Effects of Interpersonal Relationship Dimension on Locally Specific Participatory Processes

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Abstract

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The present study aims to explore the attributes of interpersonal relationships, as a socio-psychological dimension, and their beneficial or detrimental effects on locally specific participatory processes in a Turkish context. Following this, an analysis of the effect of the relationship on locally specific participatory processes is presented, through a comparative assessment of processes in four local cases which were partners of the Local Government & NGO Cooperation in Participatory Democracy Project. This research, designed as an exploratory case study, determines some of the unexplained factors affecting participatory processes. Finally, the study reveals that, relationships, change in relationships, trust, rivalry, dominance, hidden agendas and jealousy are all perceived attributes of the interpersonal relationship dimension in the Turkish context. While the interpersonal relationship dimension enhanced the participatory process in two of the four cases (Odunpazarı and Seyrek), it hindered the participatory process in Gazi and Kaymaklı.

Keywords: participation; participatory process; interpersonal relationship; local government; Turkish context.

1. Introduction

Interpersonal relationship is a basic socio-psychological dimension of participatory processes, since participation is an interaction among participants and the participatory process is initiated by individuals and their interaction with each other (Kulözü, 2016). Aside from the concept of trust, other attributes of interpersonal relationships have not been focused on or explored as socio-psychological attributes of participatory processes, except for an article written by Kulözü & Tekeli (2014), which focused on the socio-psychological dimensions of participatory processes. Furthermore, neither the

effects of the relationship dimension nor the effects of its attributes on the processes have been explored or examined.

This study generally aims to answer two questions, including, 'what are the perceived interpersonal relationship attributes and their beneficial or detrimental effects on participatory processes in a Turkish context?' and 'how does the interpersonal relationship dimension affect contextually different participatory processes? The study was designed to be exploratory in nature. Along the same line as Kulözü (2016), the claim of this exploratory case study is the fact that the varying dimensions of participatory processes should be determined. Only after all aspects are understood can steps be taken to design and conduct the most beneficial participatory process.

Despite the absence of particularly relevant literature, this study intends to explore a number of issues, which includes: the attributes of the interpersonal relationship dimension in a Turkish context, the beneficial or detrimental effects of the explored attributes of the Local Government & NGO Cooperation in Participatory Democracy Project process, the beneficial or detrimental effects of the interpersonal relationship dimension on participatory processes in Gazi, Kaymaklı, Odunpazarı and Seyrek, since they were partners in the participatory project case.

Accordingly, the study is presented in four main sections. First, the theoretical framework focuses on the key concepts for the study, including participation, participatory processes, contextual differences and interpersonal relationship dimension in both participation and social sciences literatures. Second, the case project of the study and the case municipalities are introduced to allow an understanding of their contextual characteristics. Following a presentation of the methodology, the findings of the research are presented under two headings: the findings of the case project, and the findings of contextually different participatory processes. Finally, the findings of this study are interpreted in the conclusion.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Participation and Participatory Processes

Participation refers to the direct involvement of the public in decision-making processes through a range of formal and informal mechanisms. As proponents of participation and participatory practices, Wondolleck & Yaffee (2000) argue that, participation leads to better decisions. Similarly, Fung & Wright (2003) state that, participation can lead to effective and equitable solutions while increasing the capacity of the public for self-governance. Participatory approaches are discussed as being more democratically accountable than traditional, representative and instrumental approaches. Opposing the instrumental approaches, as stated by Cooke & Kothari (2001), the professed aim of participatory approaches is to make people more central to development, by encouraging the beneficiaries to become involved in the decisions and processes that affect them, especially decisions and processes over which they previously had only limited control or influence.

Global trends toward participation and participatory practices began to appear in both literature and practice during the second half of the 20th century. The concept of participation has attracted researchers from a broad range of academic disciplines. Because of this trend, focus shifted from

outputs, such as plans and/or policies, to participatory processes in the field, such as public management, planning and political sciences.

The process is of particular importance in the participatory approach, as it not only takes into account the specific content of issues, but also considers how issues are discussed, how problems are defined and how problem-solving strategies are articulated (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014). Unlike the traditional approach, a participatory process aims to help communities invent their own participatory processes rather than providing a set of procedures to be followed. Therefore, the result is that there are locally specific processes that cause some locals to be more favourable to the management of participatory processes than others (Healey, 1997; Kulözü, 2016). In short, every single participatory process is locally specific and unique to the context where the process is conducted (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014).

As discussed by Kulözü (2016) and Kulözü & Tekeli (2014), the uniqueness of participatory processes comes not only from contextual differences, but also from the different social actors and their interaction during the process. Various social actors, which have assorted connections with each other, take part in participatory processes. As a result, participants, their participation patterns and the pattern of interactions among them illustrate the differences for each participatory process. These differences lead to unique experiences in a participatory process. Generally, the individuality of a participatory process could be explained based on three components: the individual/society, the context, and the process itself (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014; Kulözü, 2016). Interaction between these components in a participatory process stimulates the social influence process. Social influence is an intrinsic element of participatory processes, in terms of its transformative power to invoke changes in an individual's feelings, thoughts, attitudes, behaviours and interactions during the process. Through social influence resulting from changes within a context, socio-psychological dynamics become effective in participatory processes (Kulözü, 2016). However, since social influence is a chief research area in social psychology (Dunn, 2008), the type of social influence that occurs in the participatory process could be explored with the knowledge already gained in the area of social psychology and other social sciences. Socio-psychological dynamics constitute a part of the subtle reality behind participatory processes and are of paramount importance (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014; Kulözü, 2016). As one of the key aspects of the socio-psychological dimension, interpersonal relationships will be examined in the following section.

2.2. The Interpersonal Relationship Dimension and Its Attributes

Although the common aim of every participatory process is to reach a consensus, with or without consensus however, each participatory process is unique (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014). Participatory processes are galvanised by the participants and their interactions, because individuals come together to reach a consensus on decisions or policies during the process. Each participatory process is conducted in a unique socio-cultural context and has its own pattern of interaction that is created by the participants. Therefore, participatory processes are subject to socio-psychological phenomena, such as interpersonal relationships. Each participatory process and its achievements are determined by the effect of its individual socio-psychological dimensions (Kulözü, 2014; Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014).

Participation is the interaction between participants. During the participatory process, interactions among individuals, whether they previously know each other or not, create an interpersonal relationship. Interpersonal relationship is a product of two parties who participate in an interaction (Bateson, 1972; Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014). During participatory processes, social actors learn about each other through interactions that result in new interpersonal relationships. In addition to a new interpersonal relationship, an established interpersonal relationship could be changed during the process as a side effect of the process, as well as other dimensions of the process and process participants. However, the relationship dimension and participatory process flows is not always one-way, but mutual. Because the interpersonal relationship dimension affects the participatory process and its outcomes by playing a role in people's efforts to persuade others or effect changes in their attitudes during the participatory process (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014). In other words, it affects both the participatory process and other socio-psychological dimensions, including communication, power and conflict. However, the present study is only focused on the interpersonal relationship dimension of participatory processes alone.

Interpersonal relationship is one of the basic socio-psychological dimensions of participatory processes, as it forms the basis of other interactional dimensions (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014). Although there are relatively few studies that focus on this issue, interpersonal relationship has a special role within participatory processes. In this section, the issues related to interpersonal relationships that have already been covered both in the participation literature, and also in the review of findings, as well as the social sciences literature are presented, to determine the pre-defined interpersonal relationship attributes. These pre-defined attributes are used to explore the attributes of interpersonal relationship dimensions from the perspective of the participants.

A review of participation literature revealed that, although the concept has not been discussed as an attribute of interpersonal relationship, 'trust' (Carnes et al. 1998; Bentrup, 2001; Webler, et al. 2001; Schulz, et al. 2003; Bickerstaff, 2004; Dowling, et al. 2004; Tippett, et al. 2005; Pascaru & Buţiu, 2010) is one of the most discussed socio-psychological phenomena, not just as an attribute of interpersonal relationship. In addition to trust, Hagmann et al. (1999) highlight the concept of 'entering the community' (participants from out of the selected location); McCool & Guthrie (2001) discuss the idea of 'relationship building'; Cooper (2002) demonstrates the notion of a 'hidden agenda', all of which could be evaluated under the interpersonal relationship dimension (Kulözü & Tekeli, 2014). In short, the review of participation literature shows trust, relationship building and hidden agenda to be attributes of the interpersonal relationship dimension. However, before examining the enhancing and/or limiting effects of these attributes on participatory processes, social sciences literature should be reviewed to understand how these concepts are engaged with, and then determine interpersonal relationship attributes, by applying knowledge from both areas of study.

A review of social sciences literature showed that there are two basic types of interpersonal relationships: symmetrical and complementary relationships (Bateson, 1972). If the behaviours of two individuals are regarded as similar, there is a symmetrical relationship between them, and such a relationship can be demonstrated through friendship. However, a complementary relationship is where the behaviour of the two individuals are dissimilar, they mutually complement each other, such as in a

dominance-submission and nurturance-dependence situation. Within participatory processes, the effects of symmetrical and complementary relationships on friendships as a symmetrical relationship, and dominance-submission as complementary relationship and their effects on participatory processes could be examined. Therefore, the 'type of relationship' could be determined as a pre-defined relationship attribute.

In addition to the types of interpersonal relationships, the change in interpersonal relationship pattern clarification is also important for the present study. Since the participatory process is accepted as a socially influential process, the influence of the process and the interactions during the process on interpersonal relationships can be explored by examining the changes in interpersonal relationships. Although interpersonal relationships change over time, as it can be seen within our own everyday experiences, they are sometimes extremely resistant to change. In terms of the propensity of interpersonal relationships to change and resist, relationships are categorised as habitual, self-amplifying and self-validating. Interpersonal relationships have habit-forming effects on the individual's behaviour and create a propensity to act towards another person in a certain way, while self-amplifying is used to explain mutual reinforcement in the context of an interpersonal relationship. In a self-validating relationship pattern, even if one party attempts to change the relationship by adopting a different style of interaction, the other party might perceive incorrectly by believing that the new behaviour is simply a continuation of a previously established pattern (Bateson, 1972). Discussions on the building of new interpersonal relationships and changing patterns of interaction reveal that, the habit forming effect of a relationship, competitive relationships, resistance to change, and their effects on the participatory processes could be defined as interpersonal relationship attributes.

A review of the participation literature portrays trust as a special type of interpersonal relationship, because it is the only attribute of the interpersonal relationship dimension to be discussed and examined. In fact, trust is one of the most discussed socio-psychological attributes in the participation literature. However, there are different definitions of trust. One approach of defining trust as the outcome of subjective probability calculation of risk involves evaluating the other party in terms of his/her trustworthiness (Zucker, 1987); another approach conceives trust as socially embedded, and argues that trust emerges as symmetrical pattern of interaction (Anheier & Kendall, 2000: 8). Trust plays an important role in determining the types of influence they are able to exert over one another and the type of relationship that already exists among the participants. A participatory process without trust could create suspicion, such as a 'hidden agenda'. A hidden agenda, related to the power dimension, could be defined as keeping certain items off the agenda so that a chance for others to exert their influence never arises. A hidden agenda is one of the most important issues related to trust and interpersonal relationship in the participatory processes. Therefore, as a socio-psychological attribute, trust could help explain many other socio-psychological attributes of participatory processes. In the context of participatory processes, trust between actors of the process that have different interests have critical importance.

The issues that are discussed in the field of social psychology and participation related to interpersonal relationships are determined in this study. While trust, hidden agenda, and relationship building attributes have been discussed within the context of the participation literature, the others have

not been previously discussed. Based on these sub-issues, such themes including friendships, dominance and submission, competitive relationship, the habit forming effects of the relationship developed within the participatory process, resistance to change, trust and hidden agenda are determined as the attributes of the relationship dimension. Through these evaluations, issues related to the interpersonal relationship dimension are presented by clarifying their roles within the participatory process.

This study intends to explore the perceived attributes of interpersonal relationships and their beneficial and/or detrimental effects on locally specific participatory processes. Therefore, in the following section, the case project and the case sites where the project was conducted, as well as the method of the study are presented.

3. Case Study

3.1. The Local Government & NGO Cooperation in Participatory Democracy Project

In Turkey, a law that allows local administrations to create city councils, which also allows NGOs to participate actively in local decision-making mechanisms, was passed with the enactment of the Local Administrations Code [TBMM (the Grand National Assembly), no: 5355, ratified on 26 May 2005]. Based on this law, citizens are allowed to participate in the administration of the city, Civil Society Development Center (CSDC) designed the Local Government & NGO Cooperation in Participatory Democracy Project. CSDC (2005) launched the project that would serve as a guide in participatory administration given the lack of experience in the Turkish context. The purpose of the project is defined as "enabling local administrations to create participatory administration structures in cooperation with the NGOs in their area" (Kulözü, 2014; Kulözü, 2016).

The project was conducted by CSDC with the financial support of the European Commission (CSDC, 2005). The project was launched with the participation of local municipalities in Turkey including Gazi, Kaymaklı, Odunpazarı and Seyrek, in cooperation with NGOs between 2005 and 2007. During the project process, CSDC organised meetings to provide a platform for the partners to come together to share their experiences within each of their participatory processes. In the interim periods between these meetings, each municipality worked with the support of the CSDC in order to create participatory administration structures that shifted from management to participatory decision-making processes (Kulözü, 2014; Kulözü, 2016). To reach their goals, the CSDC provided technical and educational support for each municipality geared towards their own individual situation. Although the objective of each locality was the same for the partner in each of the case projects, due to their contextual differences each partner locally designed their own participatory process.

3.2. Contextual Differences of the Case Areas: Gazi, Kaymaklı, Odunpazarı and Seyrek

Each municipality case reveals geographical differences parallel to their individual social, cultural, economic, political contexts within Turkey (Kulözü, 2016) (Fig. 1). Kaymaklı and Seyrek are town municipalities. Seyrek, with a population of 3,865, is a district of İzmir that is located in the Aegean Region. Kaymaklı, with a population of 5,811, is located in the Central Anatolian Region. Gazi, with a

population of 139,962, is located in the Black Sea Region, and Odunpazarı, with a population of 274,038, is located in the Central Anatolian Region. Gazi as well as Odunpazarı are considerably larger municipalities in terms of population, compared to Seyrek and Kaymaklı. In terms of their socio-economic development levels, according to a report by the State Planning Organisation (2004), Odunpazarı, a central-metropolitan district of Eskişehir, was ranked seventh in terms of development, of the 872 districts across Turkey. Gazi, a central-metropolitan district of Samsun, was ranked 25th. Kaymaklı, as one of the central districts of Nevşehir, was ranked 89, while Seyrek, a sub-district municipality of Menemen/İzmir, was ranked 142 out of the 872 districts (State Planning Organisation, 2004; Kulözü, 2014; Kulözü, 2016). Parallel to their socio-economic development level, the development of civil society in each of the locations were also different. That resulted in differences in terms local participants in the project meetings. In Odunpazarı and Gazi, NGO representatives participated. In Seyrek and Kaymaklı, only individual local stakeholders participated, meaning there were no NGOs at the start of the project in 2005 (Kulözü, 2016).
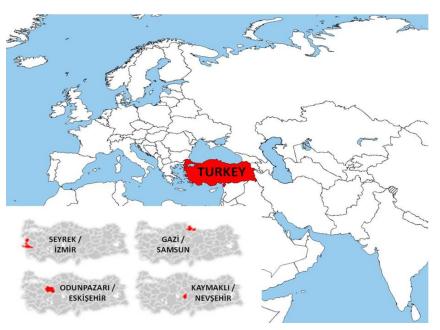

Fig. 1. Map of Turkey and the cities where the case areas are located.

4. Research method

This research was designed as an exploratory case study, and the field study was conducted in Gazi (Samsun), Kaymaklı (Nevşehir), Odunpazarı (Eskişehir) and Seyrek (İzmir) between August 2011 and January 2012. During the field study, 45 participants from the case project from all four locations were interviewed. The interviews were conducted in an in-depth manner. The respondents were selected from among the participants of the project process and attended at least one of the key meetings organised by the CSDC. Since the participant numbers varied in each case, the number of respondents interviewed also varied. The limitation of the present study was addressed by presenting the quantitative results of analyses for each case as an average per person. As a result, the 45 interviews

conducted during the field study were distributed among the locally specific participatory processes as follows: 14 from Kaymaklı, 13 from Seyrek, 11 from Odunpazarı and 7 from Gazi.

During the interview, open-ended questions were posed to the respondents, and the interviews were reported and recorded. The questions included: 'what was your experience regarding interpersonal relationships during the participatory process?' and 'how did the interpersonal relationship affect the participatory process?' In order to analyse the collected qualitative data, a content analysis method was used. Through content analysis, the perceived interpersonal relationship attributes were explored based on the subjective descriptions of the respondents. The collected qualitative data is then translated into a quantitative form, through the use of multivariate statistical analysis techniques in classifying the data. In addition to quantifying the specific issues, a content analysis was used to explore whether the respondents considered their effects to be detrimental or beneficial for both the case project and the locally specific case processes, along the same lines of Kulözü (2016). Therefore, when assigning the replies of the respondents into content categories, not only was the frequency of mention of each perception recorded, but also whether respondents mentioned the issues and their effects on the process in a positive or negative way. As a result, through content analysis, the attributes of the relationships and their detrimental or beneficial effects on the participatory process were also determined by comparing the differences between the frequency of negative and positive comments.

5. Findings

5.1. Attributes of interpersonal relationship dimension and their effects on the case project process

The research determined seven perceived relationship attributes from both participation and social sciences literature, including friendships, dominance and submission, competitive relationships, habit forming effects of the relationship developed within the participatory process, resistance to change, trust and hidden agenda. The empirical study included interpersonal relationships, change in interpersonal relationships, trust, rivalry, dominance, hidden agenda and jealously. These were explored as the perceived attributes within the interpersonal relationship dimension. Table 1 reveals how often each perceived attribute was mentioned for the total sample, and shows whether it was mentioned in a general, positive or negative way. According to the findings, the interpersonal relationship dimension was mentioned 22.1% of the time with a general connotation, 40.7% of the time with a positive connotation, and 37.2% of the time negatively. It means that the interpersonal relationship dimension was referred to in more beneficial terms (40.7%) than detrimental (37.2%) in the case of the Local Government & NGO Cooperation in the Participatory Democracy Project.

Table 1. Perceived attributes of relationship dimension categorized depend on their mentioned in positive and in negative meanings.

	General Mention		Positively		Negatively		Total	
Attributes of Relationship	frequency of mention	%	frequency of mention	%	frequency of mention	%	frequency of mention	%
Total	261	22.1	480	40.7	439	37.2	1180	100
The relationship attributes that benefited the project process								
Relationship	115	28.3	199	48.9	93	22.8	407	34.5
Change in relationship	71	28.0	144	56.7	39	15.3	254	21.5
Trust	21	11.1	95	50.3	73	38.6	189	16.0
The relationship attributes that were detrimental to the project process								

Rivalry	15	12.1	23	18.6	86	69.3	124	10.5
Being dominant	27	27.8	3	3.1	67	69.1	97	8.2
Hidden agenda	10	10.8	16	17.2	67	72.0	93	7.9
Jealousy	2	12.5	0	0	14	87.5	16	1.4

Table 1 puts the relationship attributes into two groups. First, the attributes that enhanced rather than hinder the process; and second, the attributes that hindered rather than enhance the process. The research revealed that the three relationship attributes which enhanced the project process were, change in relationships, relationships, and trust, while the other four relationship attributes that hindered the process were rivalry, being dominant, hidden agenda and jealousy.

5.1.1. Relationship

The analysis showed that interpersonal relationship, being the most cited attribute, is an effective attribute of the participatory process. The interpersonal relationship attribute was cited almost one-third of the time (34.5%). Symmetrical relationship, importance and unimportance of the relationship in the participatory process, the effects of individuals on the relationship, how a relationship should be, the effort and time that were used to develop relationships, what was necessary to develop relationships, the effects of the relationship on the process (both positive and negative), the continuity and discontinuity of relationships, the effects of politics on the interpersonal relationship and the effects of the process on the interpersonal relationship, and the effects of all of these issues on the participatory process, were all categorised as an interpersonal relationship attribute of the analysis process. For the total sample, interpersonal relationship was mentioned 28.3% of the time in general, 48.9% of the time positively, and 22.8% of the time negatively. Since, the interpersonal relationship attribute was cited frequently in positive terms, the attribute was considered to be beneficial to the process rather than a hindrance. The following quotation exemplified relationship attributes and their positive effects on the case project process:

> *"The process was affected more by the relationship. For instance, the most important asset of our initiative was the high number of participant NGOs, whose participation was based on their relationship with other participants. For the individual participants, our initiative, the CSDC or the municipality were not important. What was important for the future participants was the person who called them to the meetings or organisations. The people at the centre built an atmosphere of trust in their social environment and used their social networks… after participating one time, a person would continue to participate, it became a habit; but the first step was very important, and it was based on forming a relationship" (a respondent (Odunpazarı), 07.08.2011).*

5.1.2. Change in Relationship

The analysis revealed that a change in interpersonal relationship, as the second most cited attribute, is an effective attribute in the participatory process. For the total sample, the attribute was cited nearly one-fifth of the time (21.5%). During the analysis process, a change in the interpersonal relationship was realised and was not realised, change should be realised, resistance to change, change in the interpersonal relationship of men-women and the effects of the change in the interpersonal relationship on the process were all categorised under the change in relationship attribute. For the total sample, change in relationship was mentioned 28% of the time in general terms, 56.7% of the time positively,

and 15.3% of the time in negative terms. It is revealed that, a change in the interpersonal relationship was considered to be beneficial to the process. The following citation exemplified change in relationship attribute with its positive effects on the case project process:

> *"Relationship changed very much. For instance, I became a good friend with a participant who was a member of a religious group. If we had met before the participatory process, I would be unlikely to talk with him, and [at first] I even did not want to sit with him. The changes in relationship provided for the sustainability of the process" (a respondent (Odunpazarı), 07.08.2011).*

5.1.3. Trust

The findings revealed that trust, as the third most cited attribute, is an effective attribute in the participatory process. Within the total sample, trust was cited almost one-sixth (16%) of the time. During the analysis process, the way of building trust, the importance of trust, the importance of trust to central persons, there was trust and was no trust, trust increased and decreased during the process and the effects of trust on the process were all categorised under the trust attribute. Within the entire sample, trust was mentioned 11.1% of the time in general terms, 50.3% of the time in positive terms, and 38.6% of the time in negative terms. Therefore, trust was considered to be beneficial to the process rather than a hindrance. The following remark exemplified trust attribute and its' negative effect on the participatory process:

> *"If trust could have been created among the people in the women's cooperative, and if we could have worked to a successful outcome, the workshop could have been continued. There was neither trust nor success ... I did not trust anybody during the process. In particular, I did not trust any of the central people" (a respondent (Kaymaklı),13.10.2011).*

5.1.4. Rivalry

The analyses showed that rivalry is an active interpersonal relationship attribute in participatory processes. The attribute was cited almost one-sixth (10.5%) of the time within the total sample. Rivalry was in the process and was not, the effect of rivalry on the process in positive and negative terms were all categorised under the rivalry attribute in the analysis process. Within the entire sample, rivalry was mentioned 12.1% of the time in general terms, 18.6% of the time in positive terms, and 69.3% of the time negatively. This reveals that the rivalry attribute was typically cited in terms of its detrimental effects on the participatory project process. The following interview exemplified a rivalry attribute and its negative effect on the participatory process:

> *"There was too much rivalry. The conflict of interest was at such a level that some of the participants became like enemies. As a result, the participants separated into groups, which were detrimental to the continuity of the process" (a respondent (Kaymaklı), 13.10.2011).*

5.1.5. Being Dominant

The findings showed that dominance is an interpersonal relationship attribute in participatory processes. The attribute was cited 8.2% of the time within the total sample. During the analysis, there was being dominant and there was none, the reaction to the dominant participants and the effects of being dominant on the process were all categorised under the dominant attribute. Within the entire sample, this attribute was mentioned 27.8% of the time in general terms, 3.1% of the time positively, and 69.1% of the time in negative terms. This shows that dominant attributes were commonly

mentioned in terms of its detrimental effects on the participatory project process. The following citation exemplified dominant attribute and its negative effect on the participatory process:

> *"There was a secretary of the mayor who took over the mayor's responsibilities in his absence. He was very dominant. He said 'They don't know anything, I don't care about them'. There were unwritten rules based on the whim of the mayor's secretary. If he did not approve of something, it would not be realized" (a respondent (Gazi), 25.10.2011).*

5.1.6. Hidden Agenda

The findings revealed that hidden agenda, cited 7.9% of the time in the total sample, is an interpersonal relationship attribute in the participatory process. The importance of a hidden agenda, there were hidden agendas and there were none, and the effects of hidden agenda on the participatory processes were all categorised under the continuity of interpersonal relationship attribute in the analysis. Within the entire sample, the attribute was mentioned 10.8% of the time in general terms, 17.2% of the time positively, and 72% of the time negatively. Meaning that the hidden agenda attribute was primarily cited in terms of its detrimental effects on the project process. The following citation exemplified hidden agenda attribute and its negative effect on the participatory process:

> *"Some participants came to meetings with hidden agendas. I think they used the participatory process to boost their political identities. This led some participants to discontinue their involvement in the process" (a respondent (Odunpazarı), 09.08.2011).*

5.1.7. Jealousy

The analysis showed that jealousy, which was cited 1.4% of the time in the total sample, is an interpersonal relationship attribute of the participatory processes. During the analysis, there was no jealousy and there was jealousy, and the effects of jealousy on the process were all categorised under the jealousy attribute. In the entire sample, jealousy was mentioned 12.5% of the time in general terms and 87.5% in negative terms. This results show that the jealousy attribute was primarily mentioned in terms of its detrimental effects on the participatory project. The following citation exemplified jealousy attribute and its negative effect on the participatory process:

> *"The fact that our participatory process was unsuccessful was not related to management, as it was rather attributable to jealousy among individuals. There was little cooperation among the women, as they were jealous. For this reason we could not create an atmosphere of togetherness" (a respondent (Kaymaklı), 12.10.2011).*

5.2. Comparing the Effects of Interpersonal Relationship Dimension on the Locally Specific Participatory Processes

Table 2 presents the interpersonal relationship dimension in three groups: based on their neutral, beneficial and detrimental effects for the participatory processes conducted in Gazi, Kaymaklı, Odunpazarı and Seyrek. An analysis that focuses on the difference in the ratio of positive and negative references of the four case processes individually revealed that, while the relationship dimension is considered to have enhanced the participatory processes of Odunpazarı (38.4–33.9%) and Seyrek (53.4–20.9%), it hindered the participatory processes of Gazi (30.5–46%) and Kaymaklı (38.4–47.6%) from the perspective of participants.

Evaluating the hindering and enhancing effects of the interpersonal relationship dimension in association with the development levels of the cases did not yield any significant result. Findings based

on the respondents' subjective descriptions reveal that the interpersonal relationship dimension affected the participatory process in the most and least developed cases positively, and it affected the other two cases negatively. This reveals that, there is no correlation between the hindering and/or enhancing effects of the interpersonal relationship dimension and the socio-economic development levels of the cited cases. Despite not being a focus of this study, there could be a correlation between the interpersonal relationship dimension and other dimensions at the micro level, such as psychological dimensions, and with dimensions at the macro level, including other socio-psychological and cultural-contextual dimensions.

Table 2. Relationship dimension in general, positive and negative meanings for each case area (results are presented in each case as average per person).

Relationship Dimension	General Mention		Positively		Negatively		Total	
	frequency of mention	%	frequency of mention	%	frequency of mention	%	frequency of mention	%
Odunpazarı	93	27.7	129	38.4	114	33.9	30.5	34.4
Seyrek	71	25.7	148	53.4	58	20.9	21.3	20.3
Kaymaklı	53	14.0	146	38.4	181	47.6	27.1	25.8
Gazi	44	23.5	57	30.5	86	46.0	26.7	25.5
Average per person	5.8		10.7		9.8		26.2	
Total	261	22.1	480	40.7	439	37.2	1180	100

5. Conclusions

The present case study aimed to explore some of the unexplained factors affecting participatory processes, by focusing on the interpersonal relationship dimension. The study was designed with the purpose of exploring the factors affecting the participatory processes, which are of critical importance in our increasingly democratised world. In our contemporary society, communities need to collaborate when making decisions on behalf of the individual, society and the environment. By exploring unexplained factors affecting participatory processes, a path may be discovered for more successful participatory practices.

This exploratory research revealed that, while the only discussed interpersonal relationship attributes in the participation literature had been trust (along with some relationship building and hidden agenda), interpersonal relationship, a change in interpersonal relationships, trust, rivalry, dominance, hidden agenda and jealousy are also perceived to be attributes of the interpersonal relationship dimension. The study, in terms of the effects of the contextual differences, determined that while the interpersonal relationship dimension is perceived to have enhanced the participatory processes in two cases (Odunpazarı and Seyrek), it is perceived to have hindered the processes in Gazi and Kaymaklı. Alternatively, the extent to which the interpersonal relationship dimension enhanced the contextually different participatory processes was different for the two enhanced case processes, indicating the importance of context on participatory practices.

As a result of these findings, the present study established a framework of the interpersonal relationship dimension and its attributes in a Turkish context. Such a framework clears a path for the exploration of their enhancing or limiting effects by considering that, the attributes and interpersonal relationship dimension could be altered before and during a participatory process. The interpersonal relationship attributes could be categorised based on, whether or not they could be subject to alteration,

have enough time that is required to make an intercession and achieve the desired results. While some interpersonal relationship attributes, including hidden agenda, rivalry, and jealousy, cannot be subjected to change (or may take too long to change), trust, dominance and change in relationship may be altered within a relatively short period of time in the context of a participatory process.

The determination of the interpersonal relationship attributes and the means of intervention are of critical importance, as it may open a pathway to establish the frame in which the required actions can take place before or during the participatory process. However, due to the contextual differences and uniqueness of each participatory process, it is not possible to determine a single accurate answer with regard to how and when to intervene. It should be considered that the relationship dimension and its attributes affect each participatory process in its own way, and is dependent on the uniqueness of each participatory process and its context, as is explored in this study. Therefore, intervention should be set in motion based on the need of each context by enhancing the beneficial effects of the interpersonal relationship and its attributes, and more importantly by decreasing the hindrances. Efforts to determine which of the areas and which actions can be initiated against the obstacles of the participatory processes would increase the likelihood of a more democratic and successful participatory experience.

In sum, by exploring the attributes of interpersonal relationship in the participatory processes, along with their detrimental and beneficial effects on participatory process in a Turkish context, and changing the effects of the interpersonal relationship dimension on locally specific participatory processes, this research has presented a framework for researchers, managers of local governments, and participatory process designers and facilitators, in line with the sample set forth by Kulözü (2016). Subsequently, other socio-psychological dimensions and their attributes may be studied to develop our understanding about the socio-psychological dimensions of participatory processes in different contextual settings, and their changing effects on locally specific participatory processes.

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