)*
** p <0.05 level (2-tailed)*

Moderation models

Two distinct simple moderation models were evaluated using the SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013). In both models, affective polarization was the focal predictor, reappraisal served as the moderator, and two different dependent variables were considered: likelihood of voting in the first model, and life satisfaction in the second model.

The results of the first model demonstrated statistical significance ($F(3.204) = 8.90$, $p < .01$, $R2 = .12$). Notably, it was found that higher levels of affective polarization ($B = .017$, $SE = .004$, $p < .001$) and greater utilization of trait reappraisal ($B = .223$, $SE = .090$, $p < .05$) were both positively associated with an increased likelihood of voting. Furthermore, the interaction between affective polarization and trait reappraisal exhibited significance ($B = -.003$, $SE = .001$, $t = -2.711$, $p < .01$), highlighting that the relationship between affective polarization and the likelihood of voting was indeed moderated by trait reappraisal.

To delve deeper, the examination of simple slopes for varying levels of trait reappraisal was conducted: low (-1 SD below the mean), moderate (mean), and high (+1 SD above the mean). Notably, each of these analyses revealed a positive and significant connection between affective polarization and likelihood of voting. However, the strength of this connection varied based on the level of trait reappraisal. Specifically, for individuals with lower trait reappraisal ($B = .010$, $SE = .001$, $p < .001$), the association between affective polarization and likelihood of voting was more pronounced compared to those with moderate ($B = .007$, $SE = .001$, $p < .001$) or higher trait reappraisal levels ($B = .004$, $SE = .002$, $p < .01$).

Through the application of the Johnson-Neyman technique, it was determined that the significant relationship between affective polarization and likelihood of voting became nonsignificant when the value of trait reappraisal exceeded 4.32.

In contrast, the second model did not attain statistical significance ($F(3.204) = 1.08$, $p = .36$, $R2 = .02$). This suggests that affective polarization ($B = -.004$, $SE = .007$, $p = .623$), trait reappraisal ($B = .037$, $SE = .152$, $p = .806$), and their interaction ($B = .001$, $SE = .002$, $p = .621$) were not significantly associated with life satisfaction.

Discussion

This study contributes to the growing literature on affective polarization, emotion regulation, and political behavior by examining their interrelations within a single analytical framework. The findings suggest that affective polarization is associated with both increased likelihood of voting and decreased life satisfaction, highlighting its dual role as both a mobilizing and psychologically taxing factor. This duality aligns with previous research indicating that affective polarization may simultaneously strengthen political engagement while undermining individual well-being (Iyengar & Westwood, 2014; Gidron et al., 2019).

The negative association between affective polarization and well-being found in this study is consistent with prior evidence linking political polarization to adverse psychological outcomes. For instance, Nayak et al. (2021) demonstrated that perceived polarization is associated with increased levels of anxiety and depression, while Fraser et al. (2022) emphasized its broader negative implications for physical and mental health. Similarly, Simchon et al. (2020) introduced the concept of "election-related distress," highlighting how politically charged environments can generate sustained emotional strain. The present findings extend this literature by showing that these patterns are also observable within the Turkish context, suggesting that the psychological costs of polarization may generalize across different sociopolitical settings.

However, the results did not support the moderating role of trait reappraisal in the relationship between affective polarization and life satisfaction. This finding suggests that while emotion regulation strategies are theoretically relevant for managing negative affect, their impact on broader well-being outcomes may be limited in highly polarized contexts. This is somewhat inconsistent with previous research indicating that reappraisal can buffer against negative emotional experiences (Gross & John, 2003; Ford et al., 2019). One possible explanation is that life satisfaction, as a relatively stable cognitive evaluation of one's life (Diener et al., 1999), may be less sensitive to short-term emotional regulation processes compared to more immediate affective states.

In contrast, the moderating effect of trait reappraisal on the relationship between affective polarization and voting behavior was supported. Specifically, individuals with lower levels of reappraisal exhibited a stronger association between polarization and voting likelihood. This finding is in line with theoretical perspectives suggesting that negative emotions can function as motivators for political action (Van Zomeren & Iyer, 2009). When individuals are less able to regulate their emotional responses, they may be more likely to translate these emotions into action, such as participating in elections. Conversely, higher levels of reappraisal may attenuate emotional intensity, thereby reducing the motivational drive for political engagement. This interpretation is consistent with previous findings showing that emotion regulation can influence the extent to which emotional reactions lead to behavioral outcomes (Ford et al., 2019; Gross, 2002).

The positive association between affective polarization and voting behavior also aligns with earlier studies suggesting that polarization can increase political participation (Klar et al., 2018; Knudsen, 2020). In highly polarized environments, individuals may feel a stronger sense of group identity and urgency, which can encourage participation in political processes. At the same time, this heightened engagement may come at a psychological cost, as indicated by the negative relationship between polarization and well-being. This supports the idea that affective polarization represents a complex phenomenon with both functional and dysfunctional consequences.

Another noteworthy finding is the relatively small effect size observed for the relationship between education and voting intention. Although statistically significant, the limited practical significance suggests that structural or contextual factors may play a more substantial role in shaping political participation. This is consistent with broader research indicating that political behavior is influenced by a wide range of individual and contextual variables (Filiztekin & Kent, 2023).

Overall, the findings of this study highlight the importance of considering both the benefits and costs of affective polarization. While polarization may enhance political

participation by increasing emotional engagement, it may simultaneously be associated with reduced well-being. Moreover, the role of emotion regulation—particularly reappraisal—appears to be context-dependent, influencing behavioral outcomes more strongly than broader well-being measures.

Limitations and Future Research

The findings of this study must be interpreted considering several methodological limitations. Due to nonrandom sampling, the findings are not representative of the Turkish population. Instead, they may, at best, be and stimulate further research. A survey adopting random sampling can obtain samples representing different demographic groups based on their proportion in the whole population. It is precisely because of the sampling strategy that the sample structure shows significant domination of people who are currently students and in full employment. Besides, the unequal gender distribution in the sample size collected and the fact that the supporters of a particular political group are notably more than the other supporters can be viewed as another limitation. Another issue that needs to be mentioned is that the participant collection time was limited, as it was not taken into account that the elections would go to the second round in the data collection process. The study's results could have changed drastically if the study had been carried out in a two-time longitudinal manner. Finally**,** taking political action is complex. Therefore, a future study addressing the issue must consider other strategies and different factors not covered in this study to draw a more precise conclusion.

Declarations

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

Ethics approval was obtained in 2021 from the Ethics Review Committee of the Maastricht University Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience (ERCPN-OZL_234_39_02_2021) prior to the commencement of the study.

Publication Permission

Not applicable.

Availability of Data and Materials

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Authors' Contributions

EŞ prepared the discussion, conclusion, and recommendations sections of the article, while EŞ introduction and contributed to the identification of studies to be included in the research.

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