

Democracy and Economic Growth: Policy Recommendations for Türkiye

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Abstract: Nations development levels have been associated with various factors such as geographical conditions, places of establishment, genetic influences, natural disasters, epidemics, and even fate. Recent studies have established connection between the development level of a country and the political and economic institutions that result from governance style. These institutions serve as fundamental frameworks within societies, encompassing the legal system, educational system, cultural structure, and moral framework; collectively, they shape the entire political and economic infrastructure of the nation. Economists explain the functioning of the economic system and examine how both the system and its participants are affected by the consequences of the actions taken by individuals within that system, while proposing solutions to developmental challenges. In addressing the intertwined processes of production, consumption, and distribution, economics aims not only to identify problems but also to contribute to their solutions. The concept of economic development, which encompasses not only the growth of national economies but also all aspects that increase the quality of life of individuals, has recently been studied together with democracy. The relationship between democracy and economic development, whether former affects the latter or vice versa, has been a frequently investigated topic. This study aims to describe the development of economic development and democracy in Türkiye from the foundation of the Republic to the present day, using macroeconomic indicators and indices. It assumes that political and economic institutions are affected by democratic frameworks of societies and aims to offer policy recommendations for Türkiye.

Keywords: Economic Development, Growth, Democracy, Indices, Türkiye

Jel Codes: O1, O4, O5

Demokrasi ve İktisadi Büyüme: Türkiye için Politika Önerileri

Öz: Milletlerin gelişmişlik düzeyleri coğrafi koşullar, kuruluş yerleri, genetik etkiler, doğal afetler, salgın hastalıklar ve hatta kader gibi çeşitli faktörlerle ilişkilendirilmiştir. Son çalışmalar bir ülkenin gelişmişlik düzeyi ile yönetim tarzlarından kaynaklanan politik ve ekonomik kurumlar arasında bir bağlantı kurmuştur. Bu kurumlar toplumlar içinde hukuk sistemini, eğitim sistemini, kültürel yapıyı ve ahlaki çerçeveyi kapsayan temel çerçeveler olarak hizmet eder; topluca, milletin tüm politik ve ekonomik altyapısını şekillendirirler. Ekonomistler ekonomik sistemin işleyişini açıklar ve hem sistemin hem de katılımcılarının o sistem içindeki bireylerin gerçekleştirdiği eylemlerin sonuçlarından nasıl etkilendiğini incelerken, aynı zamanda gelişimsel zorluklara çözümler önermektedirler. Ekonomi, üretim, tüketim ve dağıtımın iç içe geçmiş süreçlerini ele alırken yalnızca sorunları belirlemeyi değil, aynı zamanda bunların çözümüne de katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadırlar. Sadece ulusal ekonomilerin büyümesini değil, aynı zamanda bireylerin yaşam kalitesini artıran tüm yönleri de kapsayan ekonomik kalkınma kavramı, son zamanlarda demokrasi ile incelenmiştir. Demokrasi ile ekonomik kalkınma arasındaki ilişki, birincisinin ikincisini etkileyip etkilemediği veya tam tersi, sık sık araştırılan bir konu olmuştur. Bu çalışma, makroekonomik göstergeler ve endeksler kullanarak, Türkiye’de ekonomik kalkınmanın ve demokrasinin Cumhuriyet’in kuruluşundan günümüze gelişimini tasvir etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Siyasi ve ekonomik kurumların toplumların demokratik çerçevelerinden etkilendiği varsayımına dayanmaktadır ve Türkiye için politika önerileri sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İktisadi Gelişme, Büyüme, Demokrasi, Endeksler, Türkiye

Jel Kodları: O1, O4, O5

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1. Introduction

Studies examining the differences in the development levels of countries have sometimes been attributed to geographical reasons, sometimes to epidemics, sometimes to lifestyles and ways of thinking, and sometimes to production methods. Especially after the 20th century, social scientists focused on the differences in development between countries and began to question the reasons for these differences. Today, the thesis that the management styles of countries are effective is prominent among these reasons, and it is argued that economic development is faster, especially in societies governed by democracy, through effective and functional institutions (Acemoğlu & Robinson, 2016).

When the governance styles of underdeveloped countries are examined, it is seen that, unlike developed countries, the power of political authority is concentrated in a relatively small group, and although they adopt pluralistic democracy, they sometimes do not implement the constitution. On the other hand, although there are democratic institutions in most developed countries, it cannot be concluded that this is absolutely superior in terms of achieving the economic development of these countries. In particular, it is observed that there is no improvement parallel to the democratic governance that is reflected equally in the living conditions of all people in that society. Therefore, the extent to which democracy affects the economic performance of a country and its economic development as a whole is still open to debate (Barış & Erdoğan, 2018).

In explaining the development differences between countries, an approach that emphasized the role of institutions came to the fore in the 1990s. In the studies carried out within the scope of this approach, the transformations experienced in the economies and political structures of countries due to democratic development and the economic models and political institutions formed as a result of these transformations began to be discussed (Acaravcı et al., 2015). There is a consensus that economic and political freedoms are important in the functioning of institutions. It is accepted that economic growth creates a “culture of democracy” over time and lays the foundations of democratic political institutions, which in turn brings economic development. Thus, according to the new institutional economics approach, which economic and political institutions a country has begun to be accepted as the basic elements determining economic development (Erkuş & Karamelikli, 2016). On the other hand, while the positive effect of institutional developments that include economic freedoms on economic growth is not much discussed, the debates on whether democracy is a complete determinant in achieving economic development are still ongoing.

In these discussions, empirical studies that have been rapidly increasing in number in recent years and measure the relationship between economic development and democracy through various variables come to the fore. These studies, which mostly examine the role of institutions in economic development, also benefit from various indices implemented by different institutions and addressing a large number of variables from democracy to human rights, from corruption to economic freedoms on a country basis and with cross-country comparisons. In the empirical studies conducted, different results have been reached depending on the countries examined, the variables addressed, whether they were conducted in the long or short term, and ultimately the methodology used. While some empirical studies have concluded that there is a positive effect between democracy and economic development, some have reached the opposite conclusion. Some studies have not been able to establish a causal relationship between the two. In these studies, while examining the relationships between democracy and economic development, cross-country comparisons have generally been made and concrete evidence has been sought regarding the existence or absence of this relationship with the help of various variables. Although each of these studies offers valuable results in themselves, they are far from making a holistic contribution to the subject. Because in order to be able to relate democracy and economic development, it is necessary to carefully examine the manifestation of these two concepts in each society. The subject contains the existence of many special conditions that cannot be generalized. Therefore, it

is important to discuss the different hypotheses put forward by the studies in a multifaceted manner, taking into account the special conditions of each country. For this purpose, the empirical studies to be conducted should be based on theoretical studies and theoretical studies should contain results that can be proven by empirical studies.

Undoubtedly, the population and the human capital that develops accordingly, high technology, R&D studies and the export-oriented trade that this brings, as well as capital accumulation, can be counted among the basic determinants of economic development. However, in addition to all these, the element that mobilizes elements such as trade, industry, and the service sector and ensures that they work in harmony is an incentive-oriented environment. Therefore, an economic development that does not take into account factors such as a production-based income economy, a fair income distribution, welfare economy, education, health, cultural development and environmental conditions, which are important among the factors that determine economic development, is not a real development (Pamuk, 2019).

Democracy is the best governance style for countries until a better governance style is found. Societies get their power from strong institutions, and strong institutions get their power from strong societies. The most fundamental difference between developed and developing countries today cannot be explained by the fact that countries are located in a rich geography or in a good geopolitical position. What is important is how these riches are managed, shared and brought to a sustainable position. Therefore, any scientific study to be conducted on this subject is important in terms of societies reaching a higher level of development and maintaining this level.

In the Republic of Turkey, which achieved political independence after a great war of independence under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Atatürk's philosophy of "there is no political independence without economic independence" can be considered as an important milestone showing the necessity of considering economic development and the form of government together.

While studies on economic development and democracy today question the reasons for development differences in the world and offer suggestions on how to eliminate these differences, we conducted this questioning for Turkey and aimed to offer a solution to Turkey's development problem with a macro-level study.

Based on this approach, the aim of this study is to address the thesis that political and economic institutions and the organizations that ensure their functioning are shaped according to the democratic structures of societies, from the perspective of Turkey, and to discuss policy recommendations for Turkey by analyzing democracy and economic development in Turkey from 1923 to the present.

This study aims to contribute to those who will work in this field by not only analyzing the democracy and economic development process in Turkey in a multi-variable manner, but also by developing policy recommendations based on these analyses. Because underdevelopment is not the fate of countries. It is against science to approach this with a fatalistic approach and not question it. It is of great importance to conduct this questioning on a scientific basis in order to reach a conclusion.

The study consists of five sections. In the first section, democracy will be addressed within a conceptual framework and theoretical relationships will be discussed in this context. In this section, democracy indices will also be addressed and democracy scores of various countries, including Turkey, will be discussed.

In the second section, the concept of economic development will be discussed and the indicators of economic development will be discussed. In this section, the indices measuring economic development will also be examined and the scores and rankings of some countries, including Turkey, in these indices will be discussed.

In the third section, the relationship between economic development and democracy will be discussed, and a literature including theoretical and empirical studies will be presented, and the relationship between the approaches to this relationship and the

literature will be discussed. In this section, the roots of underdevelopment in the world and in Turkey will also be analyzed.

In the fourth section, democracy and economic development in Turkey will be discussed with the help of the Freedom House Democracy Index, which measures democracy, and selected indices that measure economic development, using a comparative analysis technique.

In the results and recommendations section, study will be concluded based on the analysis findings.

2. Conceptual Framework

In the first part of the study, the concept of democracy will be explained and how this concept has been shaped, defined and measured throughout the historical process will be discussed. In this part, where theories of democracy will be examined with a critical eye, the indexes measuring democracy will be explained and the data of some countries, including Turkey, will be presented comparatively.

2.1. Definition of Democracy, Its Emergence and Changes in the Historical Process

Karl Marx defines democracy as a libertarian system that will eliminate the inegalitarian forms created by the capitalist economic system and result in all citizens being equal before the law (Bozdoğan & Akkaya, 2020). Democracy, which is formed by combining the words *demos*, meaning people, and *kratos*, meaning power, in the ancient Greek language, is used in the sense of "self-government of the people". In this respect, democracy can be defined as the participation of individuals who constitute society in the administration through their representatives.

The concept of democracy was used by the Greeks in different meanings such as the poor, the people, the majority, the people, the Athenians. When these different uses are evaluated with the social and political realities of the period, it shows that the aristocrats who were deprived of their power used the word democracy as an adjective to belittle the people. Along with all this, the word democracy was used by the Greeks to describe the way cities were governed (Özdemir et al., 2010).

Democracy, which indicates how power would be determined in ancient Greek city-states, could not go beyond being based on a limited and exclusive social basis at that time. In this basis, those who governed and were governed were mostly men who owned slaves. Women and children, just like slaves and foreigners, could not participate in the democratic system. However, even in this state, unlike many countries called democratic today, there is a democratic structure in which everyone with citizenship status participates. Today, the concept of citizenship has expanded by including different definitions and practices, ensuring the strengthening of different social classes parallel to the emergence of nation-states and the strengthening of the central structure (Minarlı, 2014).

There has been no complete consensus on the concept of democracy in the last two centuries (Babacan et al., 2010). The many changes the world has experienced with globalization have made the concept of democracy even more complex. The concept of democracy, which is agreed upon in the idea that those governed can freely choose those who will govern them, is also defined in the Turkish Language Association (TDK) dictionary as "A form of government based on the sovereignty of the people (www.tdk.gov.tr, 2021)". In order to be able to say that a country is governed by democracy, the administrators elected through a transparent process must be accountable and their change, if desired, must be guaranteed by the constitution. In addition, individuals with different thoughts, beliefs and identities must have the right to equal representation within the same society.

In world history, democracy has experienced a difficult development process spanning two centuries. According to political scientist Samuel Phillips Huntington, the

current democratic transition period has occurred in waves and reverse waves, and the first wave began in the 1820s when the right to vote was granted to a large portion of the male population in America. This wave continued until 1926, resulting in 29 countries becoming democratic. However, in 1922, Mussolini came to power in Italy and the wave changed direction. In 1942, the number of democratically governed states in the world dropped to 12, creating the first "reverse wave." A second wave of democratization occurred in 1962, when 36 countries transitioned to democratic rule. Then, another reverse wave occurred, and the number of democratically governed countries dropped to 30. Huntington said that the third wave occurred in 1974, and he did not mention a reverse wave after that. While there are those who cite the transition to democracy in the 1990s as an example for the fourth wave, there are also those who describe the process that started with the Arab Spring as the fourth wave (Özdemir, 2018).

Political scientist Seymour Martin Lipset, known for his work on comparative democracy, has addressed democracy based on the approach that "any sociological analysis of a behavioral pattern, whether it is about a small or large social system, should contain certain hypotheses and empirically testable results." He stated that democracy should be based on a series of conditions in countries and should be evaluated as a process that emerges in the presence of these conditions and gains stability (Lipset, 1959).

German thinker Max Weber explains democracy with the concepts of modern and direct democracy. While modern democracy reflects social development, direct democracy is an unmediated understanding shaped by established rules, where the state, bureaucratic structure and society produce solutions to problems together. In this understanding of democracy based on elections, obedience to the representative authority is essential. However, this obedience is based on a system of thought in which the rights of the majority are protected and powers are shared, rather than unconditional submission (Becer, 2019).

The moral understanding of the sociologist Emile Durkheim has been influential in shaping the perspectives of political thinkers on democracy. The moral values that people have are the basic dynamics that create society, and the moral values around which society gathers depend on the specific and changeable conditions. Durkheim also emphasizes that social behavior is the product of external pressures (Özyurt, 2007).

As a result, democracy has continuously renewed itself with economic, social, political and cultural changes throughout the historical process. Social changes such as the industrial revolution, renaissance and reform movements, new inventions and discoveries, secularism, enlightenment, nationalism and liberalism have significantly affected the development of democracy. Therefore, with all these developments and transformations, democracy maintains its feature of being the best form of government (Koçak, 2016).

2.2. A Critical Look at Democracy Theories

The theory of liberal democracy prioritizes the benefit of the individual, which brings with it the danger of individual interests overriding social interests. In representative democracies, in an environment where the political views of all individuals cannot be fully reflected, the individual whose rights are protected can only be limited to the mass of voters who play a role in the selection of the government. In addition, the individualistic approach of the theory of liberal democracy is open to debate because it relegates values such as fraternity, equality, and justice to the background in society.

The theory of social democracy, unlike the theory of liberal democracy, prioritizes the public interest, and according to this theory, the duty of democracy is to spread political democracy throughout society. This is only possible in societies with strong economic and political institutions. In societies without strong political and economic institutions and, most importantly, without a strong organizational power to control and direct these institutions, democracy will not be able to fulfill its duty fully. The establishment and strengthening of deep-rooted institutions in a country is a process that

takes many years. It is not always possible for governments that change through democratic elections to contribute to the development of these institutions, and it is not uncommon, especially in underdeveloped democracies, for the historical development of these institutions to be disrupted at certain times (Erdağ & Peker, 2014).

Critical democracy theory is a theory that opens up the feasibility of the right to vote and be elected to debate. According to this theory, holding elections securely, raising voters' awareness, and voters bringing political parties that fully represent them to parliament are not considered sufficient conditions for democracy to be the best form of government, and no alternative solution is offered (Erdağ & Peker, 2014).

Participatory democracy theory sees the most important factor that makes democracy superior as the participation and control of the people in the political system and associates this participation only with political issues. Individuals play an active role in determining the administration and making decisions for themselves. This approach, which foresees that individuals can participate in politics and therefore in the administration in different ways, must again confront the same key questions. Is each individual sufficiently equipped when determining the individuals who will make decisions on their behalf? Does each voter have the same conditions as other voters in terms of education, health, access to information and organization? If there is no party that reflects the individual's political views or if they are not represented in parliament, does the individual have a say in the decisions made even if they use their vote freely? Therefore, it is debatable to what extent it is sufficient to construct democracy based solely on participation in the political system (Erdağ & Peker, 2014).

The theory of deliberative democracy, on the other hand, envisages citizens' direct participation in decision-making processes through institutions and organizations organized around their ideas, and in this respect, it stands out as a model similar to direct democracy. However, the fundamental contradiction here is the same contradiction as the participatory theory. An environment where people organize under civil society organizations and express their views increases political participation, but it is debatable whether these organizations fully reflect the individual's views and whether the purposes they serve will remain the same as their starting point (Erdağ & Peker, 2014).

Moreover, all these theories are far from revealing the biggest problem in democracies. The functioning of countries' democracies stems not only from internal dynamics but also from external dynamics. Countries that have maintained and developed their democracies for centuries with strong and effective institutions are role models for countries that are still in their infancy in democracy, but they can also often appear as an obstacle to developing democracies in line with the interests of the country.

2.3. Evaluating Democracy Indices Together

Although democracy is a style of government that is accepted worldwide, it is always subject to criticism. The most important factor that leads to this criticism today is the impact of globalization, which has brought about a new understanding of society and culture in which communication has increased with the driving force of developing technology, on the theory of democracy and democratization processes (Cooley & Snyder, 2016).

Following the path opened by Lipset and setting out to measure the level of democracy in countries, many organizations have developed different democracy indexes. These organizations, which measure and compare the democracies in countries with different parameters, classify countries as democratic or undemocratic by giving them scores with the help of the indexes they have developed. In these classifications, not only whether countries are democratic or not, but also the level of democracy is examined. The reliability of these indexes, which are generally accepted in measuring democracy, is increasing every year with the widespread use and the increase in the number of professional and independent organizations working in this field. Among the generally accepted democracy indexes are the Freedom House Index, Polity Index, Bollen Index,

Vanhanen Index, Poe & Tate Index, Arat Index, and Przeworski Democracy Index (Lipset, 1959).

The indexes used to measure democracy differ in terms of the method they use, the country they examine, and the period they examine. Sometimes a country that is at the top of the human development index, which gives the impression of a democratic country, may have a completely different democracy score in another period. However, when we look at the most developed economies in the world, it is striking that this inconsistency does not occur. They are included in the indexes as democratic countries in every period, without any differences according to the index, the period they examine, and the method used.

The indexes used to measure democracy are subject to criticism in terms of their validity, impartiality and whether the methods used in measurement are valid for each country. Considering that the concept of democracy is defined differently in many countries, the fact that democracy rankings between countries are based on the same criteria is the focus of criticism. In addition, the fact that the results of the indexes sometimes contradict each other also paves the way for criticism.

Various groups have expressed that these indices always carry value judgments, methodological choices and implicit political agendas (Cooley & Snyder, 2016).

3. Economic Development

In the second part of the study, the concepts of growth, development and economic growth will be explained and the relationship between these concepts will be tried to be revealed. In this part, the obstacles to economic development and the reasons for underdevelopment will be examined and the factors affecting the development problem in Turkey will be discussed. In this section, the indices measuring economic development will also be examined and the scores and rankings of some countries, including Turkey, in these indices will be discussed.

3.1. The Concept of Economic Development

In order to discuss the concept of economic development on a correct basis, it would be correct to define the concepts of growth, development and then economic development. Conceptually, growth is the monetary expression of how much the added value created by a country in a year has increased compared to the previous year. The concept of development is the expression of the extent to which the added value obtained is reflected in the country's production and the quality of life of the people. The concept of economic development is the expression of the change in the quality of life created by both growth and development in the country. In other words, it is both the increase in the country's income and the contribution of this income to the quality of life of all segments of the country by reflecting on infrastructure and superstructure investments. Of course, there can be no development without economic growth, and no economic development without these two together. But not every growth leads to economic development. Therefore, when considering the concept of economic development, it is important that the country's income is reflected in human health, education, employment, life and property security, technology and R&D studies, and its contribution to the social and cultural development of people. In addition to all these, freedom of thought and conscience, human rights, democracy and its impact on the environment are also important elements that need to be addressed in order to be able to talk about economic development (Uras, 2012).

While the concept of development is used in the literature to express the process of change in economic, social, cultural and political areas as well as the production and income increases in underdeveloped and developing countries, the concept of economic development is used more for developed countries. While developing countries have a dynamic structure with the strategy of catching up with developed economies, developed

economies have a more static structure in order to maintain their current situation (Yergin, 2018).

While the concept of development is used in the literature to express the process of change experienced in economic, social, cultural and political areas as well as the production and income increases in underdeveloped and developing countries, the concept of economic development is used more for developed countries. While developing countries have a dynamic structure with the strategy of catching up with developed economies, developed economies have a more static structure in order to maintain their current status (Yergin, 2018). When talking about the development or economic progress of countries, it is important to compare the development or development levels at different times or with countries with similar or different characteristics in order for these concepts to make sense. A breakthrough that will be described as development for some countries may not indicate a very meaningful development for another country. Therefore, the concepts of development and progress, which are important elements in determining the differences between countries, are an important measure for countries to evaluate themselves. Another important element in development and progress is that both concepts cannot go together with stagnation. Countries that cannot sustain their development face the danger of being classified as underdeveloped countries after a while (Yergin, 2018).

Although the economic size of countries is always considered as an important data in classifying them as developed/developed or developing countries, the place of countries in the human development index is now the main criterion in evaluating the development of countries. Therefore, it is not easy to define developed, developing and underdeveloped countries today. The criteria by which this definition will be made is a matter of debate.

According to the IMF's 2022 Economic Outlook Report, when we look at the GDP, GDP per capita (at current prices) and HDI scores of the world's 8 most developed economies and 8 developing economies, the importance of the concept of economic development in determining the development levels of countries emerges. It is noteworthy that in the latest report published by the IMF, it shares tables as developed and developing countries, does not use the definition of underdeveloped countries, and groups all the remaining countries under different headings. The first 8 countries were taken as the basis in the ranking made by the IMF between developed and developing economies. Although Turkey is not in the top 8 among developing countries, it was added as the 9th country in accordance with the meaning of the study.

The USA is the world's strongest economy. It is followed by Japan. Then come Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Italy and Spain. When we rank the same table in terms of national income per capita, the order changes as America, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Japan, Italy and Spain. If we rank the same table based on the human development criterion, the order follows Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, the USA, Spain, France and Italy, without taking into account the intervening countries.

Among developing countries, China is the leader in terms of GDP. It is followed by India, Russia, Brazil, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Nigeria and South Africa, respectively. When we interpret the same table in terms of national income per capita, Saudi Arabia is the leader. It is followed by Russia, China, Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, South Africa, India and Nigeria, respectively. If we rank the same table based on the human development criterion, the ranking is followed by Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Russia, China, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, India and Nigeria, respectively, without taking into account the countries in between.

It is seen that the economic development level of countries is parallel to the level of human development. Although the rankings of developed countries vary among themselves, when looked at in terms of HDI, it is seen that developed world economies are higher in the HDI index than developing world economies.

3.2. Economic Development Indicators

Economic development is considered by social scientists, especially economists working in this field, as a multidimensional process in which dimensions such as education, health, security, culture, art, political participation and environment are also addressed, in addition to production and income. In this section, development indicators will be examined under the headings of education and health, social security, income distribution, employment, security of life and property, freedom of thought and conscience, human rights, environment, technology, socio-cultural developments and democracy.

3.2.1. Education and Health

One of the most important indicators of economic development is the extent of a country's investment in its human capital. Education and health are also important cornerstones of human capital. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which publishes economic development reports, considers education and health indicators as the main indicators in these reports. The investments countries make in these two areas and the contribution of these investments to the development of education and health carry countries to the top of the human development index. Countries that succeed in increasing their human capital power reach an advantageous position in the economic development process (Bozkurt, 2010).

3.2.2. Social Security

The most basic need of people is an environment where they feel socially safe. One of the main conditions of economic development is that individuals in society have the right to self-actualization and to exist as individuals in the society they live in, in a manner befitting human dignity. Social security is a basic and universal human right (Alper, 2016).

3.2.3. Income Distribution

Income distribution is closely related to the country's population. The fair distribution of a country's income among individuals is one of the important conditions of economic development. The relationship between injustices in income distribution and economic development has also been addressed by Kuznets. In the Kuznets Hypothesis, he argued that income inequality will increase in the first stage of economic development, then the increasing trend will stop, and finally it will decrease. French economist Thomas Piketty also stated that injustice in income and wealth distribution poses a threat to the future of capitalism and democracy (Alabaş, 2015).

3.2.4. Employment

Today, the most important economic problem in the world is the problem of using it at full capacity. In this case, where the country's resources cannot be used effectively and efficiently, it is not possible for the country to achieve its full economic development. Today, the narrow-sense employment problem causes the active and productive segment to remain outside the production area. Unemployment is one of the most important problems affecting countries. This segment, which remains outside the production, is not only a burden on society as a consumer individual, but also causes the country's national income to be low. Employment or unemployment also leads to political instability, and political instability is one of the most important factors of unemployment. During periods when unemployment increases, unrest occurs within the society. Continuous and high unemployment shakes confidence in the economic system and political order. This increases political instability (Murat & Eser, 2013; Şanlısoy, 2010).

3.2.5. Safety of Life and Property

One of the most basic needs of a person is the need to feel safe. In Maslow's eponymous hypothesis hierarchy of needs, the need for security is located right after the essential needs. The fact that a person feels peaceful and safe and the continuity of this feeling has been one of the most basic reasons for the emergence of states. Therefore, the

basic duty of every state is to ensure the safety of life and property of its citizens. This is the basic condition for the continuation of the existence of states. The greatest instrument that the state uses to ensure the safety of its citizens is the laws, and the power of the state is as much as its ability to implement these laws (Kızılkaya & Sönmez, 2003).

3.2.6. Freedom of Thought and Conscience

Economic development cannot be considered independently of social development. The path to healthy economic development is through freedom of thought and conscience and freedom of enterprise. In societies where individuals are intellectually free, high value-added product production, innovation, new ideas and inventions can flourish (Müftüoğlu, 2014).

3.2.7. Human Rights

Every human being has rights that stem from being human and cannot be deprived under any circumstances. These basic rights and privileges cannot be eliminated or restricted by any government. Human rights are guaranteed by written rules in both domestic and international law. Human rights under constitutional guarantee are also protected by texts such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Paris Charter. After World War II, human rights ceased to be an internal problem of countries and became an international problem and were guaranteed by international law (Ökmen, 2013).

Human rights violations are a major obstacle to economic development. Poverty is one of the biggest negative effects of human rights. The increase in income in world economies due to globalization leads to injustice in income distribution and the continuous impoverishment of a certain segment of society in countries where human rights violations occur. Among the important invisible reasons for underdevelopment are democratic deficits, restrictions on rights and freedoms, and human rights violations (Akyıldız, 2011).

3.2.8. Environment

The biggest problem of today's world is the consumption problem. Especially after World War II, consumption, whether it is due to production or not, leads to the rapid depletion of natural resources and the rapid destruction of the environment. Especially the high carbon emissions resulting from the production and consumption of developed countries and the environmental destruction as a result are of great dimensions. Developing countries are much more affected by these negativities, but since they do not have a production economy, they remain more innocent in terms of damaging the environment. Although international, regional or national environmental policies make efforts to reduce the extent of the destruction, use resources effectively and efficiently and create awareness, these efforts are insufficient. Studies are also ongoing in terms of reducing the excessive use of the environment and existing natural resources and preferring self-renewing resources. Within the scope of these studies, although the sustainable development goal has been on the agenda more in the last 50 years, more human-centered approaches are discussed and there is insufficient development in terms of developing a perspective that focuses on the environment. For economic development, it is essential to protect the environment and use the country's resources effectively and efficiently, and the environmental perspective should be primarily evaluated as a requirement for economic development (Denek, 2019; Tiryakioğlu & Tuna, 2016).

3.2.9. Technology

The most important factor in achieving economic development is the development of technology. Technological development is among the most important conditions of economic development, which is one of the main elements of economic development. The role of technology in the economy has also been frequently included in the development theories of Keynesian, Neo-classical, Marxist, and Schumpeterian economists. The world is being shaped by new technological developments, and technology is one of the most

important factors that will determine in which category countries will be developed and underdeveloped in the future (Ansal, 2004).

3.2.10. Socio-Cultural Developments

Society is a network of social relations where differences are melted in a crucible. Society is a living organism consisting of individuals with different thought structures, groups formed by these individuals and material and spiritual elements in which these groups strive to realize common interests. The beliefs and values and cultural structure of the society determine the society's perspective on events and the future, its actions and the route it will take. Economic development is also closely related to the social and cultural values of the society. When we compare developed and developing countries today, the similarities and differences in the socio-cultural structure of the society draw attention. Social development supports and complements economic development, and economic development supports and complements social development. It is not possible for economic development to be sustainable without the society developing socially and culturally, and social development without developing economically. In order for a society to develop economically, it is a must to be open to different ideas, to accept different cultural identities as a wealth and to use all the information produced in this way (Türkkahraman & Tutar, 2009).

3.2.11. Democracy

In countries that adopted the liberal economic model, democracy, which was considered as a complement to the liberal economic model in the political arena, came to the fore in the early years of the 19th century due to social change. Those who dealt with political science believed that capitalism would lead to social transformation and that this transformation would bring democracy. After World War II, political scientists and economists believed that democracy was a result of economic development. In later years, the concept of democracy was frequently discussed in the economic literature in revealing the differences in development and development between countries (Acaravcı et al., 2015).

3.3. Indices Measuring the Economic Development of Countries in the Global System

Various indices are organized and published by international organizations to measure the positions of countries in various areas in the world. These are a number of surveys and indices that guide investors, lenders or those who want to do business with that country about the place of that country in the world (Eğilmez, 2021b). Under this section, there are the Human Development Index, Multidimensional Poverty Index, Better Life Index, Rule of Law Index, Judicial Independence Index, Corruption Perception Index, Global Gender Equality Index, Economic Fragility Index, World Competitiveness Ranking Index and Ease of Doing Business Index. In this section, where the scores and rankings of developed and developing economies for each index will be given, different indices such as the Open Market Index, Information and Communication Technologies Development Index and Budget Transparency Index will also be mentioned.

The Open Market Index (OMI) is published by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) to show how open an economy is to trade. The index published by the ICC measures the extent to which governments have fulfilled their commitments to create open economies and aims to serve as a guide for governments in implementing reforms that will enable trade as a driving force for sustainable growth and employment creation. The ICT Open Market Index (2017) ranks the performance of 75 countries according to their openness to trade. Turkey ranks 53rd with a score of 3.3 (ICC, 2017).

The ICT Development Index (IDI) is a benchmarking tool used to monitor the development of information society worldwide. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which prepares the index, combines 11 indicators related to the level of access, use and development of Information and Communication Technologies into a

single composite index. The aim of the index is to measure the level of development and progress in Information and Communication Technologies, the differences between countries at different levels of development in this field and the potential for development (Dobrota et al., 2012).

The index was first created in 2008 under 3 different subheadings and was used in 2009. The index takes into account the number of fixed telephone lines per 100 people, the number of mobile telephone subscribers, and the internet access speed of internet users, the number of households with computers and the number of households with internet access. In the IDI measurements made for 2011, Turkey ranked 69th in the IDI Access Sub-Index, 65th in the IDI Usage Sub-Index and 68th in the IDI Capability Sub-Index, thus falling short of being among the developed countries (Özbilgin & Çalış, 2012).

The Budget Transparency Index is prepared by experts with a survey containing 140 questions that measure the extent to which country budgets are prepared in a transparent, participatory, accountable and auditable manner. The questions question the creation of the budget, its audit, and the roles of relevant institutions and the level of participation. The survey, which does not question opinions or ideas but merely presents them, is published every two years. Countries are ranked in terms of budget transparency by giving scores from 0 to 100 in the index. In this ranking, Turkey ranked 46th with 51 points in 2019. With this score, which indicates a 7-point decline compared to 2017, Turkey received a poor report card (Beşel, 2016; Polat, 2020).

4. Democracy and Economic Development

The existence of a relationship between democracy and economic development has been discussed for a long time. Although at first glance it may be judged that the economic development of the world's democratically developed countries is also high, the fact that countries that are not governed by democracy are among the world's developed economies makes it impossible to reach a definitive conclusion regarding the existence of this relationship. Although empirical studies establish a relationship between democracy and some economic indicators and, based on this, a judgment is reached regarding a causal relationship between democracy and economic development, in order to establish a full causal relationship between a multidimensional concept such as economic development and democracy, the appearance of these two concepts in each country must be examined in detail.

Lipset (1959) emphasized that the more successful a nation is economically, the higher its chances of maintaining democracy, and he started from the fact that politics and economy are an inseparable whole. Lipset drew attention to the importance of multi-party life, free press, independent judiciary, political leaders who fulfill their duties and allow a free struggle for power, and the existence of opposition from all segments of society who are candidates for office, and argued that the average wealth, degree of industrialization and urbanization, and level of education are much higher for more democratic countries.

In recent years, economic growth, on the one hand, and human development with its health, education and other dimensions, have come to the fore as criteria that can be used to evaluate the long-term development of economies. Today, it is possible to make long-term comparisons on a global scale using the economic growth criterion and, to a more limited extent, the human development criterion. On the other hand, approaches that emphasize the importance of institutions in the long-term economic development process have gained strength in the last 20-30 years. Today, institutions are accepted as the ultimate causes of economic development. Economic development, especially after World War II, has become the fundamental processes that determine the wealth and poverty of nations (Pamuk, 2019).

Democracy is as important a factor for economic development as technology, R&D investments, developed human resources, capital accumulation, inventions and innovations, which are determinants of economic growth. Democracy is one of the important institutional determinants of economic development. In order to say that a

country is a developed country, it is necessary to take into account the welfare level of the people, quality of life, income per capita, health, education and environmental conditions in addition to the production volume and income. All these elements are activated, facilitated, ensured sustainability by creating an environment of trust, and are strong political and economic institutions that work together. These institutions provide full employment, achieve price stability, balance the budget and achieve stable growth with the policies they produce. Economy and politics are intertwined, feed each other, and instability in one affects the other. These institutions become stronger as they work together (Çondur & Cömertler, 2017; Koçak & Uzay, 2018; Pamuk, 2019; Şahin, 2017).

According to Karl Marx, a scientist whose ideas are widely accepted, the goal of the economy is a tool for Weber, a modern thinker (Becer, 2019). When used correctly, this tool is the greatest driving force in ensuring the economic development of countries.

4.1. Theoretical Approaches to the Relationship between Democracy and Economic Development

Studies questioning the relationship between democracy and economic development are evaluated under three headings: conflict approach, compatibility approach and skeptical approach.

4.1.1. Conflict Approach

Inspired by Lipset's research, many researchers have put forward the conflict approach, led by Huntington. This approach is that economic development will be more difficult in developing countries governed by democracy. The view that democracy will impose economic costs is based on the hypothesis that there is a conflict between growth and democracy and that they cannot go together. It has even gone a step further and argued that democratic institutions negatively affect growth by hindering economic development. In this approach, where it is argued that growth will be achieved more in an environment where authoritarian governments restrict rights, it is claimed that democracy is not functional in developing countries and therefore the transition to democracy should be achieved first after economic development is achieved (Acaravcı et al., 2015; Koçak & Uzay, 2017).

4.1.2. Compatibility Approach

According to this approach pioneered by Olson (2002), the concepts of democracy and economic development are concepts that complement and reinforce each other. The connection between these concepts derives its power from the aspirations of individuals and societies. Because the basis of the happiness of societies is not only a strong economy but also a strong democratic government that allows for the free expression of opinions.

In the compatibility approach, it is assumed that democratic institutions contribute positively to the economic development of countries. The effects of democratic institutions on investment and consumption, their contribution to stable growth, their resilience to crises, their emphasis on values such as being a state governed by the rule of law, freedom of expression and organization, multi-party electoral system, separation of powers, and protection of human rights positively affect economic development. According to this approach, democracy creates an environment of trust for the implementation of stable investments, ensures the efficient and effective use of national resources, and mobilizes all resources towards economic development (Doğan, 2005).

4.1.3. Skeptical Approach

Representatives of this approach are skeptical of the assumption that there is a systematic relationship between democracy and economic development. They draw attention to the variable nature of economic performance levels within democratic groups and emphasize the importance of institutional factors and their functioning. Such factors include whether the political party system is based on two or multiple parties, state intervention in the economy, the extent and form of this intervention, whether the industrialization model followed is labor-intensive or capital-intensive, and the cultural

environment. According to this approach, the institutions with which a country is governed do not necessarily determine the rate of economic growth and development of that country. In fact, countries with authoritarian regimes have achieved very large economic growth despite resistance to economic discipline and structural reforms. The pro-development authoritarian regimes in Latin America and East Asia are cited as two good examples of this. According to this approach, what is important in economic growth is not the type of regime or political governance style, but the nature of the state (Adejumobi, 2000; Sirowy & Inkeles, 1990).

Although a significant portion of the scientific studies support the compatibility approach, empirical studies have yielded results that support all three views. Various hypotheses that contradict each other have been put forward in the studies, and the findings have been discussed. While some academics claim that democracy supports/hinders economic development, others argue that economic growth improves/decreases democracy. In contrast, there is a third group of scientists who have concluded that democracy has no statistically significant effect on economic development (Baum & Lake, 2003).

4.2. Empirical Studies on Democracy and Economic Development

There are many studies proving the existence of a positive relationship between democracy and economic development through econometric analyzes (Acemoğlu et al., 2019; Carbone & Cassani, 2016; Hayaloğlu, 2015).

Some studies prove that there is a negative relationship between democracy and economic development. According to these studies, democracy has a negative effect on economic development (Rachidi & Saidi, 2015; Erdoğan, 2020; Acaravcı et al., 2015).

Some studies argue that democracy has a negative effect on economic development in the long run, while it has a statistically insignificant effect in the short run.

Some of the empirical studies reveal that the relationship between democracy and economic development is not one-way, but they mutually affect each other (Şahin, 2017).

Some empirical studies have concluded that there is no relationship between democracy and economic development (Kurzman et al., 2020).

There are also different studies on whether there is a relationship between democracy and economic development in studies conducted on Turkey. In their empirical study, Acaravcı & Erdoğan (2015) concluded that economic growth positively affects democracy in both the short and long term. Erkuş & Karamelikli (2016) concluded in their time series analysis that democracy negatively affects the income level.

There is no consensus in the literature on the relationship between economic development and democracy. Some studies indicate that the relationship is positive, some indicate a negative relationship, and some indicate a positive relationship in the short term and a negative relationship in the long term. There are also studies that prove that there is no relationship between democracy and economic development.

There is no consensus in the literature on the relationship between economic development and democracy in Turkey. Some studies indicate that the relationship is positive, some indicate a negative relationship, and some indicate a positive relationship in the short term and a negative relationship in the long term. Studies proving that there is no relationship between democracy and economic development have also been conducted for Turkey.

5. Democracy and Economic Development

Turkey has an extremely important place among Third World countries. It has never been colonized and has inherited a rich political tradition from the imperial period. Even before the struggle for independence, the country's leaders openly spoke of a secular republic within a national state, based on principles largely consistent with those proposed by the theorists of 1789. But this political maturity has not changed the underdeveloped peripheral character of its economy. Turkey has followed a pattern

shared by both Latin American and Asian countries: open to the currents of the world economy in the 1920s, characterized by wartime exports of raw materials, postwar recovery under American hegemony, import-substitution industrialization, and then a depression in the second half of the 1970s. Most of Turkey's political history between 1946 and 1980 was marked by parliamentary democracy. Despite two short-lived interruptions, political life has adapted to party competition—complete with alternations between social democracy and the center-right. Although the military government was established in 1980, which was quite late (compared to Latin America), the authoritarian adaptation to the world crisis brought Turkey back into the same environment (Keyder, 1987a).

The developments that took place in Turkey after the eighties also caused negative effects on democracy and economic development in a positive way. In order to better understand the developments that took place during this period, it is necessary to correctly analyze the structure inherited from the Ottoman Empire.

5.1. General Assessment of Economic Development and Democracy Indicators in Turkey between 1972-2021

In Turkey, between 1972 and 2021, a good development trend could not be observed in terms of economic growth, democracy and indices showing economic development.

Turkey has not been able to achieve stable growth in the period from 1972 to 2021, which is the subject of the study's analysis. Turkey has grown by an average of 4.5% in this 50-year period. The unstable growth rate in Turkey has caused the basic indicators of economic development such as education, health, security, environment and socio-cultural development to be affected by this growth rate.

From 1972 to 2021, Turkey was included in the Freedom House Democracy Index as a free, partially free, and still in the current category of not free countries. During the period examined, democracy, one of the important parameters of economic development, was occasionally interrupted by coups. The blows that democracy received prevented the stable development of democracy and economic development in Turkey.

After changing from partly free to free in 1972, it was again listed as partly free, and after 2017, its scores for civil liberties and political rights have been deteriorating. The reason for this was the increasing authoritarianism of the government in Turkey. Turkey has been included in the index as a non-free country since 2017 (Freedom House, 2023).

Although Turkey was among the countries with low, then medium, then high and finally very high human development levels after 2018 in the Human Development Index from 1972 to 2021, it continued to lag behind OECD countries.

Turkey, whose HDI score has increased due to changes in the calculation methods of the Human Development Index and has become one of the countries with very high human development, still remains behind the OECD averages in terms of education, life expectancy and income per capita.

Turkey has consistently lagged behind developed countries in the Global Gender Gap Index from 2002 to 2021. In Turkey, where inequality is particularly experienced in economic participation and equal opportunities, the sub-index with the least inequality is health and survival rate.

Turkey has also lagged behind developed countries in the Better Life Index from 2011 to 2021. Compared to OECD countries in the Better Life Index, Turkey has a score below average in most categories, except for the civic participation rate, and its life satisfaction average is also below the OECD average.

6. Conclusion

Democracy and economic development are considered as a common research area of economics and comparative political science. The relationship between democracy and economic development is sometimes interpreted in terms of causality and sometimes in terms of priority and posteriority. It is a more accurate approach to see these two concepts as two structures that draw strength from each other, support, and complement and make

sense when they work in coordination. It is a judgment agreed upon in scientific studies that developed countries are generally countries governed by effective democracy. What is meant by effective democracy here is a political system in which elections are held fairly and in a free environment, without interruption, the elected government can be monitored, changed and has absolute and binding responsibility to the people, the opposition is effective and unrestricted, fundamental rights and freedoms are protected and a fair legal system is operated. It is a requirement for countries to be developed countries that this political system continues its existence with strong institutions and supports the economic development of the country with strong economic institution.

While examining Turkey's journey towards democracy and its parallel economic development, our starting point is to examine these two phenomena in detail from the perspective of Turkey and to develop policy recommendations for Turkey to reach a more prosperous society with developed economic and political institutions. For this purpose, the reasons for the differences in the development levels of countries are first revealed and the subject is examined specifically for Turkey.

Countries that have strong, controllable, inclusive and open to change economic and political institutions and the institutions that ensure the functioning of these institutions are countries that have achieved economic, political and cultural development and have carried this development into the future without interruption in proportion to the sustainability of these structures. Individuals living under a liberal, participatory and egalitarian democracy in these countries have the privilege of living in a society where the gains are fairly shared under the umbrella of absolute sovereignty, the rule of law, equal opportunities, and economic, political and social freedoms.

In this structure where an environment of trust is fully experienced in economic and political life, individuals and institutions are strong. In this environment where there is no room for uncertainty and insecurity, non-destructive competition, freedom that does not interfere with the sphere of influence of others, an effectively functioning justice mechanism, fairly distributed gains and a division of labor based on merit are essential. In these countries where institutions are strong, corruption is minimized with an effective control mechanism, income justice is ensured, poverty is reduced to a negligible rate, an order prevails in which an environment of trust is guaranteed by laws in social and commercial life, and an environment of trust is created in the political, economic and social spheres.

From this perspective, the differences in the development levels of countries are not due to geographical reasons, the conditions of their establishment, epidemics or fate. The reason for the differences in the development levels of countries is the organized, unifying and developed, in other words comprehensive political and economic institutions that are selected, controlled and changed by strong conscious individuals and work in a multi-faceted way for the country's interests and interests. Development is possible and there are examples in societies governed by a small elite that organizes society for their own interests, disregarding the vast majority of the people. However, such growth provided by exploitative institutions is not sustainable growth.

Democracy provides economic and political freedoms, opens the doors to modernization and contributes to economic growth with the economic freedoms it offers, legally secured commercial rights, a fair tax system and a functioning market mechanism. In societies that have achieved economic development, democracy is the best form of government until a better form of government is found. The reason why democracy is not the best form of government is due to its representation. In many countries, democracy is reduced to the freedom to vote and be elected, and the group that seizes power with this method can transform the existing institutional structure into a structure of power. Therefore, the way democracy is implemented is the most important factor explaining the differences in development between countries governed by democracy. An ideal democracy should include all the conditions of democracy, such as pluralism, constitutional guarantee of freedom of thought, expression and organization, the rule of

law, fair elections and a transparent management approach. Such an understanding of democracy brings into being comprehensive economic and political institutions that provide opportunities for economic development.

The political and economic institutions that people create and contribute to their sustainability are the most fundamental indicators of how developed a country is. The Turkish people also have the power and experience to establish, sustain and develop strong political and economic institutions with their cultural diversity and the experience of the principalities, empires and states they have established, developed and sustained throughout history.

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