

EVALUATING CLIMATE CHANGE SENSITIVITY AND AWARENESS IN  
TÜRKİYE: PERSPECTIVES OF THE BABY BOOM GENERATION AND  
GENERATION Z

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
OF  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE  
IN  
THE DEPARTMENT OF URBAN POLICY PLANNING AND LOCAL  
GOVERNMENTS

FEBRUARY, 2024



Approval of the thesis:

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TÜRKİYE: PERSPECTIVES OF THE BABY BOOM GENERATION AND  
GENERATION Z**

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**I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **EVALUATING CLIMATE CHANGE SENSITIVITY AND AWARENESS IN TÜRKİYE: PERSPECTIVES OF THE BABY BOOM GENERATION AND GENERATION Z**

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February 2024, 143 pages

Today, climate change creates a threat to the future. This global problem, which affects all elements of nature, is gradually turning into a crisis. Generation Z will undoubtedly be the biggest victim of the crisis, as they will be exposed to the effects of climate change in the long term. Although the destructive impacts of the crisis will affect younger generations more, the different generations need to adopt a common stance on solving the crisis because the current decision-makers in high-level positions belong to older generations. Within the scope of this thesis; Generation Z (1995 and 2010/2012) and Baby Boom Generation (1946 – 1964) in Türkiye were compared in terms of sensitivity and awareness level against the climate crisis, which is an intergenerational and global crisis, and solutions that could contribute to the fight against climate change were presented. To make a comparison specific to the climate crisis between both generations, the necessary information was obtained through a survey with 650 participants. The data from this study have been blended within the framework of historical events shaping the characteristics of these generations, enabling an evaluation of their attitudes toward the climate crisis. It sheds light on the possibility of generating a solution to this increasingly critical issue. Such findings enhance the likelihood of successful outcomes in combating the climate crisis.

**Key Words:** Climate Change, Climate Change Sensitivity, Climate Change Awareness, Climate Change Perception, Generation, The Baby Boom Generation, Generation Z

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE'DE İKLİM DEĞİŞİKLİĞİ DUYARLILIĞI VE FARKINDALIĞININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: BEBEK PATLAMASI KUŞAĞI VE Z KUŞAĞI PERSPEKTİFLERİ

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Şubat 2024, 143 sayfa

Günümüzde, dünyanın her yerinde açıkça etkileri gözlemlenebilen iklim değişikliği, gelecek için ciddi bir tehdit unsuru oluşturmaktadır. Doğadaki tüm unsurları etkileyen bu küresel sorun giderek bir krize dönüşmektedir. Genel olarak, iklim koşullarındaki istikrarsız değişimler ve bu değişimlerin neden olduğu tüm yıkıcı sonuçlar olarak tanımlanabilecek iklim krizi, yadsınamayacak ölçüde insan etkisi içermektedir. İklim değişikliğinin yıkıcı etkilerine genç kuşaklar daha uzun süre maruz kalacak olsa da, eski kuşaklarla birlikte krizi çözme konusunda ortak bir tutum geliştirmeleri önemlidir. Günümüzde mevcut üst düzey bürokratların ve politikacıların genellikle daha eski kuşak mensuplarından oluşmasından hareketle, kuşaklar arasında sağlıklı bir iletişim ağı kurarak geçmiş deneyimlerin gelecek kuşaklara aktarılmasını sağlamak, krizin etkileri daha da derinleşmeden önce krizin önlenmesini sağlayacaktır. Bu tez kapsamında; Türkiyede Z Kuşağı (1995 ve sonrası) ile Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı (1946-1964) arasında, kuşaklar üstü ve küresel bir kriz olan iklim krizine karşı duyarlılık ve bilinç düzeyi açılarından bir karşılaştırma yapılmış olup Türkiyenin iklim değişikliği ile mücadelesine katkı sağlayabilecek çözüm yolları sunulmuştur. Her iki kuşak arasında iklim krizi özelinde bir karşılaştırma yapmak için 650 kişiyle anket yapılmıştır. Anket



sonucunda ortaya ıkarılan veriler, bu kuşakların özelliklerini şekillendiren tarihsel olaylar çerçevesinde harmanlanmış ve günümüzün en büyük tehditlerinden iklim krizine karşı tutumlarını değerlendirmeyi mümkün kılmıştır. Bu bağlamda, iklim krizi ile mücadelede başarılı bir sonuç elde etme olasılığı artmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İklim Krizi, İklim Krizi Duyarlılığı/Hassasiyeti, İklim Krizi Bilinç Seviyesi, Kuşak Kavramı, Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı, Z Kuşağı

*To my family*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To begin with, I would like to thank my esteemed teacher Prof. Dr. Osman Balaban, who never withheld his support from me during this challenging and meaningful thesis journey. I would like to express my gratitude to my esteemed professors Prof. Dr. Attila Aytekin and Prof. Dr. Tayfun Çınar, who made invaluable contributions to my thesis process and helped me develop and strengthen my academic thinking. I would like to thank my esteemed Research Assistant Mehmet Mutlu, who always welcomed me whenever I needed him during my academic life.

For all their efforts, I would like to wholeheartedly thank my dear mother Esin Uyar and my father Ali Uyar, who have tried to educate me under the best conditions since my childhood. The support I received from them is the biggest factor in my ability to finish this thesis today and moreover in all my achievements in life. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my beloved mother, Esin, for making this life so beautiful for me, for her boundless compassion, and patience. To my dear father, Ali, I would like to emphasize that there is no language that can adequately convey my appreciation for his strength and limitless love. I am immensely grateful to my dear family, who instilled in me that the most important success in life is to be a good person and taught me that this should be my only aspiration in life. I express my thanks to my dear uncle, Metin Uyar, for always being by my side and for the values he has instilled in me, regardless of the time and conditions.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my precious friend Pelin Hastoprakçılar for her unique support, friendship, and for making many moments in my life more enjoyable and easier, just like these moments. I would like to thank İsmail Deniz Demirkan and Pelin Vatan Demirkan for sharing this whole journey with me, for always encouraging me with their belief in me and for making an effort with me to reach the best version of myself. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to Ali Gökhan Karabilgin for his academic support, guidance, and for the motivational talks which helped me complete this thesis today. For constantly enriching my life with all the blessings and

joy, I would like to express my gratitude to Sena Kse and our dog Turu, whom I consider as my chosen family in Ankara. For her companionship on this journey, I would like to extend my thanks to Melahat Yapıcı, one of the wonderful people that METU introduced into my life. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my childhood friends Aya Deniz and Ekin Dutar for being a guiding light on this path where I have realized one of my dreams and many others. I also would like to thank my dear friend Aya Hızarcı for the perspective she provided me with her academic competencies.

I would like to express additional thanks to the METU Aegean Alumni Association, Salih Gm, and Nevzat Kalkan for the support they provided during my survey. I also extend my gratitude to my workplace, İzmir Chamber of Commerce, for the support they have provided throughout the journey.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background & Aims of the Study

Climate change refers to long-term changes in average weather conditions and temperatures. Today, climate change is an international emergency that transcends national boundaries. In other words, the devastating effects of climate change can be observed anywhere in the world, which creates an eventful threat directly to human health, physical environment, and all aspects of both natural and human systems. In the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations, 1992), climate change is defined as a change in the climate because of human activities that directly or indirectly disrupt the composition of the global atmosphere, in addition to the natural climate change that is observed over a comparable period.

It is a harsh fact that most living species may become extinct if climate change, which is the result of human activities and defined by the Oxford Dictionary (2019) as "*a situation that requires urgent action to stop or reduce the irreversible damage caused by climate change*", cannot be combated. The frequent occurrence of many natural disasters such as floods, storms, forest fires, rising sea levels, drought, severe hurricanes, and extreme temperatures will normalize in the coming years. In addition, according to the World Bank's Groundswell (2021) Report, by 2050, more than 216 million people living in 6 regions will have to migrate elsewhere due to the climate change. This global problem, which directly or indirectly affects all elements in the nature, is gradually turning into a crisis. Therefore, all countries should develop comprehensive and effective solutions within themselves and in coordination with each other to prevent climate change with consequences such as food shortage, and water scarcity.

In this sense, the level of awareness and sensitivity of every generation, who has a serious share in the formation of climate change, because the climate change is not only a global but also an intergenerational problem, and even the fact that this change is considered as a crisis for the future, is an important criterion. In other words, all countries should raise awareness, and educate their citizens from every generation in the fight against the climate change. This process should be managed by considering the historical responsibilities of countries regarding the release of greenhouse gases, which are the most important factor of climate change, and the policies loyal to many international agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In that context, it is important that every generation in every society develops sensitivity with a certain level of awareness about climate problem.

The report published by Amnesty International in 2021 caused the level of sensitivity and awareness of climate change to be based on especially two generations, which are included within the scope of this thesis. The mentioned report states that the situation caused by climate change is an unprecedented human rights crisis. The following statements in the same report are also noteworthy. *“The climate crisis is actually a manifestation of deep-rooted injustices. Although climate change is a global problem that affects everyone, it disproportionately affects individuals and groups that have already been subjected to diverse and intersecting forms of discrimination or marginalized as a result of structural inequalities and ingrained practices, or as a result of official policies that unfairly distribute resources, power, and privileges.”* (AML, 2021). The report also mentions that individuals and groups described as ‘marginalized were marginalized based on gender, class, caste, race, minority status, disability, ‘age’, and migration status and that these people had more difficulties in adapting to climate change. In line with this background, this thesis provides a study carried out on the ‘age/generation’ status, which is one of the elements of marginalization, and the age status is divided into two groups. The first group includes people who are defined as ‘young’ and is, represented by Generation Z; the people of the second group are described as ‘old’ and are, represented by the Baby Boom Generation. More specifically, Generation Z represents young climate activists like Greta Thunberg, and the Baby Boom Generation represents politicians

and decision-makers like Donald Trump, who are quite skeptical and lazy about climate change. The thesis compares these groups in terms of their level of awareness and consciousness of climate change.

In this respect, the notion of generation will be examined conceptually, sociologically, and communicatively by associating it with climate change. According to Strauss and Howe (1997), generation is defined as the sum of people who were born at the same time, share a common place in history and consequently have a common personality. Specifically, within the scope of this thesis, the sensitivity and awareness levels of two different generations about climate change are analyzed in line with the character traits shaped in the face of the social and political changes they have experienced so far. However, as one of the limitations of this thesis, which will be detailed in the following part, empirical research on generational differences is still a relatively new endeavour.

Previous studies were able to compare only a few questions across time in low-response-rate samples (Smola & Sutton, 2002), and other studies collected data at only one time, confounding age and generation (e.g., Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Davis et al., 2006, as cited in Twenge et al., 2010). Not the only reason, but even for that reason alone; it would be useful to make a classification and analysis between generations in terms of how each generation will exhibit an attitude towards political, economic, social, and cultural changes experienced at the local and/or global level and how this attitude will be perceived by other generations. In the literature, different approaches develop depending on the adoption of different reference points related to the classification of generations, as well as the issue of which generation covers, which year intervals vary. Although it varies according to countries and cultures, in many studies, generations are commonly classified based on 5 generations as depicted in Table 1.

**Table 1.** A Classification of Generations

GENERATIONS	YEAR INTERVALS	ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONS
The Silent Generation	1926-1945	Traditionalists, the Lost or Forgotten Generation, the Silent Ones, Veterans, Radio Babies

Table 1. (continued)

Baby Boomers	1946-1964	Digital Immigrants, Sandwich Generation
Generation X	1965-1979	13th Generation, Baby Bust, Shadow Generation, Intermediate Generation
Generation Y	1980-1999	Millennial Generation, Millennial, Echo Boom
Generation Z	2000 and beyond	Digital Natives, Generation C (/c/onneted, /c/ommunicating, /c/ontent-centric, /c/omputerized, /c/licking), Generation 9/11, Post-Millennials, iGen, GenTech, Gen-Wii

It is possible to classify three different generations to be grouped under the names of Baby Boom Generation and Silent Generation, “Traditional Generations”; Generation X and Generation Y, “Transitional Generations”; and Generation Z, “Modern and Global Generations”.

Recent studies have drawn the beginning of the birth date of Generation Z to 1995 and completed it in 2010-2012, and have named those born since this date as Alpha Generation (Lavelle, 2019; Singh, 2014; Suderman, 2016; Twenge, 2018; as cited in Ceylan & Bayram, 2022). For the aims of this thesis, the birth year of Generation Z, who was born into a more material, technological, more global world and experienced digital capitalism and consumption culture intensively, was classified as 1995-2010 as it is in the literature in recent studies. The most important reason for acceptance of this classification within the scope of this thesis is that most of the technological developments of Generation Z, also called Digital Natives due to their dependence on digitalization, took place between 1995 and 2010, which are of great importance in carrying this naming and the features this naming adds to it. On the other hand, within the scope of this thesis, the most commonly used classification method and periods are taken into account and blended with recent studies, and the time interval of the Baby Boom Generation was accepted as 1946 – 1964.

As a consequence of all of these, this study compares Generation Z (1995 – 2010) and Baby Boom Generation (1946 – 1964) in terms of sensitivity and awareness level against climate crisis, which is an intergenerational and global crisis. The study also presents a discussion on solutions that could contribute to Türkiye's and other countries' fight against climate change based on perspectives of two particular

generations that represent two historically different extreme viewpoints and are the youngest and oldest generations living in terms of the majority of the population.

## **1.2. Significance of the Study**

The distance between Baby Boom Generation (1946 – 1964) and Generation Z (1995 – 2010), as two opposite ends historically and especially in terms of digitalization, has widened with the COVID-19 pandemic process. The pandemic has not only caused radical changes globally but has also led to the widespread use of technology in all areas of life, such as working life, educational life, and social life. The distance between Generation Z, also referred to as “Digital Natives”, and the Baby Boomers, also referred to as “Digital Immigrants”, has become increasingly evident with the demand for digitalization during the pandemic period and the digital transformations afterward. For this reason, the fact that this study was conducted in the near post-pandemic period is of striking importance in the analysis of the data obtained because of the survey.

In addition, aside from the temporal dimension, considering the purpose of writing the thesis, it is critical that Türkiye is selected as the research subject in the spatial dimension. According to the 5th Assessment Report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2014, the Mediterranean Basin, including Türkiye, is among the regions that will be most harmed by the negative effects of climate change. In this respect, it is of particular importance that such a study is being carried out in Türkiye.

In addition, from the perspective of the majority of the population, it is possible to say that 14.97% of the World's population (1 billion 168 million people) and 12.6% of the Turkish population (10 million 315 thousand people) constitute the Baby Boom Generation (1946 – 1964) in the 58-76 age group (TURKSTAT, 2023). On the other hand, 1 billion 253 million 463 thousand people belonging to Generation Z live worldwide. With this number, Generation Z constitutes 16.07% of the world's population. In Türkiye, the share of Generation Z in the general population is 16.25% (13 million 595 thousand). Generation Z is the latest generation that is currently

growing and will be dominating the world in the next several decades (Wiedmer, 2015). Generation Z will undoubtedly be the biggest victim of the crisis, as they will be exposed to the effects of climate change in the longer term.

However, the fact that the effects of climate change will be experienced directly by future generations does not change the fact that the crisis is an intergenerational issue. The wrong formation of the social order and the transfer of this wrongly formed order to the next generations cause the continuity of the crisis. In terms of solving the crisis, it is essential that Generation Z adopt a different approach from the Baby Boom Generation. At this point, establishing a healthy communication network between generations will ensure the transfer of past experiences to future generations. This transfer will lead to the prevention of the crisis before the effects of the crisis deepen further. These two generations, who represent both ends in many respects, will only be able to meet on common ground about the solution to the issue in question if they achieve a similar level of awareness and sensitivity to climate change. The Baby Boom Generation is a generation that is sensitive to political issues and cares about participation in political processes, similar to Generation Z but methodically different from it.

Moreover, from a sociological perspective, Baby Boomers have been viewed as having distinctive experiences that set them apart from previous generations. Gillon (2004), in their book *Boomer Nation: The Largest and Richest Generation Ever, and How It Changed America*, for example, suggests that beneath all the contradictions, there is a strong signal: Boomers have reshaped an entire culture around their single cohort. On the other hand, Generations born in the 1990s and raised in the 2000s during the most profound changes in the century exist in a world with the web, internet, smartphones, laptops, freely available networks, and digital media are considered the Generation Z (Singh & Dangmei, 2016). In other words, they are born and raised in the digital world and what distinguishes them from other generations is that their existence is more connected to electronics and the digital world (Singh & Dagmei, 2016). The fact that both generations have very distinctive and many first features that differ from other generations has emerged once again because of a detailed examination of the two generations within the scope of this study.



Hence, it is extremely important to study the climate crisis, which is considered one of the biggest problems of the world due to its temporal (post-pandemic period), spatial (Türkiye), demographic, and striking contrasts and similarities of the two generations, through these dynamics within the scope of this thesis.

### **1.3. Limitations of the Study**

In the questionnaire survey of this thesis, 650 people from both generations were contacted. Half of the participants, specifically 325 individuals are from Baby Boom Generation. Since individuals from Baby Boom Generation, whose birth year is close to 1946 have low or no internet literacy, the survey has been conducted with people via telephone interviews or face-to-face communications. On the other hand, respondents from Generation Z and Baby Boom Generation, whose birth year is close to 1964, could participate in the online survey without any problems. In the surveys conducted via face-to-face communications, since this opportunity could only be realized within the borders of Izmir province, the sample was limited to Izmir for respondents with a birth year approaching 1946.

Moreover, while majority of respondents from Generation Z are METU students and graduates, majority of respondents from Baby Boom Generation are METU graduates. Of the 650 respondents, 560 (86.15%) stated they have at least a university degree. In fact, 34.9% of the respondents have a master's or doctorate degree. More precisely, 76 (23.3%) of the 325 participants from Generation Z and 38 (11.6%) from the Boomers generation have a master's or doctorate degree. According to National Education Statistics (2022), the ratio of higher education graduates aged 25 and above to the total population in Türkiye is only 23.9 %. Therefore, the sample in this research does not reflect the reality of the education level in Türkiye. In other words, participants of the survey of this thesis are mostly well-educated individuals. Yet, this is not an unintended issue, as well-educated groups of societies are still the ones that are more aware of climate change.

In addition, the fact that the range of birth years of generations varies from study to study during the literature review, especially academic discussions on whether Generation Z is the last generation in existence, has been a difficulty in determining

the birth year of Generation Z within the scope of the thesis. In addition, although in 1991 Strauss and Howe conducted the most comprehensive study accepted in the literature, by considering the historical processes of Western societies. This has led them to focus on the historical events experienced by generations living in Western societies. *Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069* by Strauss and Howe (1991), the first systematic generations study, is specifically US-centred, as even the title suggests. For this reason, since this study is being conducted in Türkiye, Türkiye's historical processes have had to be addressed separately within the scope of the study.

#### **1.4. Methods of the Study**

In order to make a comparison specific to climate crisis between both generations, the necessary information was obtained through a quantitative research method, which is the survey. In total, 28 questions were asked to a group of 650 participants, 325 participants from both generations. The survey questionnaire is presented in the appendix. Although an examination was made on the generation variable, it was also pointed out whether the answers of the participants differed depending on gender, educational status/professional status, media use, and socioeconomic status. The survey was shared on various social media platforms (WhatsApp groups, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) with individuals who met the criteria and were willing to participate. The survey was completed through phone conversations with individuals from the Baby Boom Generation who have low or no internet literacy. The content analysis was conducted for the 4 open-ended questions at the end of the survey, and a statistical report was presented for 24 multiple-choice questions.

As a result of the survey, the resulting data were analyzed and the solutions that are thought to contribute to Türkiye's fight against the climate crisis are presented in the conclusion section of the study.

#### **1.5. Overview of Structure & Organization of the Study**

In Chapter 2, the results of the literature review were presented. In Chapter 2, entitled *Discussing Generations*, the concept of generation, classification of generations, a

brief overview of Türkiye's demographic structure, a brief sociological overview of generational theory, and intergenerational relations were examined. Then, the Baby Boom Generation (1946 – 1964) and Generation Z (1995 and 2010/2012), which shaped the structure of the study, were analyzed based on the issue of how generation identities were shaped. Due to this examination, two evaluations were made: understanding and comparison of the characteristics of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z in general and in terms of climate crisis.

In Chapter 3, entitled Associating Intergenerational Dynamics with Climate Change: Türkiye as a Spatial Dimension, the notions of intergenerational justice and intergenerational equity, which are nowadays more commonly associated with issues such as environmentalism and climate change, have been analyzed in this context for the aims of this thesis. These mentioned notions were analyzed in the context of climate change through two generations, namely the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z. What is critical here is that these two concepts were analyzed through these two generations living in Türkiye. Türkiye is a strategic country in the context of climate change in terms of its geographical location, its position in international agreements, and youth climate activism movements. For these reasons, this chapter was divided into two sub-headings: climate change as an intergenerational issue and Türkiye as a hotspot of climate problem. In this regard, the policies in Türkiye on climate change were analyzed with their historical processes, and at the same time, the recent trend of climate activism was focused on. In this chapter, Türkiye's attitude in the process of combating the climate change was conveyed on a historical basis. This historical assessment was based on intergovernmental environmental agreements. Those were, respectively, The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement. Moreover, the part related to climate activism in Türkiye was based especially on young generation activism. Consequently, what is written in the second and third chapters; together; serves as a basis for the following chapters of the thesis.

The Case Study Analysis Chapter, which is the fourth Chapter, focused on the research design and methodology, and profile of survey respondents. The survey results were analyzed through the generation perception in the context of global

problems, responsible actors, and solutions. Moreover, the results of the survey conducted within the scope of this thesis compared with the findings of the Climate Crisis Perception Research published by the Yuvam Dünya Association in collaboration with KONDA in the years 2022 and 2023 and several studies conducted in the EU, the United Kingdom, the U.S., and the Philippines.

In the fifth and last chapter, named the Conclusion Chapter, an academic discussion was held on what was written in the previous sections, and various suggestions that could contribute to Türkiye's fight against the climate change were made regarding the solution to the crisis in question. It contained the summary part, which was a summary of the general outlines of the study. A result combining the theoretical part and the survey part, which was assumed to be the practical part, was presented in the conclusion section. The conclusion section included all the findings, discussions, recommendations, analyses, and comparisons revealed within the scope of the thesis.

## CHAPTER 2

### DISCUSSING GENERATIONS: CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS AND CLASSIFICATION OF GENERATIONS

In this part of the study, the concept of generation will be examined conceptually, sociologically, and communicatively. In its simplest form, Hazlett (1992) defined the concept of the generation “as a common character and behavior that can be separated from different generations by integrating around common values and judgments”.

The characters and behaviors mentioned in this definition can bring different perspectives to individuals in every issue of life, as well as create different perspectives in the face of climate change in this study. A solution process for the devastating effects of climate change begins with the diversity that will arise from different generations' perspectives. A solid bridge will be built by the older generations in society transferring their experiences to new generations who will be exposed to the effects of the crisis for a longer period when climate change is not yet described as a crisis but the effects of change are beginning to be seen. The more robust this bridge, which can be established if there is healthy communication between the generations, the more possible it will be to avoid the worst effects of climate change until 2050. In this respect, in this part of the study, the phenomenon of generation and intergenerational relations especially in climate change will be examined.

#### **2.1. The Concept of Generation & Classification of Generations**

The concept of generation and the issue of how to classify generations are almost as old as humanity itself. Since the beginning of time, man has tried to define what age means and how to measure age differences between the members of society. It is crucial to define a historical era or generation although it is always a difficult and controversial task. According to Jensen (1974, p.90), “*the concept generation is not*

*only a prerequisite for the empirical study of intergenerational relations, but is actually a prerequisite for a theory of social existence – for sociological theory – for the basic components of the social structure are coexisting generations.”*

There is no absolute acceptance in the literature at the reference point to be taken during the classification of generations. Although taking birth years as a basis provides a basic classification criterion when distinguishing between generations, it will not be sufficient when different factors are taken into account and a more comprehensive classification is desired. With globalization, social changes that gain momentum in the individual and society are the cornerstone of socially constructed generational consciousness. This situation reveals the necessity of how all kinds of events that took place at those times shaped the characteristics of the generations rather than chronological dates to make a systematic generation classification. In other words, generation classification is a sociological issue, not a biological one, like its definition.

In short, it is understood that there is no common consensus in the literature on which elements to make definitions about the classification of generations, which start and end dates to be taken when determining age ranges, how to name the generations, and how many generations exist. In this context, although it is known that generations do not have a fixed period, it is understood from the studies that they are usually renewed every fifteen to twenty years. Generally, generations in the literature are classified as Silent Generation, Baby Boom Generation, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. Some researchers working on the issue of generation add a transition generation between Generation Y and Generation Z, also known as "Generation (M)ilennium" and called "Generation M". However, the general acceptance is on the acceptance of the above-mentioned 5 generations. This classification varies according to countries and cultures. It is stated that different historical processes and events in Western countries are not fully compatible with Türkiye (Arslan and Staub, 2015). The main reason for this is the different experiences of societies living in different regions in the same period of history. There is not only a temporal but also a spatial dimension to the generation classification. Moreover, technological innovations, which are an important

determinant of generation classification, and the fact that different societies meet with these innovations at different times differentiate the generation classification of developed countries and the generation classification of developing and undeveloped countries such as Türkiye. For this reason, within the scope of this thesis, the developments specific to Türkiye were also mentioned in the following sections while examining the historical processes of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z. As depicted in Table 2, different classifications emerged as a result of the compilation of "Studies related to the Generation classification" in many different sources.

**Table 2. Studies on Generation Classifications**

AUTHORS	SILENT GENERATION	BABY BOOM GENERATION	GENERATION X	MILLENNIALS	GENERATION M	GENERATION Z
Akduman and Hatipoğlu (2021)		1946 – 1964	1965-1979	1980 - 1999		2000 and beyond
Appelbaum (2005)		1943-1960	1961-1981			
Berk (2013)	1946 and before	1947-1965	1966-1981	1982-1996		
Cennamo and Gardner (2008)		1946-1961	1962-1979	1980 and after		
Crumpacker and Crumpacker (2007)	1929- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1979	1980-1999		
Çakmak ve Çelik (2017)		1946 – 1965	1966 – 1980	1981 - 2000		
Deniz Kazkondur (2020)	1925 – 1945	1946 – 1964	1965-1979	1980 - 1999		2000 and beyond
Fleschner (2007)	1925- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-2000		
Glass (2007)	1900 – 1945	1946 – 1964	1965-1980	1981-1994		1995 – 2012
Gürsoy (2008)		1943-1960	1961-1980	1981-2000		
Howe and Strauss (2000)	1925- 1943	1943-1960	1961-1981	1982-2000		
Haeberle et al (2009)	1930- 1944	1945-1964	1965-1979	1980-1999	1999-2019 and beyond	
Keleş (2011)		1946-1964	1965-1979	1980-1999		

Table 2. (continued)

Quran (2010)	1927- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1979	1980-1999		2000 – 2020
Kyles (2005)	1900- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1979	1980-1999		
Lamm and Meeks (2009)		1943-1960	1961-1980	1981-2000		
Lancaster and Stillman (2002)	1900- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-1999		
Lyons (2007)	1945 and before	1945-1964	1965-1979	1980 and after		
MacKenzie and McGuire (2016)	1900-1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-1994		1995-2012
Martin and Tulgan (2002)	1925- 1942	1946-1960	1965-1977	1978-2000		
Oblinger and Oblinger (2005)	1946 and before	1947-1964	1965-1980	1981-1995	1995 and beyond	
Salahuddin (2010)	1922- 1943	1922- 1943	1943-1960	1960-1980	1980-2000	
Seçkin (2005)	1945 and before	1946-1964	1965-1980	1980-1995	1995 and beyond	
Senbir (2004)	1929- 1939	1945-1965	1965-1944	1977-1994	1994- 2003	2003
Sessa (2007)	1925- 1945	1946-1963	1964-1982	1983 and beyond		
Sever İşçimen (2012)	<1946	1947 – 1964	1965-1980	1981-1995		1995 and beyond
Spitznas (1998)	1925 – 1945	1946 – 1964	1965-1980			
Tapscott (2008)		1946 – 1964	1965 – 1975	1976 - 2000		
Taş and Kaçar (2019)			1964 – 1979	1980-1995		1995 and beyond
Tek and Orel (2006)	1946 and before	1946-1964	1965-1976	1977-1994	1995- 2002	2003- 2023
Twenge et al (2010)	1925- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1980-2000		2000 and beyond
Trower (2009)	1925- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-2000		
Turgut Ünal (2020)	1944 and before	1944 – 1964	1965-1980	1981 - 1999		2000 – 2020
Washburn (2000)	1926- 1945	1945-1964	1965-1981	1982-2003		



Table 2. (continued)

Williams and Page (2011)	1930- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1976	1977-1994		1994 and beyond
Wong (2008)		1945-1964	1965-1981	1982-2000		
Yelkikalan and Altın (2010)	1925- 1945	1946-1964	1965-1979	1980-1994		
Yıldız (2021)	1925 – 1945	1946 – 1964	1965-1979	1980- 2001		2000 and beyond
Zemke et al. (2000)	1922- 1943	1943-1960	1960-1980	1980-1999		
Zhang and Bonk (2010)	1946 and before	1946-1964	1965-1976	1977-1994		1994 and beyond

## 2.2. A Brief Sociological Overview of Generational Theory

Joshi (2011) stated that considering the use of the concept of generation, which corresponds to the words generation, age group, and cohort, it is known that it dates back to Ancient Greek and Egyptian civilizations. Although the concept of generation is known in the historical process, Ibn-i Haldun made the first theory about generations in the 14th century under the name of Generational Systems Theory. On the other hand, it is known that systematic scientific studies on generations date back to the early 19th century. In other words, the use of the concept of generation dates back to ancient civilizations, while the development of the theory of generation dates back to the early 19th century.

The Generational Systems Theory defines four different generations as the artist generation, prophet generation, nomadic generation, and heroic generation. These four generations form a cycle by continuously following each other periodically. These generations repeat each other in a cycle with an interval of 80 or 100 years. According to the theory, which aims to predict the future by understanding the past, generations are shaped in the environment prepared by their predecessors and prepare the sociological environment for the next generation cyclically. Neil Howe and William Strauss were among the greatest proponents of this theory in the following years.

On the other hand, Auguste Comte was the first person to initiate systematic scientific research on generational studies between 1830-1840. Comte (1974)

revealed that generational changes are effective forces in the historical process and stated that social progress can only be possible with the accumulations that one generation will pass on to the next generations. In this respect, it is essential to establish a balance in intergenerational communication and all kinds of interactions. Knowing the experiences of previous generations and the decisions as a result of these experiences will be the starting point for finding solutions to ongoing social problems. The point to remember is that if the right strategies had been adopted at the first moment when any social phenomenon occurred, this issue would not have grown and turned into a crisis after a while. Therefore, knowing how previous generations have assessed the problem in question and how they have dealt with it or even failed to do so, will undoubtedly serve as a point of reference for subsequent generations.

Karl Mannheim (1938), an influential sociologist, wrote, "*The social phenomenon described by the concept of generation is actually the identity formed by connected groups and embedded in the social-historical process.*" According to him, the sociological significance of all generations lies in the expression that they are the collective agents of major social changes or carriers of age spirit. According to Marshall (1991), experiences unique to each new generation allow this mentioned social change. In *The Problem of Generation* (1927/1952), Mannheim sought to describe three elements making up a generation: "*a shared temporal location (i.e., generational site or birth cohort), shared historical location (i.e., generation as actuality-exposure to a common period or era), and finally a shared socio-cultural location (i.e., generational consciousness- or entelechy)*" (Gilleard and Higgs, 2002, p.373).

Furthermore, according to Pierre Bourdieu, it is possible to talk about a generation only in the presence of the whole of the products created by the same generation mode of production. To put it more precisely, Bourdieu stated that, all kinds of changes in the form of reproduction, that is, every new situation of institutionalized mechanisms functioning as a means of reproduction (economy, family, and education), as well as all kinds of transformations in the forms of production of successive generations, are at the root of reproduction crises and the emergence of separate generations (Bourdieu, 1989, as cited in Canatan, 2022). Moreover,

Eyerman and Turner, as Bourdieu's followers, shaped the definition of generation in the sociological sense based on the concept of habitus borrowed from Bourdieu. According to them, (1998, p.93) "*generation refer to a cohort of persons passing through time who come to share a common habitus, hexis, and culture, a function of which is to provide them with a collective memory that serves to integrate the generation over a finite period of time*". In its shortest form, they defined the generation as individuals with collective memory emerging from culture.

Fast forward to the present day, it is possible to say that Strauss and Howe's (1991) and Inglehart's (1997) research give depth to the generation theory. In other words, the concept of a generation has gained its current meaning and popularity with the works of Ronald Inglehart, William Strauss, and Neil Howe. Strauss and Howe (1991) developed the generation theory by conducting the most comprehensive generation study today. The Generation Theory, developed by Strauss and Howe, is also important in terms of having a systematic covering of recent historical periods. As Dobransky-Fasiska (1994) said, "*instead of analyzing society by age groups that develop throughout the human life span, Strauss and Howe focus on the generations that the "age brackets" are passing through*". (G.I Generation → Silent Generation → Boom Generation → 13<sup>th</sup> Generation → Millennial Generation → Homelander). However, the generation theory of Howe and Strauss has a fallacy that the focus of their extensive work was the definition of the life cycles of the American civilization over the past four centuries. So, this situation, that is, the theory that has been put forward based on American history, may lead to another misconception in terms of generational studies in other regions. On the other hand, even if each society has gone through different historical processes and social, cultural, and economic stages and structures, all generations on Earth have many characteristics that are parallel to the universally defined age ranges and generation definitions. This does not change the fact that Strauss and Howe's Generational Theory, despite certain deviations, provides a meaningful basis for generational analyses in any given region.

According to Strauss and Howe (1997), generation is defined "*as the sum of people who were born at the same time, share a common place in history and thus have a common personality*". So much so that it is claimed that individuals of the same generation who experience the same historical events and social changes in their

period have similar characteristics in line with the archetypes determined and repeated throughout history. Strauss-Howe Generation Theory, which mentions the existence of 25 different generations and is accepted by many people today, mentions generations progressing in a cycle with four main archetypes as depicted in Table 3 and Table 4. Strauss and Howe put forward these 4 main archetypes with reference from Ibn Khaldun's Theory of Generational Systems.

**Table 3.** Generational Archetypes

<b>Generational Archetypes</b>				
	<b>Hero</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Prophet</b>	<b>Nomad</b>
<b>Recent Generations</b>	G.I. (1901-24) Millennial (1982 -2000?)	Silent (1925-1942)	Baby Boomer (1943-1960)	Generation X (1961-1981)
<b>Reputation as Child</b>	good	placid	spirited	bad
<b>Coming of Age</b>	empowering	unfulfilling	sanctifying	alienating
<b>Primary Focus Coming of Age</b>	outer-world	inter-dependency	inner-world	self-sufficiency
<b>Young Adulthood</b>	building	improving	reflecting	competing
<b>Transition in Midlife</b>	energetic to hubristic	conformist to experimental	detached to judgmental	frenetic to exhausted
<b>Leadership Style Entering Elderhood</b>	collegial, expansive	pluralistic, indecisive	righteous, austere	solitary, pragmatic
<b>Reputation as Elder</b>	powerful	sensitive	wise	tough
<b>Treatment as Elder</b>	rewarded	liked	respected	abandoned
<b>How it is Nurtured</b>	tightening	overprotective	relaxing	under-protective
<b>How it Nurtures</b>	relaxing	under-protective	tightening	overprotective
<b>Positive Reputation</b>	selfless, rational, competent	caring, open-minded, expert	principled, resolute, creative	savvy, practical, perceptive
<b>Negative Reputation</b>	unreflective, mechanistic, overbold	sentimental, complicating, indecisive	narcissistic, presumptuous, ruthless	unfeeling, uncultured, amoral
<b>Endowments</b>	community, affluence, technology	pluralism, expertise, due process	vision, values, religion	liberty, survival, honor

(Source: William Strauss and Neil Howe, "The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy," New York: Broadway Books, 1997. p. 98.)

(Source: Strauss and Howe, 1997.)

Another concept put forth by Strauss and Howe is the concept of turning. A turning is defined by them (1997) as *“an era with a characteristic social mood, a new twist on how people feel about themselves, their culture, nation and future”*. A new turning, which is defined as a new historical era or period, starts every two decades or so. Based on their theory, each historical cycle consists of four turnings respectively named high, awakening, unraveling, and crisis, and spans the length of a long human life, roughly 80 to 100 years. They term this period as a saeculum and there are seven Anglo-American saecula identified by them. Millennial Saeculum one of them is the saecula where today's generations are located.

**Table 4.** Recent Generations and Their Archetypes

Recent Generations and Their Archetypes					
ERA	1908–1929	1929–1946	1946–1964	1964–1984	1984–?
		<b>(Crisis)</b>		<b>(Awakening)</b>	
KEY EVENTS	Four Freedoms World War I Prohibition Scopes Trial	Crash of 1929 New Deal Pearl Harbor D-Day	McCarthyism Levittown Affluent Society Little Rock	Kent State Woodstock Watergate Tax Revolt	Perestroika National Debt Culture Wars Simpson Trial
ENTERING ELDERHOOD (AGE 63–83)	<b>Progressive</b> (Artist) <i>empathic</i>	<b>Missionary</b> (Prophet) <i>wise</i>	<b>Lost</b> (Nomad) <i>tough</i>	<b>G.I.</b> (Hero) <i>powerful</i>	<b>Silent</b> (Artist) <i>empathic</i>
ENTERING MIDLIFE (AGES 42–62)	<b>Missionary</b> (Prophet) <i>moralistic</i>	<b>Lost</b> (Nomad) <i>pragmatic</i>	<b>G.I.</b> (Hero) <i>hubristic</i>	<b>Silent</b> (Artist) <i>indecisive</i>	<b>Boom</b> (Prophet) <i>moralistic</i>
ENTERING YOUNG ADULTHOOD (AGES 21–41)	<b>Lost</b> (Nomad) <i>alienated</i>	<b>G.I.</b> (Hero) <i>heroic</i>	<b>Silent</b> (Artist) <i>sensitive</i>	<b>Boom</b> (Prophet) <i>narcissistic</i>	<b>Thirteenth</b> (Nomad) <i>alienated</i>
ENTERING CHILDHOOD (AGES 0–20)	<b>G.I.</b> (Hero) <i>protected</i>	<b>Silent</b> (Artist) <i>suffocated</i>	<b>Boom</b> (Prophet) <i>indulged</i>	<b>Thirteenth</b> (Nomad) <i>abandoned</i>	<b>Millennial</b> (Hero) <i>protected</i>

Source: HOWE, N. & STRAUSS, W. 1997. *The Fourth Turning: What the Cycles of History Tell Us About America's Next Rendezvous with Destiny*, New York, Broadway Books.

(Source: Strauss and Howe, 1997.)

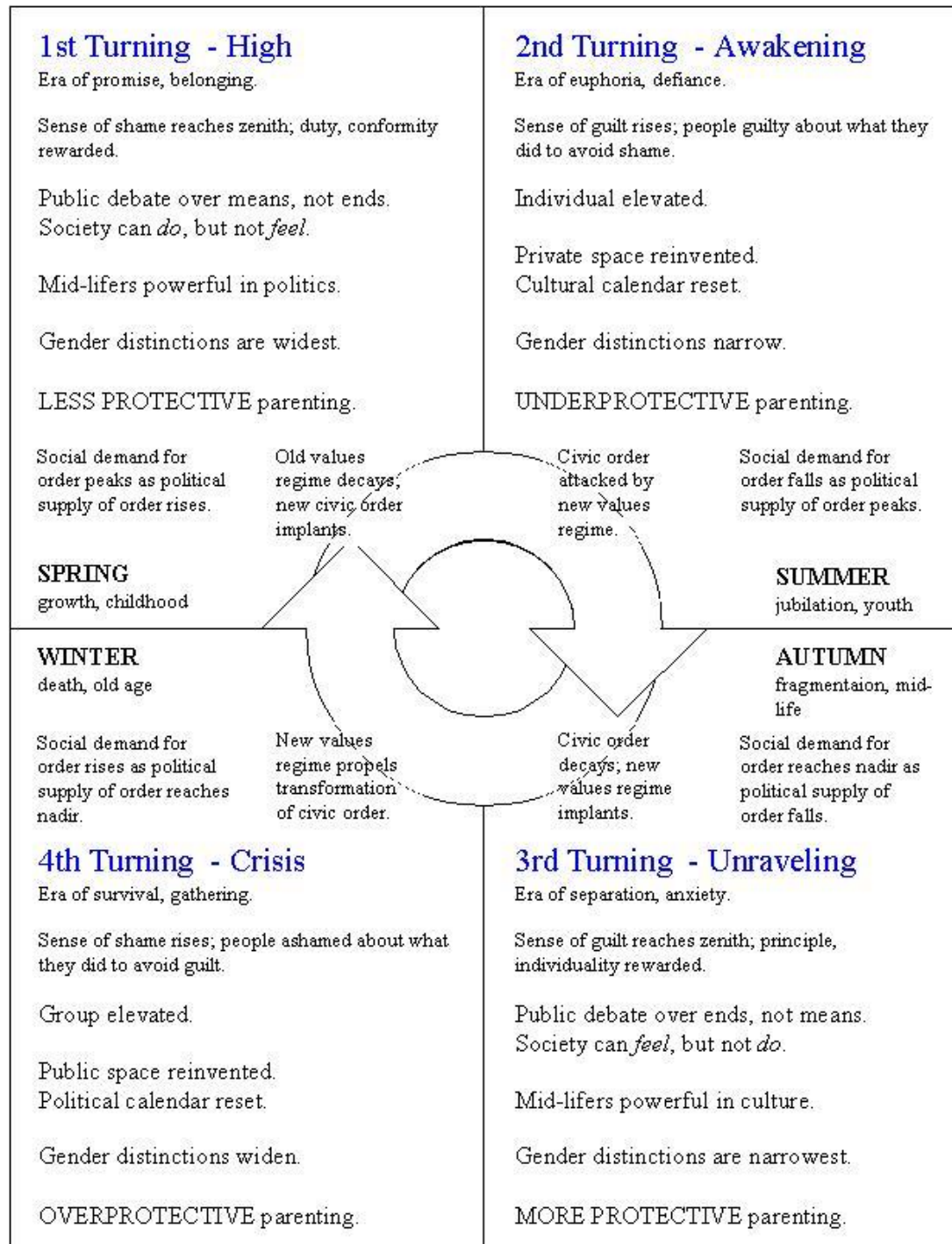
The first turning ‘High or Rebirth Period’ is represented by strong institutions and weak individualism. In the literature, the societal characteristics emerging from the generational characteristics of the rebirth period are symbolized by values, budding, conformity, and growth/affluence (Boysen, 2013; Mann, 2011). This is the period when prophets are born. It can be associated with the idealist, dominant Baby Boom Generation. As depicted in Figure 1, in this period, public debates were over means, not ends. Society can do, but not feel. Mid-lifers are powerful in politics. Gender distinctions are the widest. Social demand for order peaks as the political supply of order rises. Old values regime decays and new civic order implants. (Strauss and Howe, 1997). Moreover, the second turning ‘Awakening Period’ is represented by spiritual upheaval and impeding public progress. In the literature, the societal characteristics emerging from the generational characteristics of the awakening period are symbolized by abundance, civil rights, gender equality, liberty, and spirituality (Boysen, 2013; Mann, 2011). This is the period when nomads are born. It can be associated with reactive, recessive Generation X.

In contrast to the high period, the third turning ‘Unraveling Period’ is represented by weak institutions and strong individualism. In the literature, the societal

characteristics emerging from generational characteristics of the unraveling period are symbolized by complacency, gluttony, individualism, pragmatism, and survivalism (Boysen, 2013; Mann, 2011). This is the period when heroes are born. It can be associated with civic, dominant G.I. Generation and Millennials. As depicted in Figure 1, in this period, public debates were over ends, not means. Society can feel, but not do. Mid-lifers are powerful in culture. Gender distinctions are narrowest. Social demand for order reaches nadir as the political supply of order falls. Civic order decays and new values regime implants. As depicted in Figure 2 and as accepted in today's alternative studies, Generation Z, whose birth years were between 1995 and 2012, matched with the hero archetype. Also, in contrast to the awakening period, the fourth turning 'Crisis Period' is symbolized by secular upheaval. In the book "The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy by Strauss and Howe (1997), there is a statement that "*A Fourth Turning*" lends people of all ages what is literally a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to heal (or destroy) the very heart of the republic." In this period, where the artist archetype was born, citizenship and social consciousness were revived. As this period ends, institutions will be reconstructed and society will realize how important it is to be a part of the collective. The community purpose will take precedence over the individual purpose again. In the literature, the societal characteristics emerging from generational characteristics of the crisis period are symbolized by reset, reliance, and technology (Boysen,2013; Mann,2011). It can be associated with adaptive, recessive Silent, and New Silent/Homelander. As depicted in Figure 2 and as accepted in today's alternative studies, Generation Z, whose birth years were between 1995 and 2012, also matched the artist archetype. Because in The Generational Theory, which was introduced to the literature by Strauss and Howe, 1984-2004 was defined as "Millennials" and the generation to cover the period until 2024 was defined as "New Silent/Homelander" based on the fact that the generation cycle changed in about 20 years starting from 2004. Based on the current alternative nomenclatures and periods mentioned in more detail in the previous sections of the thesis, it is possible to say that Generation Z covers individuals from both archetypes in this case and has a very diverse structure.

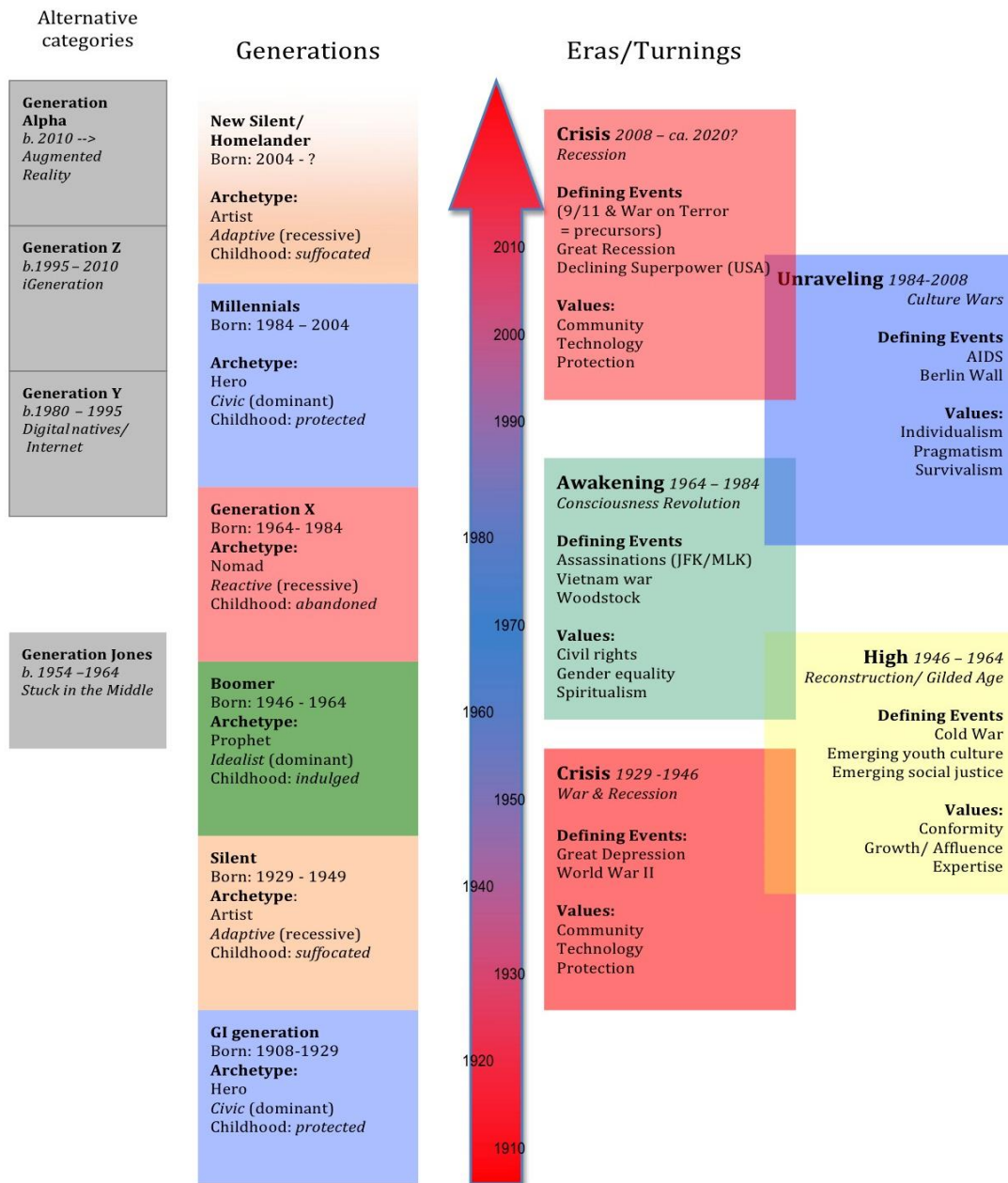
Within the scope of this thesis, in the following sections, climate change, which is an issue between societies and generations, was studied and compared through

archetypes in the Millennial Saeculum, where social consciousness stands out as a goal today. The results of the survey study conducted with 650 people within the scope of the thesis were evaluated in the light of these archetypes and important findings supporting these archetypes were presented in the last part of the thesis.



By Steve Barrera (sbarrera@mindspring.com), adapted from *The Fourth Turning*, William Strauss and Neil Howe, 1997, Broadway Books.

**Figure 1.** The Four Turnings Source: (Strauss and Howe, 1997.)



**Figure 2.** Generations, Archetypes and Turnings Source:

(Strauss and Howe, 1997.)

## 2.3. Intergenerational Relations

### 2.3.1. Intergenerational Collaboration

Collaboration is an intentional and purposeful process that can take a variety of forms. Even just to define this concept, scholars put forward a wide range of



definitions. Working with someone (or several individuals) to create something or accomplish a goal is what one Millennial author defined as collaboration (Morgan, 2012). Collaboration is how people work together to create value and to create new sources of value, according to Baby Boomer Peter Senge (2006). Collaboration occurs when people work on a common task or provide significant help to each other, according to Baby Boomer Morten Hansen (2009). According to some writers, cooperation is a way to link resources, ideas, and individuals who would not often work together (de Sousa, Pellissier, & Monteiro, 2012, as cited in Irwin, 2014). The concept of collaboration, similarly defined by both Boomer and Millennial authors, gains more importance at an intergenerational level.

In line with all the collaboration definitions mentioned, definition of an intergenerational collaboration is as follows: it is the process of gathering two or more generations around a predetermined common purpose and realizing a beneficial and efficient sharing for all generations. Thanks to this sharing between generations, a two-way flow of information takes place. The focus of this study is climate change; the common goal expected to be adopted by different generations in society is to prevent environmental disasters caused by climate change. The first of the two-way information flows mentioned is from the Baby Boom Generation to Generation Z; and the transfer is the transfer of how this generation has followed from the past to the present in the fight against climate change, what wrong decisions have been made, why no solution has been produced regarding this issue today and what can be the solution to this ongoing issue no matter what is done differently. On the other hand, the other aspect of the information flow is from Generation Z to the Baby Boom Generation; and the transfer is the transfer of where/where the struggle area(s) are in social or global struggle areas such as the climate change, the existence of changing social structures and especially the technology used by Generation Z, also referred to as Digital Natives, in all areas of their lives, what kind of place it can have in social issues.

In this section, it would be useful to draw attention to the fact that digitalization also penetrates social issues. Because one of the areas where the differences between generations are most evident today is the issue of proximity/distance to technology.

At this point, the difference between Generation Z, who does not know a world without the internet, and the Baby Boom Generation (47 years old for a Boomer born in 1946), who first met the internet in 1993, is clearly revealed. In fact, our social media activity, which is frequently done today, especially by Generation Z, is an undeniable fact of the global world. The fact that technological developments come to different life stages of each generation is important in terms of intergenerational relations. This situation can be seen more clearly in generations whose life stages intersect with each other. According to Schmitt (2015), perceptual and learning processes may not be equal in terms of adapting to technological developments compared to an adult individual in the younger generation in the same period of time. The fact that each generation has different conditions in the context of opportunities and threats emphasizes the importance of cooperation and communication.

It is for the benefit of both themselves and the whole society that past generations are in contact with today's generations. Increasing social networks that facilitate intergenerational contact is critical in this context. As a matter of fact, government policies, political agendas, public transfer systems, distribution of income sources, social protection systems, social planning models, media representations, sustainable development goals, and establishing a two-way mentorship program that increases intergenerational interaction in most countries have begun to be adopted. In this way, intergenerational solidarity is contributed and social welfare is tried to be increased.

### **2.3.2. Intergenerational Solidarity**

According to Kaplan & Sanchez (2014), intergenerational solidarity refers to activities or programs that increase cooperation, interaction, or exchange between any two generations. Similarly, according to another definition by Newmann & Hatton-Yeo (2008), intergenerational solidarity is planned ongoing activities that bring different generations together purposefully to share mutually beneficial experiences.

Intergenerational solidarity has a key role in economic and social systems. With a more powerful expression, intergenerational solidarity is also an important

prerequisite for social cohesion and forms the basis of community welfare and informal care systems (UNECE, 2019). In a sense, welfare systems are based on an intergenerational solidarity in which the elderly support the young and the young support the elderly. Such programs, which can be supported by governments, have an undeniable role in the establishment of the aforementioned solidarity network, but they are formal tools. In addition, there is another traditional and familiar informal solidarity method that has developed naturally and gained a place in society. With the transfer of their own experiences by their elders, a bridge is established between the past and the present. If this bridge, which can be established if healthy communication is established between generations, is established, any issue is a problem; measures will be taken before the change turns into a crisis. Thus, by strengthening intergenerational solidarity through both formal and informal methods, it is tried to prevent possible exclusion, accusation, and marginalization; that is, conflicts. The differentiation of the characteristics of each generation can sometimes create an obstacle to positive interaction in both the public and private spheres. Gaps and transitions between generations, as well as cooperation and solidarity, are inevitable, but they are part of the socialization process. This conflict, which can be called in different ways as the clash of traditional values and modern values the clash of Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants or the clash of young and old, or the Boomer and Zoomer conflict, must be transformed into solidarity in the joint decision-making process as a result of life together.

### **2.3.3. Intergenerational Conflict**

Urlick (2016) states that Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, and Jundt (2005) distinguish between surface-level diversity (such as age and other demographic characteristics) and deep-level diversity (differences in values, thoughts, and attitudes) in intergenerational conflict. Even an intergenerational conflict includes both surface- and deep-level characteristics at the same time, which is usually the case, it can be really difficult to resolve and endure for a long time (Urlick et al., 2016). Yet there is hope. According to Bengston et al. (2003), four global trends suggest that the balance and interaction between generations are changing around the world: *(1) the extension of the life course; (2) changes in the age structures of nations; (3) changes in family*

*structures and relationships; and (4) changes in governmental responsibilities* (Bengston and Oyama, 2010). For this change to take place in a good way, it is important to know which trends have what effect. Demographic transformations with an increasing elderly population are one of the reasons that affect (1) and (2). On the other hand, the COVID-19 Pandemic is one of the reasons that can be associated with (3) and (4).

First of all, another name for the demographic transformation, which affects (1) and (2), is the global aging process. As in the whole world, Türkiye's demographic structure is changing in various respects and the weight of the elderly population is gradually increasing. According to the estimates announced by the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA on 11 July World Population Day, it is estimated that the world, which has a population of 8 billion today, will reach 8.5 billion in 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050 and 10.4 billion in 2100. UNFPA points out that this projected population growth is a clear call for humanity to find solutions to the challenges it faces. Moreover, in the world, the population aged 65 and over, which has a rate of 9.3% in 2020, is expected to increase to 16.0% in 2050 (UNFPA, 2022). The numerical expression of this percentage is that the population aged 65 and over, which was 761 million in 2021, will more than double and increase to 1.6 billion in 2050. This prediction highlights the statement in the World Social Report 2023 published on 12 January that the elderly should be at the center of the steps taken to achieve a sustainable future (UN, 2023). The elderly population rate in the world is 9.8% in 2022. Türkiye's elderly population rate is just above the world's elderly population average with 9.9% according to the data of 2022 from TURKSTAT.

Secondly, what changes intergenerational interaction in the context of both conflict and contract is the COVID-19 Pandemic which is related to (3) and (4). The curfews or restrictions imposed during the pandemic period have raised the issue of the generation members not leaving the house for a long time and being isolated in a sense (Burke, 2020). Although there are exceptions, the difference between the characteristics of Generation Z, which can quickly and easily adapt to increasing online communication during the pandemic period, and the Baby Boom Generation, which is prone to face-to-face communication in all areas of life, has become even

sharper. In addition to the sharpening of this difference, intergenerational information transfer could not be realized due to the existing isolation.

It is very important to approach global problems with the wealth created by all differences, not despite all the differences between generations. Because only in this way, fair solutions can be produced for all segments of society against all kinds of social and global problems. In other words, Generations are partners in the search for well-being which, is essential for a civilized society.

In the next part of the study, the historical events that constitute the characteristic of the Baby Boom Generation, which was born between 1946 and 1964, will be emphasized and the reasons behind their attitudes and behaviors in the face of today's social issues will be tried to be understood. In this context, later in the study, a similar review will be conducted for Generation Z born in 1995 and later. At the end of the study, abstract examinations for both generations will be combined with concrete survey results and privatized in terms of the climate change issue.

## **2.4. The Baby Boom Generation (1946 – 1964)**

### **2.4.1. The Importance of the Baby Boom Generation in Combating the Climate Change**

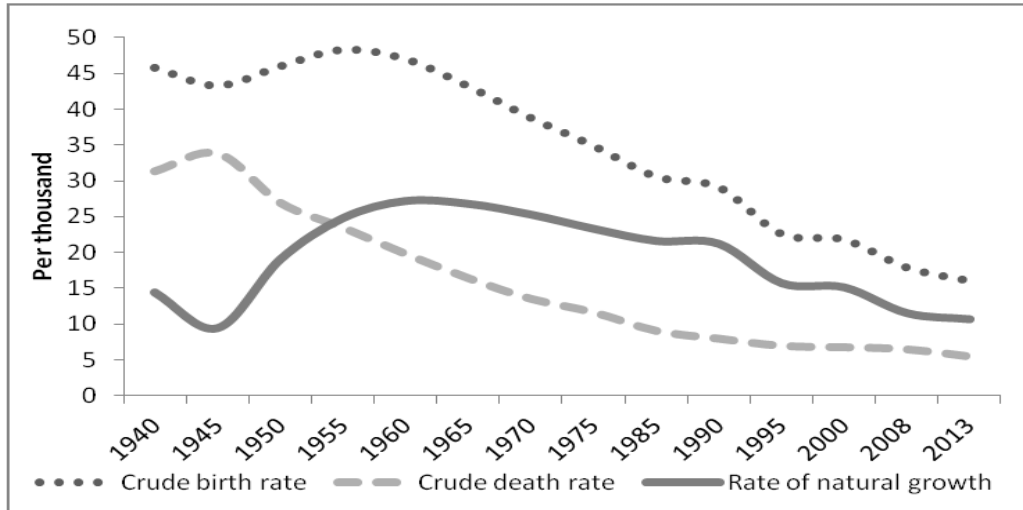
What kind of environment generations are born and raised in determines the attitude they take in the face of any change such as social, cultural, political, legal, economic, psychological, environmental, etc. In the face of climate change, which is one of the biggest problems facing the world today, it is important for states to follow responsible, coordinated, and legal obligations, and for individuals to follow a sensitive approach. States should support people affected by climate change to adapt to climate change. The UN Human Rights Council has invited states to adopt an age-inclusive approach to climate action, among others, to *“support the resilience and adaptation capacities of older individuals in both rural and urban areas so that they can respond to the adverse effects of climate change”* (UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 44/7, 2020). The main reasons for this include the fact that the elderly are

more sensitive to emergencies, are exposed to social exclusion, the world's population is aging, the climate crisis is an intergenerational issue, and the necessity of changing the wrong social order that has been going on for years as soon as possible.

As a result of all these reasons, in this part of the study, the Baby Boom Generation will be discussed from different perspectives, and what kind of generation characteristics it has in the face of global issues specific to the climate crisis will be examined.

#### **2.4.2. Defining the Baby Boom Generation**

The Baby Boom Generation, which took its name as a result of the population increase experienced as a result of the birth of one billion babies worldwide in the years following the Second World War, represents individuals born between 1946 and 1964 as depicted in Figure 3. That is the reason why Ronald Inglehart (1977) described the baby boomers as “*a post-scarcity generation*”. Psychologically, as a result of negative events such as war and scarcity, people create an intrinsic source of motivation such as starting a family and taking refuge in the presence of the family, overcoming difficulties based on the support received from family members. Considering the years, they were born and the negative events experienced just before, the concept of a large/crowded family is almost a power for the Boomers. In those years, this generation tended to live together in the same house with both their parents and children. That is why some scholars have named the Boomers ‘the sandwich generation’ which means those who care for both a child and an older adult. Moreover, another name given to the Baby Boom Generation is ‘*children of the Cold War period*’ because of the years they were born, that is, the years of East-West conflict. In addition to these definitions, by Twenge (2013), the representatives of this generation were also called ‘*me generation*’ by comparing them with their parents, the members of the Silent Generation. The reason for this naming is that, unlike members of the Silent Generation, whose parents care about authority, love to share, and prioritize the existence and safety of government over themselves, Boomers are a generation that is more focused on themselves and their future.



**Figure 3.** Changes in Birth and Death Rates in Türkiye, 1940 – 2013

(Source: Adali, Turkyilmaz and Yucesahin, 2016.)

### 2.4.3. Historical Process of the Baby Boom Generation

The years 1946 – 1964, when the Baby Boom Generation individuals were born, are called the Golden Age of the Welfare State. According to Kapil and Roy (2014), the Baby Boom Generation experienced an unprecedented level of economic growth and prosperity throughout their lifetime thanks to education, government subsidies, rising property prices, and technological advancements. It is possible to say that employment increases are observed worldwide, social rights are developed and many responsibilities are accepted as the responsibility of the state. In the aforementioned period, the capitalist state understanding was modified and replaced by a strong welfare state understanding, which was not only adopted but also institutionalized. In this institutionalization process, the contribution of the Baby Boom Generation, which is actively involved in the social security system and contributes to the financing of social expenditures, has an important place. In Türkiye, the Baby Boom Generation, the first members of the labor migration to Europe, especially to Germany, since the early 1960s, worked as migrant workers in Europe, played an important role in raising the welfare level there and in the formation of the welfare state, and formed the representatives of the working class in Europe at that time.

The establishment of the United Nations in the United States on October 24, 1945, in order to ensure international peace and protect security is a prominent development

in terms of ensuring economic, social, and cultural cooperation between nations. The establishment of NATO in 1949 can be given as an example in terms of protecting the security of member countries. Similarly, the role of the European Coal and Steel Community, which was founded in 1951 by six countries to develop their economies and expand the market, in forming the foundations of the European Union is undeniably great. These developments are important developments that took place in the early years of the Baby Boom Generation, whose start date is considered to be 1946. In addition, in those years when the bipolar World order prevailed, the USSR's launch of Sputnik 1 and the USA's Explorer 1 satellite in 1957 became one of the prominent cultural events. The hippie movement, which coincided with the youth of the Baby Boom Generation, sexual revolution movements, and social revolutions against women's rights and freedoms emerged as other determining factors in the formation of this period. Although the aforementioned social revolution movements are among the global events that affected Generation X, who was born between 1965 and 1979, they shaped the perspective of this generation on social events in terms of coinciding with the youth of the previous generation, the Baby Boom Generation. In other words, the social events experienced coincided with the different life stages of the generations and affected each generation in different ways. The Baby Boom Generation, young adults in the years of the assassinations of leaders such as John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and the Vietnam War, is the generation that created Generation 68. Since the Baby Boom Generation is identical to the revolutionary movements and 1968 student uprisings, it is a generation that has had an impact on politics and in every period. That is why Strauss and Howe (1991) stated that *“when Boomers started to come of age, most of them were activists who are in favor of free speech, creating several angry youth uprisings to express their opinions.”* According to Lancaster and Stillman (2009), *“these young idealists with education looked into the ideals of their parents’ generation and protested the status quo, asking for revolution in the areas of civil rights, women's rights, reproductive rights, and even the rights of Mother Earth, as a result, giving birth to the ecology movement.”*

While these developments took place in the world, in Türkiye, the representatives of the Baby Boom Generation are the generation that witnessed military coups, the



transition process from single-party to multi-party life, the golden years of radio, and the entry of television into homes. Television, which was first broadcast by Istanbul Technical University in 1952, was seen as one of the most prominent technological developments of the Baby Boom Generation in Türkiye. Developments such as the transition to color television and the spread of television at home are related to the X and Y Generation periods, respectively, which are the next generations. In those years, when people started to spend their free time watching television, popular culture began to be imposed in Türkiye. Today, television, which is one of the traditional media tools, is generally preferred by the members of this generation for the representation, reflection, and follow-up of any social or global event. Today, when the use of social media is widespread, the Baby Boom Generation mostly still tends to maintain its old habits.

#### **2.4.4. General Characteristics of the Baby Boom Generation**

The social events they experienced had an impact on the environment and upbringing style in which the Baby Boom Generation was grown up and the characteristics and features of the generation. For example, according to Hornblower (1997), perhaps with a prejudiced expression, because Baby Boomers grew up in a period of economic progress, it was unnecessary for them to focus on their personal growth.

First of all, the characteristics of the generation in their professional lives roughly include keeping the interest of the organization ahead of the individual interest, being cooperative, success-oriented, respectful of authority and loyal to work, believing that achievement comes after paying dues, thinking the most important motivation in the workplaces is promotion, aiming to work in the same place for a long time and retire from there. In other words, as expressed by Cugin (2012) and Glass (2007), driven to succeed and earn rewards, Boomers live to work instead of working to live. Also, Kon (2017) stated that the Baby Boom Generation is a generation that attaches importance to salaries as post-war children. Cugin (2012), Eisner (2005), and Zemke et al., (2000) stated that Boomers emphasized equality in both their professional lives and personal lives and to promote social equality, they do not hesitate to get involved in protests and demonstrations.

Secondly, the characteristics of the Boomers in general can be summarized as being prescriptive, patient, abstemious, tradition-bound, culture-bound, tending to behave conservatively and normatively, and having low technology skills. In particular, their low technological skills have led to their identification as digital immigrants. According to Venter (2017, p.3), *“digital is their second language and they need to learn this language to communicate with the digital natives (Generation Z) – but some struggle to adapt to this new environment and keep their digital immigrant accent.”* Despite this, the Baby Boom Generation, which captures technological developments in its Middle Ages, receives help from Generation X, Y, and Z, especially from Generation Z members who live a more intertwined life with technology, which can be described as their children and grandchildren, respectively.

Especially, with the curfew for individuals over the age of 65, which is one of the measures in the Covid 19 process, the technology trends of the Baby Boom Generation had to change positively for many different purposes such as education, shopping with digital payment, and entertainment. In particular, the fact that social media is the main channel where this generation can see and hear from their children and grandchildren (usually Generation Z individuals) due to quarantine has led to an increase in the use of social media and an effort to adapt to the new order during the Covid 19 process. The coerciveness of pandemic conditions seems to have increased the use of technology by this generation. In other words, the Baby Boom Generation came to the fore as a generation that was determined to fight with challenges. This is worth considering in terms of the capacity to adapt to the new situations and conditions that develop on the occasion of the political, economic, and social instabilities experienced by the Baby Boom Generation. One of the main research topics of this study is how to exhibit the attitude and behavior of individuals belonging to the Baby Boom Generation in the face of climate change in the face of the global challenges they experienced between 1946 and 1964 when they were born. For this reason, it is important to examine what events they were exposed to during their period and how these events shaped their generation in general.

In this context, similarly, the next part of the study will examine Generation Z born in 1995 and 2010/2012.

## **2.5. Generation Z (1995 and 2010/2012)**

### **2.5.1. The Importance of Generation Z in Combating the Climate Change**

Amnesty International (2022) clearly mentions that climate change disproportionately affects marginalized individuals and groups. According to the UN Human Rights Council (2020), one of the most vulnerable groups to climate change is children and young people. In fact, according to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment (2018), no group is more vulnerable to environmental harm than children. And there may not be another growing threat to the world's children and their children - that is greater than climate change, according to a 2015 UNICEF report.

According to the statement issued by UNHCR in 2019, the people most affected by climate change should not only be seen as victims, but also as *“carriers and main partners of change in local, national, and international efforts to combat climate change”*. In other words, as stated in the declarations of Amnesty International (2021), children and young people should have the opportunity to participate in initiatives to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and be equipped with the knowledge and training needed to participate meaningfully in such discussions, be involved in decision-making processes that directly affect them, and have access to legal remedies if the state fails to fulfill its duty to protect children at risk.

The definition of ‘child’, who is a human being below the age of 18 years, covers the birth years of Generation Z in generation studies today. According to the report published by Amnesty International in 2021 regarding the reports published by the UN on related issues so far, two generations evaluated as disadvantaged/victim/other in the issue of climate crisis constituted the building block of this thesis. For this reason, in this part of the study, it is critical that another generation examined in terms of climate change is Generation Z.

### **2.5.2. Defining Generation Z**

Wiedmer (2015) stated that *“Generation Z is the latest generation that is currently growing up and will be dominating the world in the next several decades.”* The

problem is that there is a disagreement over defining the specific beginning and ending years for the birth of Generation Z. For example, as mentioned by Salleh and others (2017), Singh, (2014) defines Generation Z are those who were born in 1995, while Jaleniauskiene & Juceviciene, (2015) and Schroer (2015) in their research stated that the birth year timeframe for Generation Z is from 1995 until 2012.

The definition, much like the beginning and ending years of the generation, is highly diverse. The definitions for Generation Z are: 'Digital Natives', 'Gen Tech', 'Generation Me', 'Gen Wii', 'Gen Next', 'Next Gen/Generation', 'i-Gen', 'Instant Online' or 'Post-Millennials'. Moreover, the name 'Snowflake Generation' of the generation is one of the names in the sources. The term snowflake alludes to their uniqueness, as each snowflake is distinct. On the other hand, Aydın (2020) bases this naming on the finding that the generation's commitment and even dependence on technology makes them more mentally fragile. Twenge (2018) has made a statement about the feature of being fragile as one of the general characteristics of Generation Z, which approves of Aydın (2020), and stated that the reason for this is the connection between them and technology. Another name given by Strauss and Howe (1991) is the "*New Silent Generation*", which refers to the fact that they will feel lonelier over time due to the excessive importance of individualism. Also, research by Cowan (2014) stated that Generation Z is commonly referred to as "*the Curling Generation*" because their parents are seen as diligently removing obstacles from their path, allowing them to move effortlessly toward their future. Another name given by Mailoli (2017) is the "*Multitaskers*" as they can perform multiple tasks simultaneously, generally with the same degree of care and dedication.

In summary, the names used for all generations refer to the characteristics of the people belonging to that generation. Most of the names used to name Generation Z are generally shaped by the relationship of this generation with technology. Because this generation is not independent of technology, and it is impossible to analyze it today.

### **2.5.3. Historical Process of Generation Z**

As indicated by Schwieger and Ladwig (2018, p.46), "*the world in which Gen Zers have been raised has been fraught with political tension, violence and societal*

*instability post-9/11.*” In addition, they live in a more economically troubled period compared to the generations before them.

The history strip that shaped the general characteristics of the 1995 – 2012 period is as follows.

- **1995:** Designed by IBM in 1994 as a mobile computer with phone features, Simon became known as a smartphone in 1995. Windows 95 was released to manufacturing and went on sale.
- **1996:** Early in 1996, USB 1.0 was launched.
- **1998:** Google was founded.
- **2001 and later:** Advanced digital technologies were introduced by Apple, whose portability continued to increase, and global interaction gained momentum through such devices.
- **2003:** Skype is launched.
- **2004:** Facebook is launched.
- **2005:** The first YouTube video was made.
- **2006:** Twitter goes live and messaging becomes mainstream.
- **2007:** Apple introduced the iPhone.
- **2010:** iPad was introduced.

Twenge (2018), on the other hand, considers the years **2011** and **2012** as a milestone in which the communication of this generation differs from the previous generations. These years are the years when people are constantly going online in virtual environments through smartphones. More strikingly, these are the years when the gap between Generation Z and previous generations has begun to deepen.

#### **2.5.4. General Characteristics of Generation Z**

The most important feature that distinguishes this generation from other generations is that they do not know a world without the Internet. In other words, as Salleh, Mahbob and Baharudin (2017, p.59) stated that, “*they are the first generation that is widely and directly exposed to the digital technologies such as social networking sites and overloading information on the internet.*” In addition to this, Generation Z

is the first generation among all generations to experience access consumption the most and concretely experience globalization thanks to Internet literacy. McCrindle (2018) stated that this globalization covers many areas such as culture and communication, unlike its effect on other generations. Lenhart (2013) claimed that it was so typical for many of Generation Z's babies to have social media accounts taken by their families. The childhood toys of Generation Z consist of smartphones and tablets. While the streets constitute the playground of the previous generations, the playground of Generation Z children is a technological tool. This has led to the fact that technology is more than a luxury for them and is at the center of their lives. For this generation, which has made the virtual environment a reality of their physical lives, the distinction between virtual and physical space is disappearing day by day. The concept of phygital created by the combination of physical and digital concepts is the reality of Generation Z, which experiences the physical and digital space as a single intertwined space. The digital reality is an extension of the physical perception of this generation, which conducts its communication largely through social media, can find the equivalent of everything that exists in the physical space on a wide scale from online shopping to online education, and can do different things together through networks at the same time. The quarantine process of the COVID-19 Pandemic has increased Generation Z's commitment and even dependence on the digital world. This situation affected the individuals of the generation both positively and negatively.

First of all, from a negative perspective, Joseph Coombs (2013) pointed out that while Generation Z is tech-savvy, they lack problem-solving skills and have not demonstrated the ability to analyze a situation, contextualize it, and make informed decisions. Another negative return of technology-oriented living is related to their weakening social relations since they meet the need for socialization through technological tools. The fact that Generation Z spends so much time on the internet destroys the time they will spend with their family and friends and causes them to have conflicts with older generations. One point that should be briefly mentioned is that although the fact that Generation Z lives an intertwined life with the internet is largely influenced by the period in which they were born, another effect is related to demographic transformation. Generation Z is less familiar with face-to-face

communication than older generations who grew up in more crowded families because they are only children or have fewer siblings than other generations. In addition to these two negative returns, the ability to quickly access all kinds of information thanks to technology literacy has made this generation a more impatient generation than its predecessors, according to Berkup (2015) is another one. Such upbringing has made them to be impatient, rebellious, and expecting instant results. Generational White Paper published in 2011 also revealed that Generation Z tends to be impatient, instant-minded, and lacking the ambitions of previous generations. They have acquired attention deficit disorder due to high dependency on technology, resulting in a low attention span. This generation is characterized as individualistic, self-directed, highly demanding, acquisitive, materialistic, and entitled compared to previous generations. (Gaidhani, Arora and Sharma, 2019). On the other hand, this digital and global generation also has many positive features that have brought them to the period in which they were born. For example, according to Cowan (2014), Generation Z is highly multi-tasking with reliability on social media. Moreover, as another positive return, Yaman (2020) determined that their curiosity for everything different and new is one of the most important characteristics of Generation Z. For this reason, they tend to buy every new technological product released to the market and to be aware of every technological development. Another positive return is expressed by Max Mihelich (2013) in his description. He outlined that Generation Z is highly concerned about environmental issues and very conscious of looming shortages, including water shortages, which suggests they possess a high sense of responsibility towards natural resources.

In literature, being an indifferent generation, neither positive nor negative but rather a relatively neutral characteristic is highlighted as one of the prominent characteristics of Generation Z, specifically in Türkiye. This indifference is particularly associated with political matters. According to the findings of the Türkiye Youth Profile Survey conducted by the Institute of Strategic Thinking in 2013 with young people between the ages of 15-35, young people in Türkiye were also described as politically indifferent. The reason behind the indifference of young people to politics is the coup that was effective in the period of Generation X, the fear of being tagged, which is reflected in the memorandum understanding and

supported by families, and the behavior of staying away from politics. In addition, the fact that social media occupies the agenda of young people with popular culture, that the same social media enables young people to examine the lives of politicians in-depth, and that virtual saturation causes them to stay away from politics in real life are among the results of this research.

However, these assumptions may not be entirely accurate because although they stay away from politics in real life, they are close to politics in a virtual environment. The reason for this is that Generation Z was born at a time when freedom, global, digital, and individuality were at the forefront compared to their parents, Generation X. In a virtual environment, unlike real life, they stand close to politics as a product of the digital world, and the comfort area of this generation is social media. As Twenge (2018) explained, Generation Z sees adding an icon to their profile pictures, retweeting the opinion they support on Twitter, or tagging the politician on Instagram as a new form of citizenship participation instead of marching in protest or meeting with politicians face-to-face. From this point of view, if Generation Z, which is accused of being a generation politically indifferent in Türkiye, is evaluated once again, it will be seen that this generation is not politically indifferent, only the place of political participation is different.

Social media, which has many different purposes for the generation, is also a political participation area for them. Compared to previous generations, they can shape their political views by choosing national and international news channels or applications through the internet instead of traditional media tools such as television and newspapers.

Similar to not following traditional media tools, they also do not adhere to traditional methods for addressing global problems. To put a finer point on it, this generation sometimes takes part in digital activist groups and sometimes in political polarizations in the virtual environment to express concerns about contemporary global issues such as poverty, inequality, and climate change. Generation Z effortlessly blends individual initiatives with community action, leveraging their numerous social networks and seamless communication abilities.



Living in a globalized world with frequent and easy exchanges, they initiate activities that involve people worldwide, showcasing a heightened openness to diversity. As a matter of fact, this is another achievement of Generation Z being born and raised in a digital world. Considering the majority of the population in terms of voting processes, this digital activism stance of the generation is critical in terms of its potential influence on determining the government of the Republic of Türkiye. According to the results of TURKSTAT (2021), the young population constitutes 15.4% of the total population as of the end of 2020 in Türkiye. When the young population is examined according to the age group, it is seen that 28.6% of the young population is in the 15-17 age group, 19.8% in the 18-19 age group, 31.3% in the 20-22, and 20.4% in the 23-24 age group in 2020. Therefore, Generation Z is a significant generation in determining a government that is a decision-maker and implementer on all societal and global issues such as climate change, as well as in creating a demand for the government to take action on these matters.

In short, the characteristics that Generation Z individuals have gained with all kinds of events and processes they have experienced from 1995 to 2010, which is the period when they were born, are a prediction of how the generation will approach climate change, which is one of the most significant global issues of today and the subject of this thesis. For this reason, this section examines how the experiences that the generation was exposed to during its period shaped the characteristics of this generation.

In this context, in the next part of the study, Generation Z, born in 1995 and later, and the Baby Boom Generation, born between 1946 and 1964, will be subjected to a general comparison.

## **2.6. Overall Evaluation and Comparison of the Characteristics of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z**

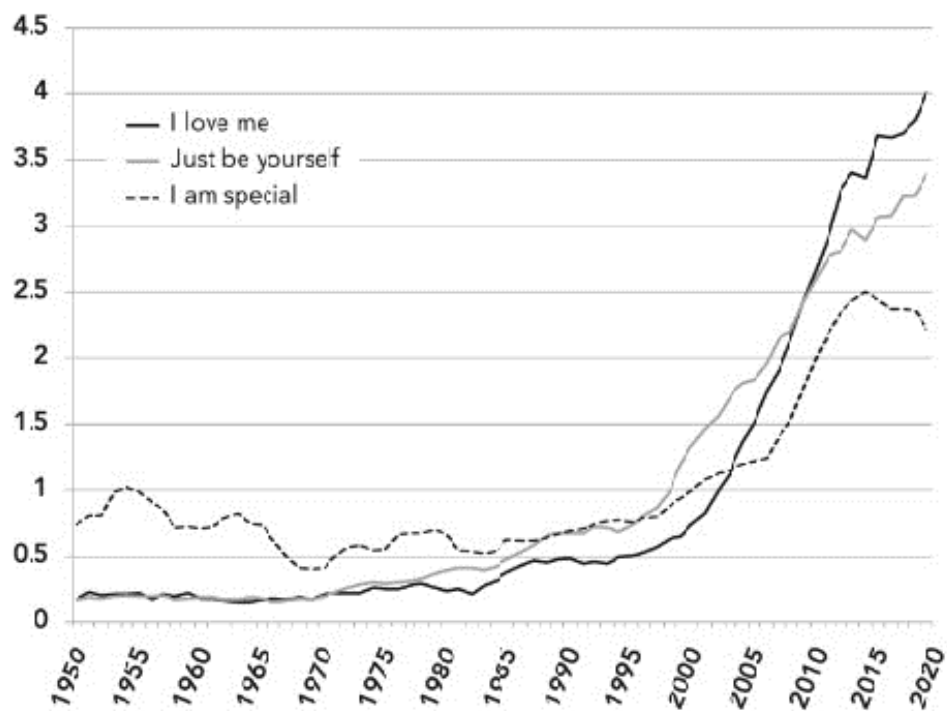
Within the scope of this thesis, in the previous chapters, the Baby Boom Generation born between 1946 and 1964 and the Generation Z born between 1995 and 2010 were examined in detail in a historical context and characteristically. A brief comparative summary of this review is provided in Table 5.

**Table 5.** A Brief Comparative Summary of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z

<b>The Baby Boom Generation</b>	<b>Generation Z</b>
Born between 1946-1964, in the years following the WW2	Born between 1995-2010, in the years of political tension, violence and societal instability post 9/11
Live to work with strong work ethics	Work to live
Known as digital immigrants, have low technological skills	Known as digital natives, extensively engaged to technology
An idealist generation with a strong sense of self and morals	Open to change and diversity, very flexible because of global connectivity effect
Patient	Impatient
Keeping the interest of the community ahead of the individual	Individualistic
Good communication skills, especially prefer to communicate in person instead of social media apps As the creator of the 68 Generation, not hesitate to get involved in protesting status quo	Poor communication skills Politically indifferent or activists in digital

Until this part of the study, and even in general, "Baby Boom vs. Generation Z" comparison, *The Theory of Culture Shift* put forward by Inglehart in 1990 constitutes a basis for the differentiation of generations. Inglehart separated old generations from the new ones through the lens of Materialism and Post-Materialism with this theory. According to him, younger generations have more post-materialistic values than older generations. Also, as Horning-Kossler (1994, p.4) stated that, "*Materialists are concerned with material well-being and security, while Postmaterialists are more concerned with what Inglehart asserts are quality of life issues.*" The main reason for this is that while older generations are growing up in famine and insecure, younger generations are growing up in prosperous and safe

conditions. The older generation, who grew up in famine, attached great importance to material values; the younger generation, who grew up in prosperity, attached great importance to post-materialist values such as "individualism. The phenomenon of individualism, which stands out within the framework of post-materialist values, was evaluated through the widespread use of the expressions *"I love me"*, *"Just be yourself"* and *"I am special"* in Twenge's 2023 book. As depicted in Figure 4 and she mentioned in her book that *"between 1980 and 2019, individualistic phrases promoting self-expression and positivity became steadily more common in the 25 million books scanned in by Google. Assuming verbal language mirrored written language, Boomers growing up in the 1950s were only rarely told "just be yourself" or "you're special," but Millennials and Gen Z 'ers heard these phrases much more often."* (Twenge, 2023).



**Figure 4.** Use of Individualistic Phrases in American Books, 1950-2019

(Source: Twenge, 2023).

As depicted in Figure 5 by Twenge, technological developments, which have gained significant momentum, especially in recent years, have become more decisive in distinguishing between generations. This differentiation has been more evident

especially between Generation Z, also called Digital Natives, and the Baby Boom Generation, also called Digital Immigrants. While being offline has become a luxury for Generation Z today, being online and learning to be online has become an indispensable need for the Baby Boom Generation.

Technology	Primary Years of Growth	Downstream Consequences
Television	1947–1990	Immediate experience of events; exposure to other regions and cultures; decline of reading; materialism
Home appliances (microwaves, washing machines, refrigerators)	1947–1985	Ability to live alone; women pursuing careers; increase in leisure time
Air-conditioning	1950s–1980s	Population growth in the U.S. South and West; fewer people socializing outside
Birth control	1960–1969	More premarital sex; lower birth rate; women pursuing careers
Computer technology	1964–2005	Increase in skills and education necessary for many jobs; rise in work productivity
Internet news	2000–2010	Instant access to information; decline of newspapers; ability to filter news to preferences
Social media	2006–2015	Ability to reach large social network; decline in face-to-face social interaction; political polarization

**Figure 5.** Examples of the wide-reaching effects of technological advances

(Source: Twenge, 2023.)

If a comparison is made on the basis of *Türkiye* for these two generations, there is no need for a specific comparison because both generations have a structure parallel to the universally accepted characteristics. However, it can be said that Generation Z in Türkiye is a generation, specifically stuck in the triangle of the economic crisis, the health crisis caused by COVID-19 and the climate crisis, which is one of the most striking facts of the year 2050, where the level of prosperity, which has increased due to economic problems, has been seriously shaken compared to previous years. This generation, whose ways of dealing with problems differ from previous generations and have a much more diverse and comprehensive perspective with the effect of

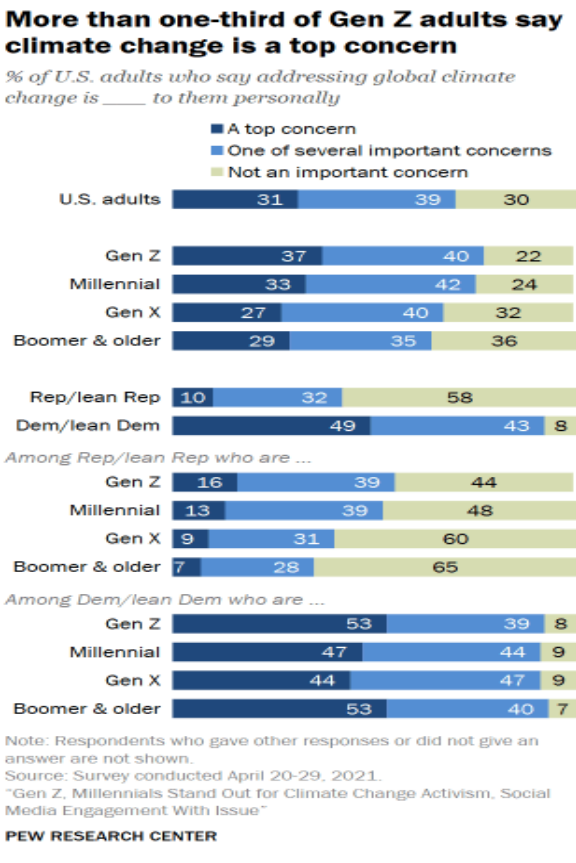
globalization, will hopefully be the architect of a sustainable future. Generation Z is a generation that questions and criticizes the ongoing system, values, and authority with an open-minded thinking style. Indeed, the Baby Boom Generation, similar to Generation Z, has a higher tendency to question authority compared to the Silent Generation that preceded it. This tendency has increased with each subsequent generation, and the phenomenon of respectability to authority has greatly decreased in Generation Z. Therefore, the ability of these two generations to analyze the current situation effectively in the face of a crisis such as climate change and generate potential solutions is promising for the future.

## **2.7. Evaluation and Comparison of the Characteristics of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z in Terms of Climate Change**

According to the article *Climate Perspectives Across the Generations* by Dan Farber (2020, p.293), “*Climate change is a multi-generational problem, but it does not impact all generations in the same way and each of these generations is impacted differently by climate change, leading to distinctive issues.*” However, the recommended solution is that all generations in society should share equal responsibility for coping with the climate crisis while the impact may not be the same across every generation. It is a fact that new generations compared to the older ones have more personal connection to the detrimental effects of climate change. The article titled “*Gen Z Perspectives on Climate Change and the Future: Having the courage to imagine and fight for a better world,*” conducted by Graj (2020), includes six interviews with Gen Z students. The following statement from one of the interviews in the article about the detrimental effects of climate crisis is very spectacular.

*“You are kind of aware that there could be an infectious disease that could become a pandemic like you're always aware that that could happen but then all of a sudden everything shut down [...] I had plans when I was in London and I wouldn't have guessed they would be disrupted so it [climate change] will change everything and where I'll be when everything changes, I don't know. I don't know what's going to be destroyed personally in my life or what's going to be completely altered but I know it will.”* (Graj, 2020, p.8)

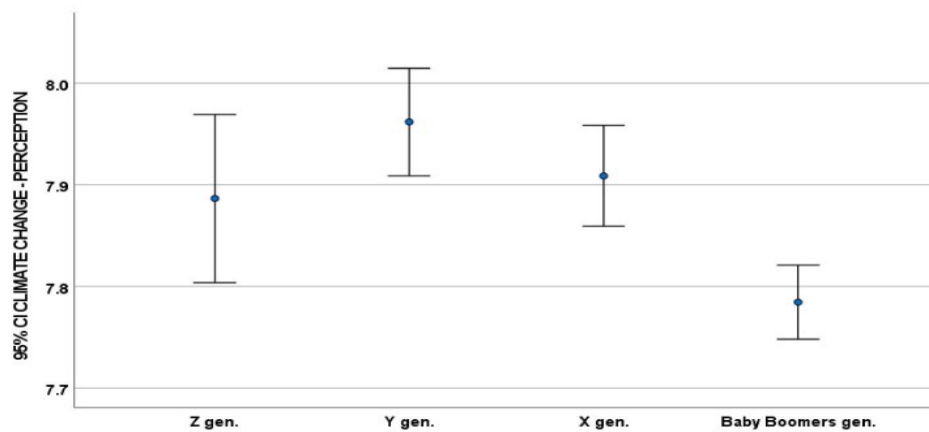
Although the destructive impacts of the crisis will affect younger generations more, it is essential for the different generations to adopt a common stance on solving the crisis because the current decision-makers in high-level positions belong to older generations. Therefore, the role of all generations of society in combating climate change is significant. Every single generation can contribute to climate change mitigation by understanding its severity, gaining more knowledge about environmental issues, being aware of their responsibilities, and altering their behavior to be more climate-friendly. There are numerous studies conducted to measure the responses of generations to the climate crisis. One of them is that 2021 Pew Research Center study on Climate Engagement and Activism conducted in U.S by Tyson, Kennedy and Funk. As depicted in Figure 6, the results of study indicate additional confirmation of the heightened concern for climate change among the youngest generation.



**Figure 6.** More Than One-Third of Gen Z Adults Say Climate Change Is a Top Concern

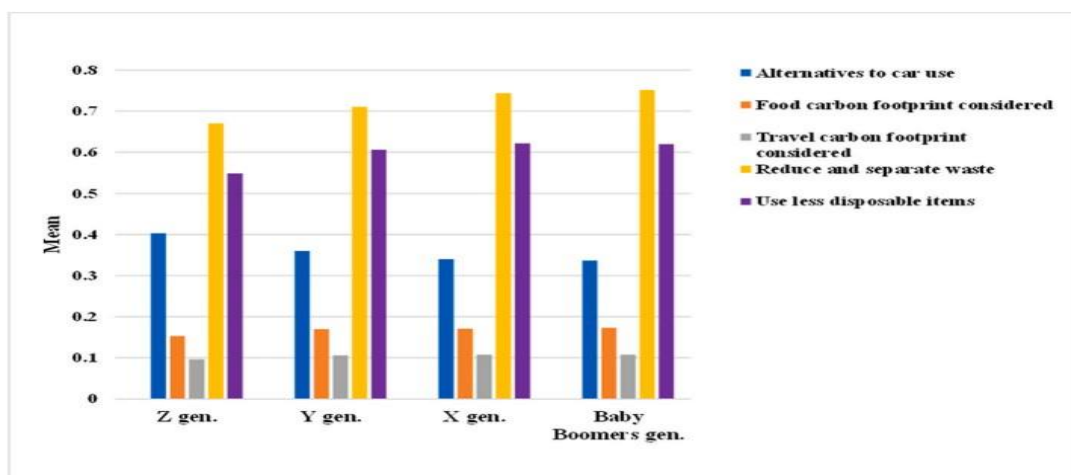
(Source: Tyson, Kennedy and Funk, 2021).

Another research conducted by Swim and others based on the years from 2010 to 2019 of data collected from surveys of representative examples demonstrates that younger generations feel the emotions of worry, guilt, and angry more than older generations, which motivates them to collaborate with others on tackling the climate crisis. Similar to these findings, research done in the Philippines in 2021 by Reyes and others clearly shows that climate change anxiety among Generation Z pushes them to become more conscious and responsible regarding this matter. Moreover, as depicted in Figure 7 and Figure 8, according to another survey conducted in 2022 with 27,655 respondents from all EU countries shows that the level of climate change perception has the lowest level for the Baby Boom Generation.



**Figure 7.** The Differences of Climate Change Perceptions among Generations in all EU Contexts

(Source: Skeiryte, Krikstolaitis and Liobikiene, 2022).



**Figure 8.** The Differences of Carry out Climate-Friendly Actions among Generations in all EU Countries

(Source: Skeiryte, Krikstolaitis and Liobikiene, 2022.)

In 2021, Deloitte conducted a research comparing Y and Z Generations in 45 countries with Türkiye. In this study, in which a total of 650 participants from Türkiye participated, the "environmental problem" was seen as one of the most important concerns by the participants. Within the scope of the study, the environmental problem was subjected to two different comparisons before and after the pandemic. In the results, the environmental problem for Generation Z ranked 1<sup>st</sup>.

As a result, many studies conducted to date suggest that younger generations are more sensitive to the fight against the climate crisis, considering that they will be exposed to its effects for a longer period of time than older generations. However, it is extremely important to give the mentioned struggle collectively, not forgetting that the crisis is a transgenerational crisis because the current decision-makers in high-level positions belong to older generations, especially the Baby Boom Generation. This means that Generation Z cannot succeed in this struggle alone. The question that needs to be asked here is whether Generation Z has an impact on state actors, international governmental institutions, and the international system. This question is worth considering and answering through the interaction between Greta Thunberg and Donald Trump.

In 2018, Greta Thunberg, the teenage climate activist, rose to prominence by organizing a protest for the climate, named "School strike for climate" in front of the Swedish Parliament. These actions soon evolved into a global movement with a name of "Fridays for Future". Greta Thunberg, who was born in 2003 and belongs to Generation Z, has called on Donald Trump, born in 1946 and a member of the Baby Boom Generation, to address the Climate Crisis. She has blamed contemporary elites and politicians for failing her generation, broken ecosystems, mass extinctions, and their excessive consumerism and lack of foresight in actions to prevent the crisis. As a typical Generation Z characteristic, Thunberg, active on social media such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, quickly became a figure that drew attention and influenced people by fearlessly challenging all responsible parties, including Donald Trump, calling people to take part in climate strikes and publishing her accounts of meetings to motivate more people to join in. She gained a reputation that spans the globe through social media. Greta was critical of Trump's 'Rose Garden' speech in



2017, in which he explained the reasoning behind the decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, such as putting the U.S.A. in a disadvantaged position and putting its competitors in an advantageous position in terms of unfair distribution of responsibilities related to climate action. According to him, Climate Change is not even perceived as a meaningful and precise process but rather is just an excuse to impose regulations, undermine the U.S.A. and impede economic growth under the capitalist system. In that speech, he formally stated that *“The agreement is a massive redistribution of United States wealth to other countries.”* As Heidrich and Nakonieczna-Bartosiewicz (2021,p.128) stated *“It was through Twitter that Greta Thunberg addressed President Donald Trump directly, warning him that if he refused to understand that the climate crisis was the biggest crisis humanity had ever faced, and would not act, he was “going to be seen as one of the worst villains in human history”.* Over time, she started to receive invitations to speak at significant events and international forums including the 2019 UN Climate Summit in New York, the 2019 UN Climate COP25 in Madrid, and the 2020 World Economic Forum Meeting in Davos, etc. After these kinds of speeches made by her, Thunberg's anger caused by her awareness and consciousness level about Climate Change was repeatedly and mercilessly humiliated and sarcastically mocked by U.S. President Donald Trump. After a while, people associated Greta Thunberg with her famous **‘How dare you!’** speech that she made at the 2019 UN Climate Summit in New York. This ‘How dare you!’ speech was directed towards contemporary elites and politicians of the older generations who have the power to determine the World’s future. As Nordensvard and Ketola (2022, p.875) clearly stated *“Greta Thunberg presents the problem through a generational narrative that pits the old against the young and current generations against imagined future generations.”*

*“You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I’m one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. **How dare you!**”*(Thunberg, 2019).

After she clearly stated that *“we children, instead of enjoying being children, have to take matters into our own hands because adults have failed and have let us down”*,

she blamed the responsible adults, urged them to panic, to take immediate action against the Climate Crisis and to join young people because she was aware that the crisis was an intergenerational issue. The reason for this was that there was still hope within her. In the same year, at the UN Climate COP25 in Madrid, Thunberg also showed her optimism, deeply believing that the Climate Crisis could be prevented by challenging corporations and governments who ignored the realities of climate change and its detrimental effects.

*“Well, I’m telling you, there is hope. I have seen it, but it does not come from the governments or corporations. It comes from the people. The people who have been unaware, but are now starting to wake up [. . .] In fact, every great change throughout history has come from the people. We do not have to wait. We can start the change right now. We the people.”* (Thunberg, 2019).

In the end, she drew the attention of huge numbers of social media users and traditional media channels such as ‘Science’ journal and ‘Time’, ‘The Guardian Weekend’, ‘GQ’ and ‘Rolling Stone’ magazines. She was strongly supported by the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres with the words *“The more I see your commitment and activism, the more confident I am that we will win. Together, with your help and thanks to your efforts, we can and must beat this threat and create a cleaner, safer, greener world for everyone”*.

Millions of people followed her posts on different social media platforms, took courage from her to support environmental organizations online, and launched/signed petitions on social media. One of the best examples of launching an online petition is the Generation Z climate activists in Türkiye who were inspired by Thunberg's speeches; Atlas Saracoglu, Seren Anacoglu, and Ela Naz Birdal. Criticizing the decision to increase greenhouse gas emissions that contradicts Türkiye's goals under the Paris Climate Agreement, these climate activists launched an online petition. They expressed themselves with these dramatic following words:

*"You are destroying the future of young people in this country that you refer to as 'the future of this country.' You are doing nothing against the climate crisis that threatens Türkiye the most! For years, during your time in power, you have attended international climate summits and engaged in climate negotiations. Yet, thanks to you, we became the sixth country to ratify the*

*Paris Climate Agreement. What is Türkiye not doing to fight the climate crisis?" (Saracoglu, Anacoglu, Birdal, 2023).*

Moreover, they filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Environment, Urban Planning, and Climate Change and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. As seen from this example, Thunberg's actions encouraged young people from all over the World and gained publicity. Thunberg has not only influenced young activists around the world, but also governments. As Heidrich (2021) mentioned there were some government actions such as declarations on the financing of climate policies, state's declarations on climate emergencies, and administrative actions related to climate policies that can be partially or completely attributed to the impact of speeches of Thunberg or meetings with Thunberg.

As can be understood, the aforementioned statements reflect the potential interrelations between Generation Z and state actors, international governmental institutions, and the international system, which are usually dominated by the Baby Boom Generation. Accordingly, the following chapter focuses on unveiling the nature of intergenerational dynamics, which can provide fruitful insights about the present generation's obligations to future generations and how and why these dynamics are interwoven particularly in Türkiye. By doing so, the fundamental role of generations' responsibilities in the extent of climate awareness is comprehensively scrutinized that constitutes the base of the following chapter. Thus, according to Greta Thunberg's approach to young climate activists, the responsibility towards the climate change as a generational problem represents specific challenges, especially to the discourse of responsibility (Bickerstaffe,2023). In this vein, it is important to address and highlight interconnected relationships between the perception of climate change, justice, and equity in the intergenerational context and why these relationships have put Türkiye in such a critical position in the process of combating climate change.

## CHAPTER 3

### ASSOCIATING INTERGENERATIONAL DYNAMICS WITH CLIMATE CHANGE: TÜRKİYE AS A SPATIAL DIMENSION

#### 3.1. Climate Change as an Intergenerational Issue

The concept of “responsibility” directly gives reference to a future-focused perspective, in the sense that it includes the possibilities of non-existing practice at the hand (Birnbacher, 2006). A significant discourse that is developed within the literature concerning responsibility indicates that one of the most essential reasons for establishing protection for the natural environment is related to the aim of justice to be achieved between old and young people (i.e. present and future generations) (Tremell, 2006). To put it in more concrete terms, the changes that are expected to be brought about by the global climate change has crucial potential to bring imbalanced risks and burdens to the present and future generations. Hence, the importance of putting the notions such as ‘generational justice’ into the foreground and relating them to the understanding concerning the responsibility for the future is vital, representers of this part of the literature argue (Bickerstaffe, 2023).

Furthermore, in 1987, the Brundtland Report, prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development and defining the concept of ‘sustainable development’, described a development approach that does not compromise the needs of future generations. This understanding of development is deeply related to the notions of “intergenerational justice”, and “intergenerational equity”.

According to Buchanan (2009), the notion of intergenerational justice includes all living and non-living beings from every society and every generation, and its potential scope is unlimited. The notion of intergenerational justice also arises from the idea that present generations have determined responsibilities towards future

generations. This notion, which is nowadays more commonly associated with issues such as environmentalism and climate change, has been analyzed in this context for the aims of this thesis. So, in his article, Wood (1996) emphasized every generation inherits the legacy of their ancestors and possesses the ultimate motive of passing this legacy unharmed to the future descendants. For this reason, members of every generation are entitled to use the natural resources that are available to them and have the responsibility to protect the numerous varieties and quality of these resources, along with making sure that they are within the reach of everyone. The term intergenerational equity comes into use right here as generations across different timelines become connected to each other with the duty to supervise and protect the existent resources. On the other hand, Weiss (2008, p.622) defined intergenerational equity with these following words: *“Such a generation would want to receive the planet in at least as good condition as every other generation receives it and to be able to use it for its own benefit. This requires that each generation pass on the planet in no worse condition than received and have equitable access to its resources.”* In her article Weiss (2008) warns that if the action is not taken by the present generations, the cost of adapting and overcoming the challenges brought by climate change will be bared by the future generations with much higher costs. She emphasized that there is a need to re-evaluate the strategies today and take action accordingly. Moreover, by all intergenerational mechanisms in their article Stylianos and Ezra (2023) refer to psychological constructs that elevate individuals’ concern for future people. These mentioned constructs include legacy motivation, generativity, responsibility towards future generations, present-future-self overlap, consideration of future consequences, and so on. According to them, such mechanisms can be particularly effective in promoting positive action on climate change because concern for future generations is a widely shared and often non-partisan value across many social groups, communities, and cultures. Consequently, before developing strategies for combating climate change, it is essential to define the present generation’s obligations to future generations.

Within the scope of this thesis, the notions of intergenerational justice and international equity are analyzed in the context of climate change through two generations, namely the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z. What is critical

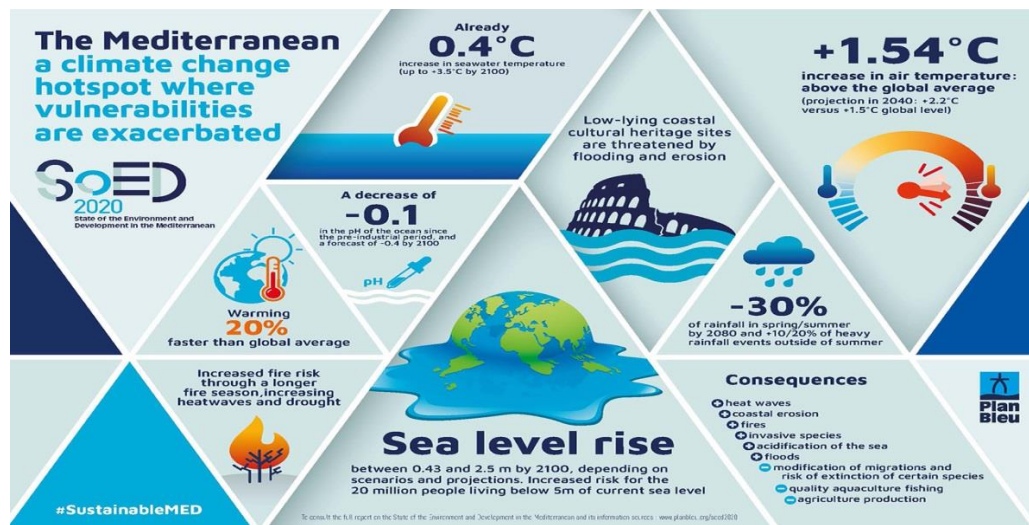
here is that these two concepts are analyzed through these two generations living in Türkiye. Türkiye is a strategic country in the context of climate change in terms of its geographical location, its position in international agreements, and youth climate activism movements.

### **3.2. Türkiye as a Hotspot of Climate Problem**

The first reason that has put Türkiye in such a critical position in the process of combating climate change is its geographical location. According to the 5th Assessment Report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2014, the Mediterranean Basin, including Türkiye, is among the regions that will be most harmed by the negative effects of climate change. In this respect, it is of particular importance that such a study is being carried out in Türkiye. Even small changes in atmospheric circulation can result in significant modifications in the Mediterranean climate because the basin lies in a transition zone between the dry climate of North Africa and the moderate and rainy climate of central Europe. This is the reason why the basin has been recognized as one of the most prominent hot spots in future climate change projections, as depicted in Figure 9(Giorgi,2006). According to the First Mediterranean Assessment Report (2020), *“the Mediterranean region is likely to be very vulnerable to climate change and many components of its terrestrial and marine environment are already under stress.”*

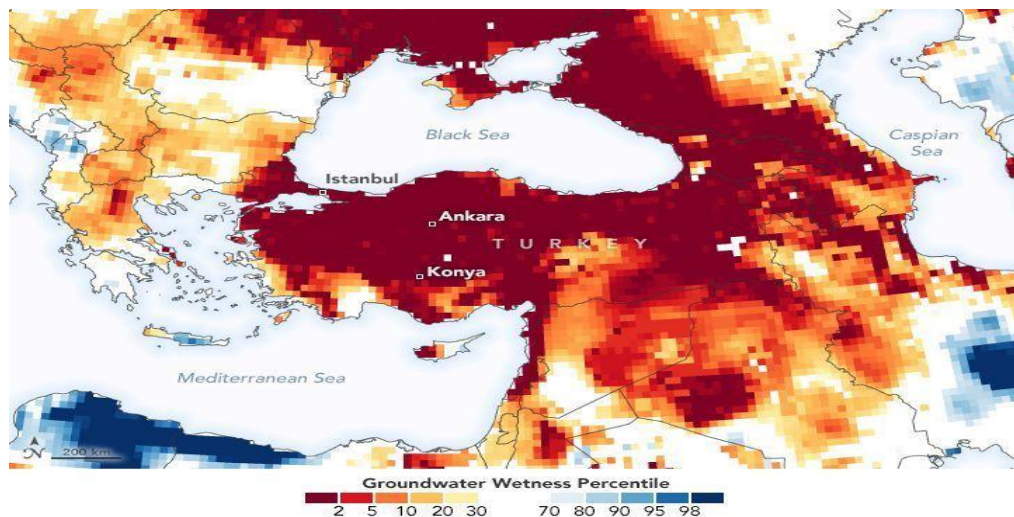
Moreover, according to the UN Environment Programme (2020), as the Mediterranean basin is densely populated with more than 510 million people, environmental issues are exacerbated by the societal aspect and raise both economic and social vulnerability in the region due to the danger of future reduced total water availability. (Lionello et al., 2014). As depicted in Figure 10, Türkiye as a Mediterranean country will become one of the countries with water scarcity in the future. According to the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), of which Türkiye has been a member since its establishment, the temperature increase in the Mediterranean basin will be higher than the other regions in the world. More broadly, the Mediterranean basin, which includes Türkiye, draws attention as one of the regions most affected by climate change. According to the 6th Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change (IPCC) Report published in 2021, as depicted in Figure 11, temperatures in the Mediterranean have risen 20% faster than the global average. Although this increase has tangible and destructive effects on local ecosystems in the basin, it has been determined that it is inevitable that it will threaten food security in the coming years. More strikingly, climate change is pregnant with a global crisis, especially for the countries in the Mediterranean Basin such as Türkiye that will occur if the necessary measures are not taken as soon as possible.



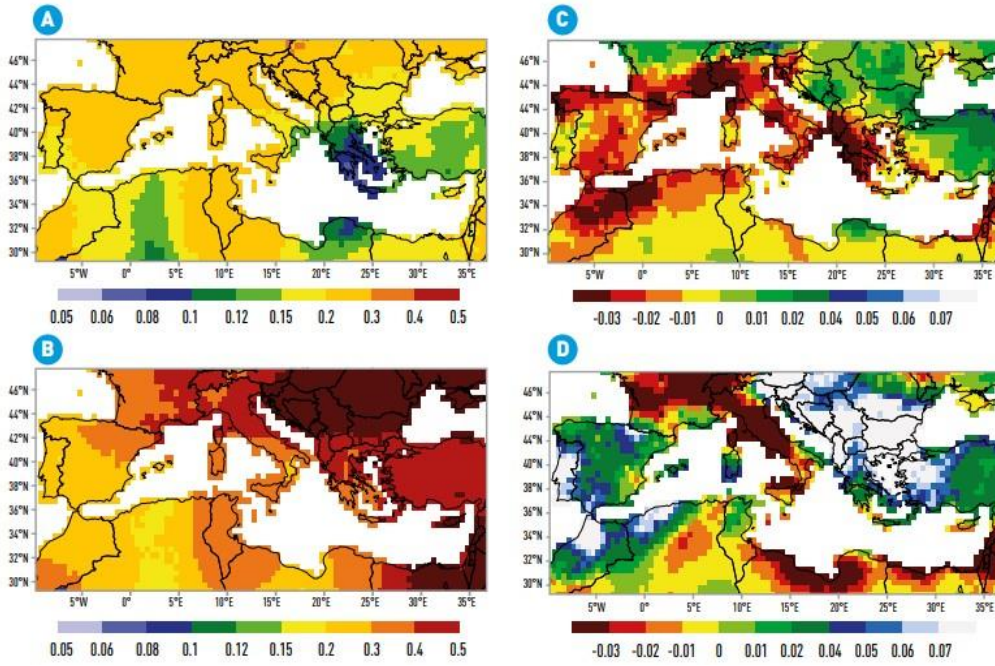
**Figure 9.** The Most Prominent Hot-spots about Climate Change

(Source: State of the Environment and Development in Mediterranean Report, 2020.)



**Figure 10.** Groundwater Storage of Türkiye

Source: Hockenos, 2021



**Figure 11.** Observed Changes in Temperature and Rainfall

(Source: The First Mediterranean Assessment Report, 2020.)

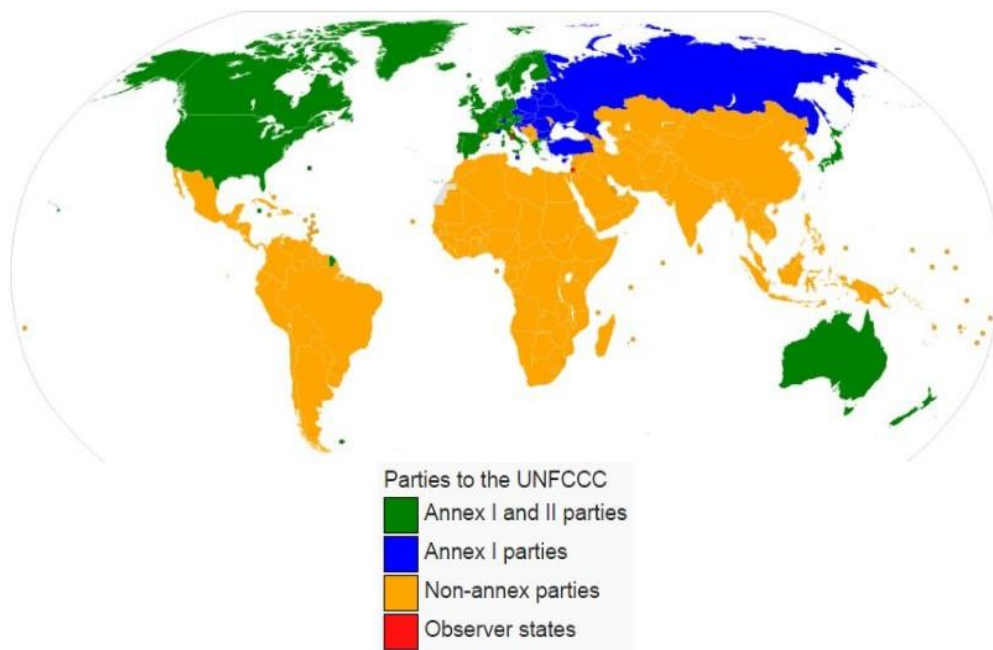
For the aims of this thesis, another reason that has put Türkiye in such a critical position in the process of combating climate change, where various ecological deterioration has started to be seen due to global warming in recent years, is of course not only its geographical location. Since Türkiye is also an OECD and G20 member and a candidate country for the European Union, its attitude in this process is worth examining. As Nicholas Stern (2006) quotes developing countries, which have limited economic power and are often disadvantaged due to their geographical conditions, are more affected by climate change. In this context, in this part of the study, Türkiye's attitude in the process of combating the climate crisis will be conveyed on a historical basis. This historical basis will be made in terms of Türkiye's position in the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement, respectively. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, signed in 1992 under the leadership of the United Nations, is the first intergovernmental environmental convention on global warming. Türkiye, which became a party to the UNFCCC in 2004, submitted the First Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory in 2006, the First Climate Change National Statement in 2007, the First and Second Biennial Report in 2016, and the Intended National Contribution Statement in 2015 to the



UNFCCC. The most important feature of the contract, which aims to stop the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human-induced impact on the climate system, is the principle of ‘Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities/CBDR-RC’. Within the scope of this principle, based on the assumption that the party countries have different responsibilities for climate change, the parties are classified into 3 different groups in terms of types of obligations as depicted in Figure 12:

1. ANNEX-1 (historical responsibility),
2. ANNEX-2 (financial liability) and
3. NON-ANNEX-1.

Cooperation, reporting and notification in the fight against climate change are under the obligation of all parties. On the other hand, the parties listed in ANNEX-1 and ANNEX-2 are under the obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to this obligation, the parties included in the ANNEX-2 list also have the obligation to provide financial and technological assistance to developing countries to achieve this goal. Non-Annex-1 parties generally include developing countries.



**Figure 12.** Parties to the UNFCCC

(Source: Reza, 2022.)

Türkiye has a special position in this classification. The reason for this is that since Türkiye was one of the founding members of the OECD at the time of the entry into force of the convention (1992), it was directly included in the ANNEX-1 and ANNEX-2 lists. However, due to the incompatibility of the level of development with other OECD countries, the fact that both the cumulative and per capita greenhouse gas emissions are below many developed countries and financial obligations, the unique conditions of Türkiye, which demands to be excluded from the ANNEX-2 list, 7<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of Parties (COP7), all party countries were unanimously accepted and Türkiye was deleted from the ANNEX-2 list and left only in the ANNEX-1 list. Mazlum stated (2017, p.148) that borrowing from presidential spokesperson İbrahim Kalın's description of Türkiye's foreign policy, *“this ‘precious loneliness’ in climate change talks leaves Türkiye between a rock and a hard place in terms of making its voice heard and getting its interests represented.”*

Accordingly, the Parties included in ANNEX-2 were encouraged to support developing countries in the areas of mitigation, finance, technology, adaptation, and capacity building at each Conference of the Parties, which takes place once a year and ensures the best implementation of the Convention. Despite this, adequate and effective steps have not been taken within the scope of combating climate change. The following statement on the official website of the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change proves this situation in Türkiye. On the official website, it is mentioned despite the decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties, Türkiye could not benefit from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which was negotiated in 2010 and started its work in 2012 and was accepted as the institution of the Convention to provide financial support to developing countries. There are two implementation tools of UNFCCC: Kyoto Protocol by 2020, and the Paris Agreement after 2020.

Held in 1997, the 3rd With a decision taken at the Conference of Parties (COP3), the Kyoto Protocol on the UNFCCC was adopted and the same Protocol entered into force in 2005. In other words, the Kyoto Protocol is the first implementation agreement of the UNFCCC. The main difference between the Kyoto Protocol and the

UNFCCC is that the Protocol has a binding greenhouse gas reduction obligation to developed countries through concrete quantitative targets and the sanctions are much heavier than the UNFCCC in cases where the targets are not achieved. In addition, while the development criterion between countries for UNFCCC is measured through OECD membership, each country can determine its level of development through various negotiations for the Protocol. In the face of the Kyoto Protocol, which was opened for signature in a process in which Türkiye did not accept to be on the ANNEX-2 list of the UNFCCC and struggled to be removed from the list, Türkiye did not become a party to the Protocol until its situation against the UNFCCC was resolved. For this reason, Türkiye, which signed the Protocol in 2009 - 12 years after the Protocol was adopted- has no commitment to reduce or limit digitized greenhouse gas emissions within the scope of the Protocol. According to Turhan and others (2016, p.449), “*although all these politically-motivated delays and latency of relevant policy-making, Türkiye’s climate policy was rejuvenated after COP13 due to a potential reshuffling of its position in a post-2012 agenda.*” After that, Türkiye envisioned its climate policy and prepared its adaptation strategy including capacity building, adaptation, and finance.

Although there are two implementation periods of the Protocol, the first period covers the years 2008-2012 and the second period covers the years 2013-2020.

In the first implementation period, the parties to Protocol ANNEX-B in the ANNEX-1 list of the UNFCCC have an obligation to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 5% compared to the year 1990 levels. ANNEX-B countries' obligation in the second implementation period is to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 18% in 2020 compared to 1990 with the Doha Amendment. Since some countries that were parties to the Protocol in the first implementation period did not undertake any obligations in the second implementation period, a sufficient number could not be provided for the Protocol to enter into force, and the second implementation period was only initiated in 2020. Since the Paris Agreement, which entered into force in 2016, created a regulatory basis and an international cooperation process in the fight against climate change, the second implementation period of the Protocol was only duly accepted.

As the 2<sup>nd</sup> implementation tool of the UNFCCC, The Paris Agreement, which was adopted in 2015 and entered into force in 2016, constitutes the building block of the fight against climate change after 2020, which partners all countries in the global emissions reduction action by establishing an international cooperation in the fight against global climate change. The most important point where the Paris Agreement is separated from the Kyoto Protocol is that it is a more inclusive and generally accepted Agreement in terms of its entry into force immediately after the Agreement is accepted (less than 1 year) and its unanimous acceptance by all countries that are parties to the UNFCCC. Another differentiating point is that under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, the obligation to reduce greenhouse gases was given only to developed countries; under the Paris Agreement, this obligation was given to each country jointly, albeit at different levels. In other words, the Paris Agreement is more calibrated and more global than the Kyoto Protocol. Unlike its predecessors, the Paris Agreement does not contain annexes to differentiate responsibilities between developed and developing countries; it envisages that developed countries will take more responsibility for emission reduction and provide financial support to developing countries such as Türkiye, based on the principle of relative capabilities.

However, although it has been decided that financial support will be met by developed countries, it has not been clarified which country will provide support to what extent. On the other hand, the gathering of non-binding climate actions to be determined by the countries party to the Paris Agreement under their national conditions under a global agreement is considered by some parties as a flexible structure and is considered frivolous voluntarily. There is also a general opinion that it would be inadequate for the parties to follow up on the responsibilities they have taken on through the provisions of the Agreement on transparency and review. Therefore, for global climate justice and the Agreement to be successful, it is important that medium and long-term global emission reduction targets are included in the Agreement and that these targets are determined by considering the historical responsibilities of the countries, not the initiative of the countries. Also, The Agreement is based on the pledge-and-review approach. Pledge and Review refers to the structure of negotiations associated with the Paris Agreement. Before the countries were expected to sign the climate agreement, each party was asked to

submit an intended nationally determined contribution (NDC). For most developed countries, the NDC specified unilateral cuts in the emissions of greenhouse gases being effective from 2020 to 2050 (or to 2030). Every five years the parties shall review and make new pledges for another five years (Paris Agreement Art. 4.9). In short, as Harstad (2022) stated, “*Pledge and Review has been referred to as a bottom-up approach because countries themselves determine how much to cut nationally.*” In this context, it is essential for each country to improve and present the best version of the commitments in the Nationally Determined Contributions to achieve these goals set within the framework of the Paris Agreement and to ensure the continuity of the planet. In other words, it is important for the validity of the Agreement that the declarations left to the initiative of the countries without any doubt over whether the countries take the necessary responsibility or not constitute a richness in this struggle.

According to the report (2022) published by the Istanbul Policy Center, which is the first study on how Türkiye will achieve the current Net Zero Target, which is one of the objectives of the Paris Agreement, it has been determined that it is possible for Türkiye to approach the Net Zero Target in the early 2050s with policy changes based mainly on energy conversion and investments in carbon-free technologies. In the process of combating climate change, it is essential for Türkiye and all other countries to act in line with their historical responsibilities, striving to achieve better results than even their National Contribution Declarations. In this context, Türkiye’s historical responsibility is also worth considering. Considering these countries in terms of collective responsibility; According to the World Resources Institute (2020), while the USA and China rank first, Türkiye stands out as one of the 20 countries with the highest emissions. An essential point is that, despite the differences in historical responsibilities of all countries, each will suffer significant damage from this crisis. For the minimization of this damage, or in a more optimistic expression, its prevention, collective action is crucial.

Hence, considering the purpose of this thesis, the scope of this study in Türkiye is especially essential due to being located in the Mediterranean Basin and having special conditions in the mentioned convention, protocol, and agreement. Thirdly and

lastly, another reason that has put Türkiye in such a critical position in the process of combating climate change is youth climate activism, which has been lacking but has recently started to revive in Türkiye in parallel with the global and environmental protests and movements in Europe. Young people's active citizenship practices, including activism on environmental issues, are not always apparent in the public sphere in Türkiye. More specifically, youth participation in climate change movements is limited in Türkiye. Considering Türkiye's geographical location and position in international agreements, which puts it in a critical position in climate change, this situation seems contradictory since young people will have to live with the catastrophic effects of climate change. According to Orman (2023), this situation can be explained by the repression by an authoritarian regime. In other words, since the authoritarian regime restrains young people's civic engagements immensely, they can not express their environmental claims in public. The article written by her includes some interviews on this issue, which show that young people in Türkiye have more urgent concerns such as economic crisis or political pressures before climate change.

*“I am responsible for my inaction, but many factors contribute to this failure. I want the opportunity to act more responsibly, to do everything in a safe, environmentally conscious manner that does not contradict my values. However, the crises in our country and other major problems push us towards inaction.” (Orman, 2023, p.9)*

*“My peers usually talk about financial difficulties or buying things like computers and phones. They have more important personal problems than climate change. I don't have many people around me who are interested in this issue or want to do something about it.” (Orman, 2023, p.14)*

It is essential to accept that young climate activism gives a different perspective on the understanding of policymakers or competent authorities, which are usually individuals from older generations. However, only in developed countries, where economic crises and political instability are not typical concerns of young people, they may have the opportunity to think and build a perspective on issues related to climate change. As a matter of fact, chapter 2 presents various survey results on the climate change sensitivity and awareness level of young people living in developed countries. These studies also show that the young people in those countries are more

aware of climate change than previous generations. On the contrary, in developing countries, including Türkiye, young people have to focus on surviving economic fluctuations. Moreover, the government restricts their freedom to express their present or future concerns. Therefore, they can not prioritize the issues related to climate change, unlike the young people in developed countries. It shows that this situation has also a political and denominational dimension. Similarly, according to Nudsen (2016), although environmental activists claim their actions and protests are above politics, environmental activism seldom remains purely issue-based.

Although climate change and its impacts will negatively affect people of all different generations in all societies around the world indiscriminately, the fact that people are even interested in this issue is based on political grounds. On the other hand, in the article "The effects of Climate Change Awareness on Mental Health: Comparison of Climate Anxiety and Hopelessness Levels in Turkish Youth" by Ediz and Yanık (2016), a survey study was conducted with young individuals aged 15 to 24 who were climate activists and those who were not. As a result of the study, it was found that the climate change anxiety of the young individuals who were climate activists was higher than the other group, and the hopelessness about the future increased among young people as the level of knowledge and awareness about this issue increased. In this context, the knowledge and awareness level of young people in Türkiye should rise with the contributions of the authorities that can help to educate young people, and they should be involved in the struggle against climate change as soon as possible for the sake of the future. Within the scope of this thesis, it has been mentioned that climate activism in Türkiye has recently increased within the third and last reason that puts Türkiye in a distinct position on the issue of climate change. Within this context, environmental activism in Türkiye has been deeply shaped by the impact of globalization since the 1980s. Especially according to Ignatow (2008), environmentalism became institutionalized in Türkiye in the 1980s and 1990s when Greenpeace and international environmental groups became active in Türkiye. According to Kesgin (2022), it has become possible to speak about a truly global climate movement since the mid-2000s.

Today, as mentioned in detail in Chapter 2, Greta Thunberg's action in front of the Swedish Parliament in 2018 has raised environmental activism to a different level.

Moreover, 16-year-old Atlas Sarrafoğlu, the pioneer of the Fridays for Future movement in Türkiye inspired by Greta Thunberg, is the youngest person to win the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) International Youth Award. As a matter of fact, he is one of the pioneers of Türkiye's first climate lawsuit together with Seren Anaçoğlu and Ela Naz Birdal, as discussed in detail in this thesis. In addition to all these, young activists who are part of organizations such as Fridays for Future Türkiye, Youth for Climate Türkiye, and Roots & Shoots Türkiye come together from all over Türkiye on days that serve a global purpose, such as the 24 September Global Climate Strike, and try to raise awareness in the struggle against the climate crisis. As hoped in this study, the number of young people getting involved in these protests should increase, and the impact of these protests should expand.

In addition to these protests, in the Youth Declaration call, where climate ambassadors from 81 provinces and 209 universities of Türkiye meet, young people can share their concerns and the solutions they have found to combat climate change. Expanding the scope of these calls is extremely important for a country like Türkiye, which is vulnerable to climate change. As Alvaro Rodriguez (2022), United Nations Resident Coordinator in Türkiye stated, *"We should all take action responsibly for the climate crisis. The role of young people in tackling climate change is extremely important."* Moreover, Oğuz Ergen, a young Turkish activist and founder of the Social Climate Association and Coastal Aegean Climate Network, who was selected as one of the six new "Young Leaders" in the UNDP-Samsung Generation17 program, today teaches children the concept and importance of sustainability within the scope of the Green Planet project led by Habitat Association. Thanks to such projects, the new generation that grows up gives hope for the future.

On the other hand, thanks to organized forums such as The European Union - Türkiye Youth Climate Forum, young people in Türkiye are not only able to produce constructive and solution-oriented proposals against the climate crisis but also to be informed about relevant developments in Europe. Consequently, with all of these mentioned geographical disadvantages, international agreements, and climate activism movements related to Türkiye, the following chapter of the thesis, the results of the climate crisis sensitivity survey conducted on a total of 650 people



from the youngest and oldest generations living in Türkiye in terms of the majority of the population were analyzed through certain dynamics.

## CHAPTER 4

### CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Research Design and Methodology

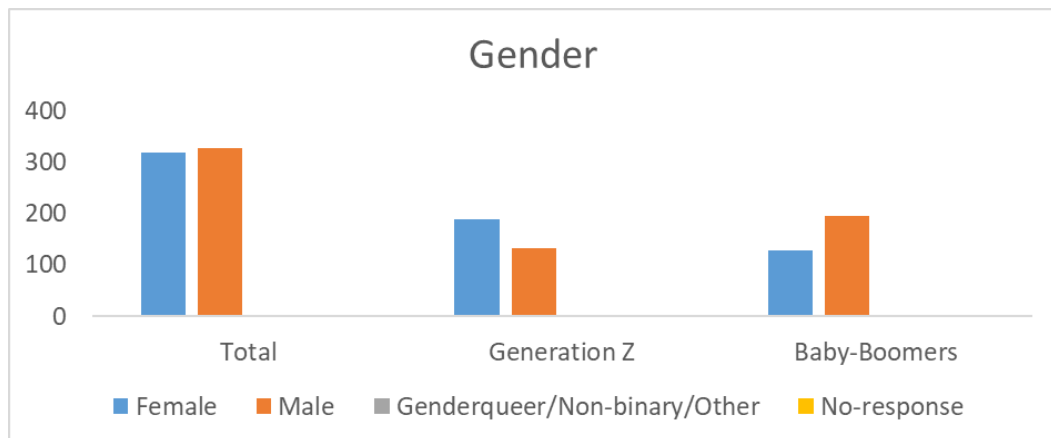
A group of 650 people participated in the survey, which measured the level of sensitivity and awareness of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z in Türkiye about climate change. The 325 of the 650 participants represent the Baby Boom Generation (1946-1964) and the remaining 325 represent Generation Z (1946-1964). In order to make a comparison specific to the climate crisis between both generations, the necessary information was obtained through a quantitative research method, which is the survey. In total, 28 questions were asked to a total of 650 participants, 325 participants from both generations. The survey was shared on various social media platforms (WhatsApp groups, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) with individuals who met the criteria and were willing to participate. The survey was completed through phone conversations with individuals from the Baby Boom Generation who have low or no internet literacy. The content analysis was conducted for the 4 open-ended questions at the end of the survey, and a statistical report was presented for 24 multiple-choice questions. The survey results were analyzed in the light of the archetypes defined by Strauss and Howe and how the historical periods in which generations were born and raised influence their perspectives towards a global issue today. As a result of the survey, the resulting data were analyzed and the solutions that are thought to contribute to Türkiye's fight against the climate crisis are presented in the Conclusion section of the thesis.

#### 4.2. Profile of Survey Respondents

In this part of the thesis, the participants of the survey are analyzed by considering various dynamics such as gender, education level, job status, socioeconomic

circumstances, and media factors. Although an examination was made on the generation variable, it was also pointed out whether the answers of the participants differed depending on gender, educational status, professional status, socioeconomic status, and media preference.

#### 4.2.1. Distribution of the Respondents According to Gender



**Figure 13.** Gender Factor

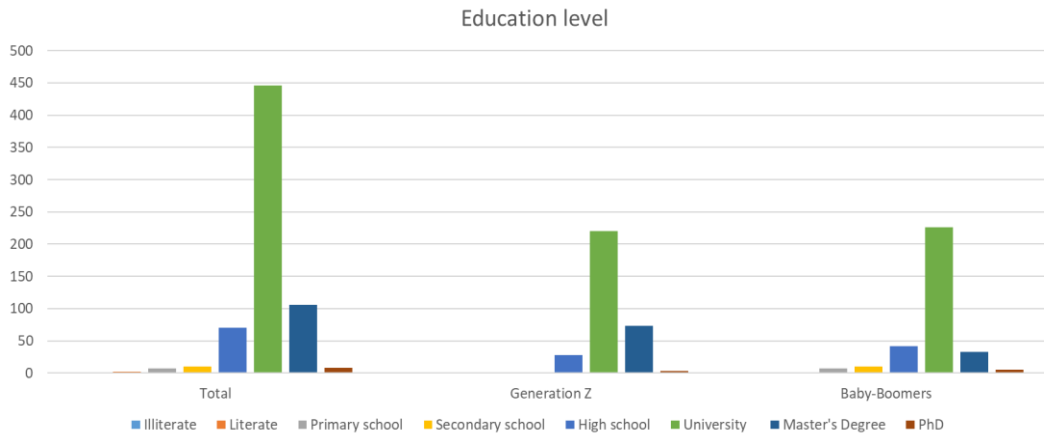
As depicted in Figure 13, out of a total of 650 participants; 319 stated that they were female, 328 stated that they were male, and 2 stated that they were genderqueer/non-binary people. 1 of the participants selected the “No-response” option. In other words, 49.7% of the participants are female, 50.4% are male and 0.3% are genderqueer/nonbinary people, which indicates gender balance in this research. Based on these rates, it is clear that the survey was conducted taking into account the gender distribution.

#### 4.2.2. Distribution of the Respondents According to Education Level and Job Status

Out of a total of 650 participants,

- 1 (0.1%) stated that they were “illiterate”,
- 2 (0.3%) stated that they were “literate”,
- 7 (1.07%) stated that they were “primary school” graduates,
- 10 (1.5%) stated that they were “secondary school” graduates,
- 70 (10.7%) stated that they were “high school” graduates,

- 446 (68.6%) stated that they were “university” graduates,
- 106 (16.3%) stated that they had a “master’s degree”,
- 8 (1.2%) stated that they had a “PhD”.



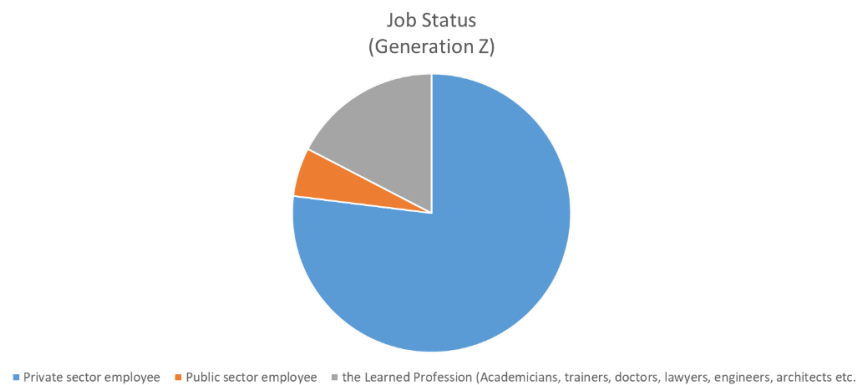
**Figure 14.** Education Level Factor

As a result, 560 (86.15%) stated that they had at least a university degree. Furthermore, 34.9% of the respondents in the survey are either a graduate with a master’s or doctoral degree. More precisely, 76 of the 325 participants from Generation Z (23.3%) and 38 Boomers (11.6%) hold a master’s or Ph.D. degree. The high rate of well-educated people among questionnaire respondents constitutes one of the limitations of this study, as stated in the introduction chapter of the thesis. According to National Education Statistics (2022), the ratio of higher education graduates aged 25 and over to the total population in Türkiye is only 23.9 %. Therefore, the sample in this survey does not correspond to the reality of the education level in Türkiye. On the other hand, since the participants represent a highly educated segment of Türkiye's population, this study reveals the maximum level of awareness and consciousness in Türkiye regarding local and global issues, specifically climate change.

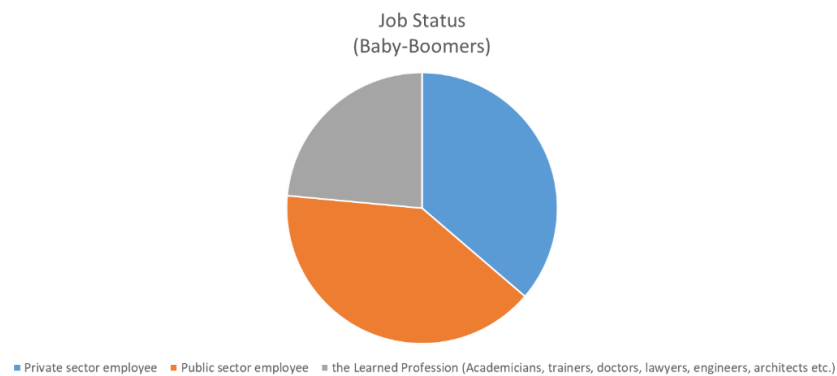
Moreover, as depicted in Figure 14, the tendency of Generation Z to pursue higher education as postgraduate programs including master's and doctorate is higher than the Baby Boom Generation. While 76 of the 325 participants from Generation Z (23.3%) hold a master’s or PhD degree, only 38 Boomers (11.6%) hold them. This situation can be explained by the fact that many younger generations strive for a

higher level of education to make a difference in business life due to the high unemployment rate in Türkiye. On the other hand, because the years when Baby Boom Generation was born were called the Golden Age of the Welfare State, and this generation deeply trusted institutionalization and the social security system, they started to work in jobs immediately after completing their education and, devoted themselves to those jobs until their retirement.

Additionally, as depicted in Figure 16, with the inevitable effect of being a generation raised in the welfare state era, Boomers preferred to work in the public sector during those years in line with confidence in government, public institutions, and social policies, In short, while the members of the Baby Boom Generation, who grew up with the assurance of the concept of the social state, started their business life a short time after graduation, the members of Generation Z, who grew up with neo-liberal policies, tend to provide their assurance by trying to strengthen their level of education since they cannot get any assurance from the state and, as depicted in Figure 15, now is predominantly employed in the private sector unlike the Boomers.



**Figure 15.** Job Status of Generation Z Participants



**Figure 16.** Job Status of the Baby Boom Generation Participants

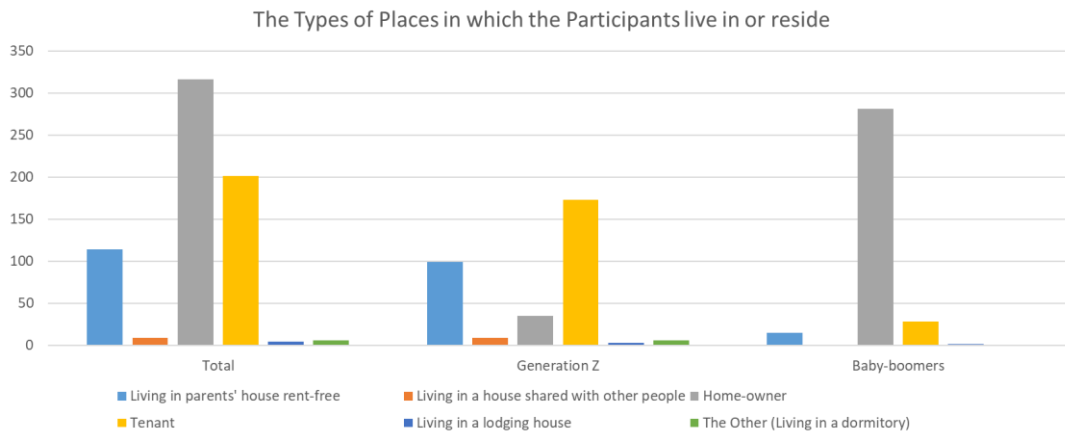
### **4.2.3. Distribution of the Respondents According to Socioeconomic Status**

While examining socioeconomic factors, dynamics such as home ownership status and the types of places in which the participants live or reside, car ownership status and the frequency of using the car, whether the cost of living in Türkiye has a negative impact on their social life or not, and the frequency of socializing, etc. were focused on.

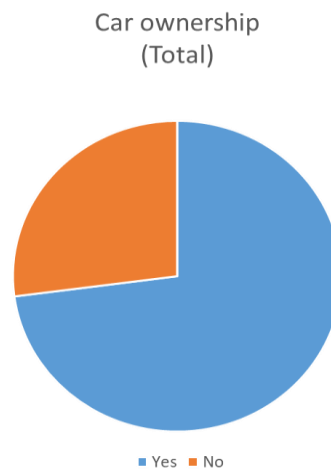
First of all, as depicted in Figure 17, while the majority of 325 participants of the Baby Boom Generation (281 participants) are homeowners, the majority of 325 participants of Generation Z (173 participants) live as tenants. In other words, 86.4% of Baby-Boom Generation are homeowners while 53.2% of Generation Z are tenants. It is observed that Generation Z has a low rate of being homeowner both because they are in the early years of their careers and because of the deteriorating economic situation in Türkiye. Moreover, as emphasized frequently in the previous sections of the thesis, the Baby Boom Generation was born to parents who struggled with poverty and scarcity for many years, building a nest egg is like a life motto for them. Therefore, many of them are homeowners and/or car owners thanks to the savings they made during their youth.

Secondly, as depicted in Figure 18, out of a total of 650 participants; 474 stated that they had a car while 176 stated that they did not have a car. In other words, 73% of participants are car owners while 27% are not. Moreover, as depicted in Figure 19, it is clearly observed that the frequency of car use of the Baby Boom Generation is higher than that of Generation Z. Out of 325 participants of Generation Z, 71 stated that they were using a car every single day, while 106 were from the Baby Boom Generation. Even though both generations claim to act responsibly and consciously in their struggle against climate change and tend to blame each other for the crisis, they prefer to use their private cars instead of public transportation helping to reduce their carbon footprint. This is one of the important criteria in terms of measuring the level of sensitivity of these two generations about climate change. Nevertheless, the analysis carried out within this thesis does not include this criterion because the criterion affecting the frequency of car use among the participants is related to the petrol prices in Türkiye. In other words, the frequency of car use by the respondents

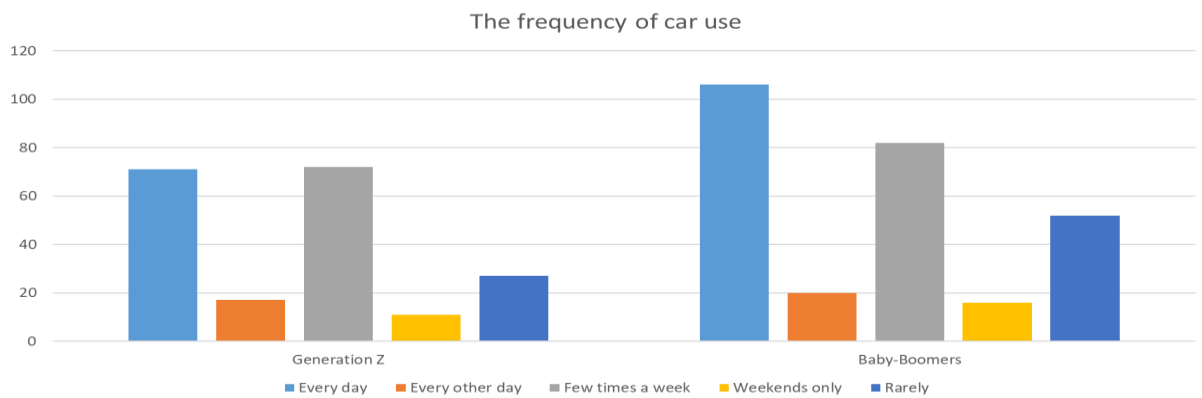
is not associated with climate change sensitivity but with economic problems, which is another critical problem in Türkiye.



**Figure 17.** The Types of Places in which the Participants live in or reside



**Figure 18.** Car Ownership Status

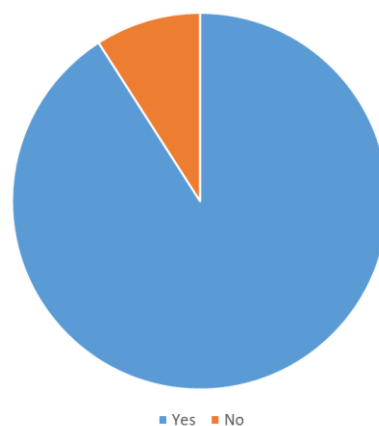


**Figure 19.** The Frequency of Car Use

Thirdly, as another socio-economic indicator of the participants and indicated in Figure 20, out of a total of 650 participants; 591 stated that the cost of living in Türkiye had a negative impact on their frequency of socialization while 59 stated that it did not have a negative impact. In other words, 91% of participants are negatively affected by the economic conditions in Türkiye while 9% of them are not. The negative impact of the cost of living in Türkiye on the frequency of socialization is higher among the participants of the Baby Boom Generation compared to Generation Z. More clearly, out of 325 participants of Generation Z; 285 (88%) stated that the cost of living in Türkiye had a negative impact on their frequency of socialization while 306 (94%) were from the Baby Boom Generation.

Actually, this situation, as frequently mentioned in the previous sections of the thesis, is anticipated because the means of socialization for the Baby Boom Generation rely on face-to-face communication, compared to Generation Z, whose means of socialization rely on online communication through technological tools. In other words, according to Generation Z, who can meet their social need online, physical meetings are just a matter of choice. However, the Baby Boom Generation, like most other needs, demands a physical reality to meet their social need. As a result, the worsening economic situation in Türkiye day by day adversely affects the frequency of socialization of the Baby Boom Generation, which does not see another alternative way to socialize, more negatively compared to Generation Z.

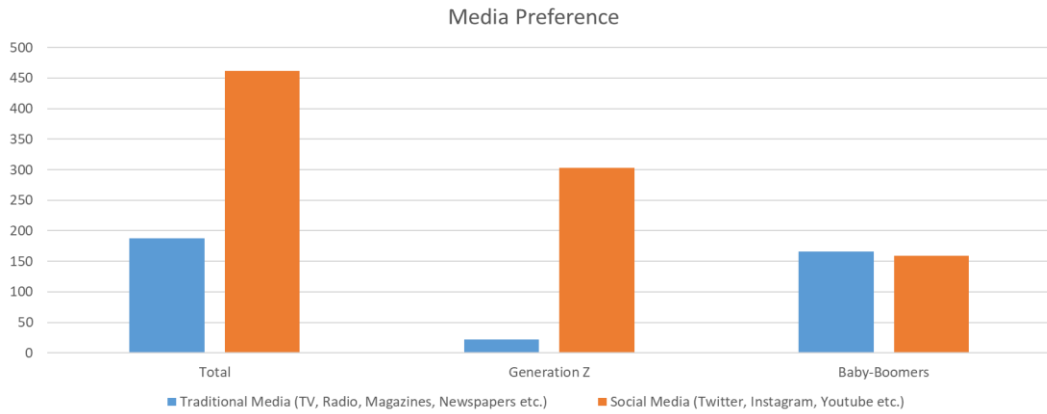
Has the cost of living in Türkiye negatively affected your frequency of socialization?



**Figure 20.** The Effect of Cost of Living in Türkiye on the Frequency of Socialization



#### 4.2.4. Distribution of the Respondents According to Media Preference



**Figure 21.** Media Preference

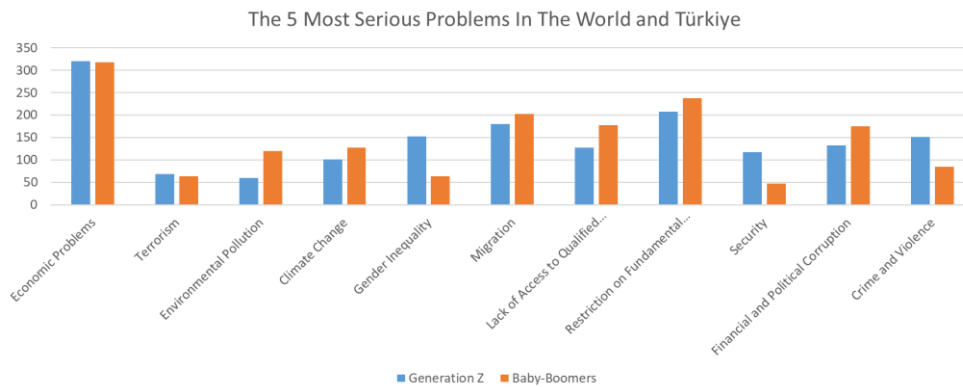
As depicted in Figure 21, Out of a total 650 participants; 462 (71.07%) stated that they preferred Social Media tools such as Twitter, Instagram, and Youtube etc. for tracking world news while 188 (28.92%) stated that they preferred Traditional Media tools such as TV, radio, magazines and newspapers etc. 93% of participants (303 people) of Generation Z prefer Social Media while 7% of them (22 people) prefer Traditional Media. On the other hand, 49.2% of participants of the Baby-Boom Generation (160 people) prefer Social Media while 50.7% of them (165 people) prefer Traditional Media.

This result, which is not surprising for Generation Z, also known as Digital Natives and born into the digital world, is unexpected for the Baby Boom Generation, also known as Digital Immigrants, who were introduced to technology at a later age. For the media preferences of the Baby Boom Generation, the difference between Social Media and Traditional Media is almost negligible. This result is thought-provoking and upsetting, especially considering the fact that traditional media tools were the only way for people to get the news until the early 2000s. So, this picture shows that traditional media tools have lost their importance and reliability for the Baby Boom Generation in recent years. This situation is a result of the increasingly politicized traditional media in Türkiye, which has lost its impartiality. At this point, social media tools have emerged as a substitute for traditional media tools for this Generation.

### 4.3. Generational Differences in Climate-related Views

In this part of the thesis, in order to make a specific analysis regarding the climate change between both generations, the required information was gathered through the questions related to the most serious problems and responsible actors for these problems in the World and Türkiye, and the most effective solutions for climate change both socially and individually according to the opinion of respondents from both generations. It was also questioned whether the respondents were aware of the historical responsibility for climate change of Türkiye climate activism around the World and the concept of sustainability. Moreover, the resulting data were analyzed whether there was an intergenerational conflict between generations or not and what they thought about the result of Türkiye’s fight against climate change.

#### 4.3.1. The 5 Most Serious Problems In The World and Türkiye



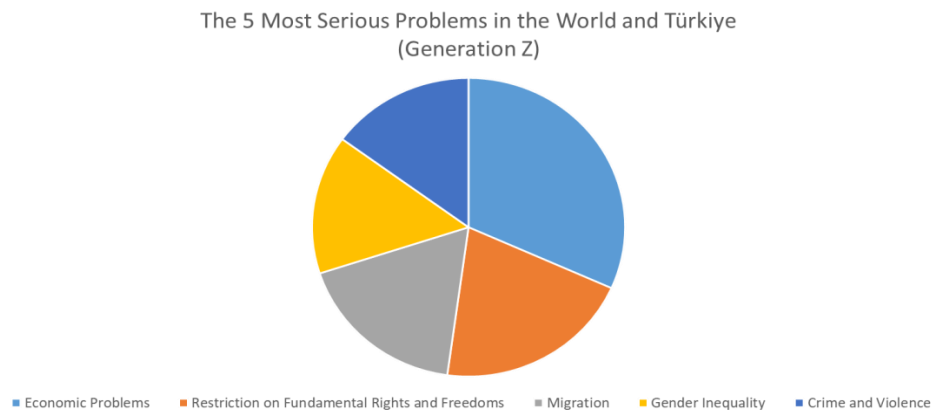
**Figure 22.** The 5 Most Serious Problems in the World and Türkiye

As depicted in Figure 22, out of total 650 participants,

- 638 included “Economic Problems”,
- 132 included “Terrorism”,
- 180 included “Environmental Pollution”,
- **229 included “Climate Change”,**
- 216 included “Gender Inequality”,
- 382 included “Migration”,
- 304 included “Lack of Access to Qualified Education and Health Services”,

- 444 included “Restriction on Fundamental Rights and Freedoms”
- 165 included “Security”,
- 307 included “Financial and Political Corruption”,
- 236 included “Crime and Violence” in the 5 most serious issues in the world and Türkiye.

2 selected the “No idea” option and 7 selected “The Other” option and included “Political Islam”, “Rising Right-Wing Populism and Fascist Tendencies” and “Injustice” in the 5 most serious issues in the World and Türkiye.



**Figure 23.** The 5 Most Serious Problems in the World and Türkiye According to Generation Z

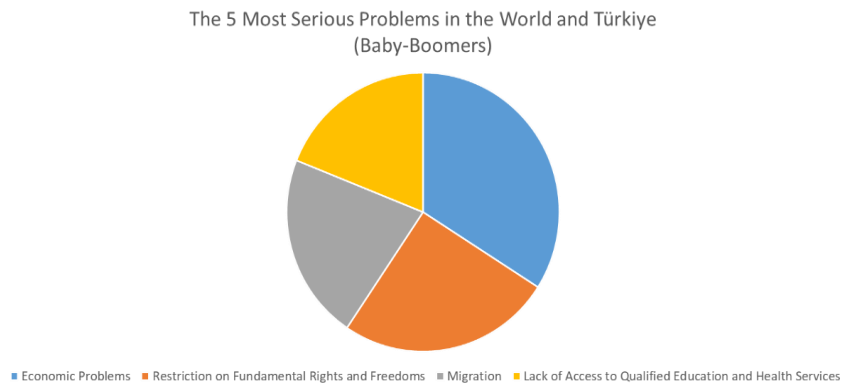
On the other hand, as depicted in Figure 23, out of 325 participants of Generation Z,

- 320 (98.46%) included “Economic Problems”,
- 207 (63.69%) included “Restriction on Fundamental Rights and Freedoms”
- 180 (55.38%) included “Migration”,
- 152 (46.76%) included “Gender Inequality”,
- 151(46.46%) included “Crime and Violence” in the top 5 most serious issues in the World and Türkiye.

Moreover, “**Climate Change**”, with 101 participants (31.07%), ranks **9th** as the most serious issue in the World and Türkiye for Generation Z.

As depicted in Figure 25, out of 101 participants of Generation Z who included “Climate Change” in their rankings,

- 13 participants selected it as their *1st choice*,
- 11 participants selected it as their *2nd choice*,
- 19 participants selected it as their *3rd choice*,
- 25 participants selected it as their *4th choice*,
- 33 participants selected it as their *5th choice*.



**Figure 24.** The 5 Most Serious Problems in the World and Türkiye According to Baby-Boomers

On the other hand, as depicted in Figure 24, out of 325 participants of the Baby-Boom Generation,

- 318 (97.84%) included “Economic Problems”,
- 237 (72.92%) included “Restriction on Fundamental Rights and Freedoms”,
- 202 (62.15%) included “Migration”,
- 177 (54.46%) included “Lack of Access to Qualified Education and Health Services”,
- 175 (53.84%) included “Financial and Political Corruption”, in the top 5 most serious issues in the World and Türkiye.

Moreover, “**Climate Change**”, with 128 participants (39.38%), ranks *6th* as the most serious issue in the World and Türkiye for Baby-Boom Generation.

As depicted in Figure 25, out of 128 participants of the Baby-Boom Generation who included “Climate Change” in their rankings,

- 8 participants selected it as their *1st choice*,
- 18 participants selected it as their *2nd choice*,

- 24 participants selected it as their *3rd choice*,
- 35 participants selected it as their *4th choice*,
- 43 participants selected it as their *5th choice*.

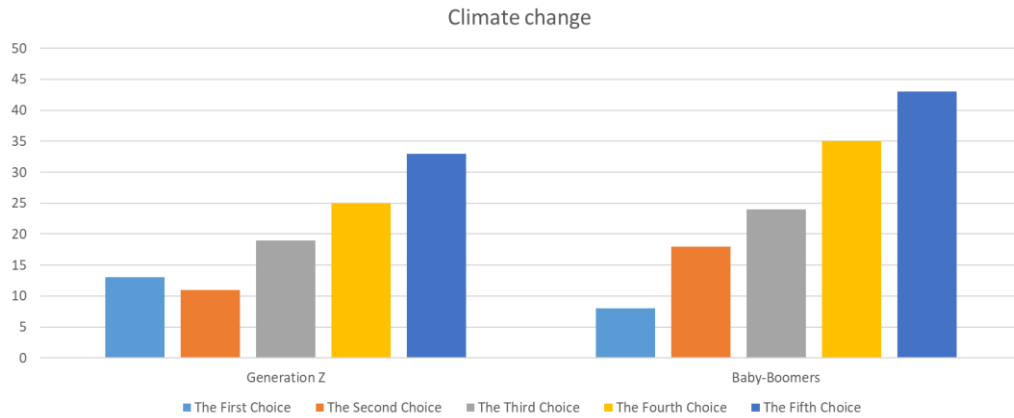
To sum up, for both generations, the rankings of the 3 most serious issues in the World and Türkiye are the same and respectively, “Economic Problems”, “Restriction on Fundamental Rights and Freedoms” and “Migration”. This ranking for Baby Boom Generation continues as follows, respectively: “Lack of Access to Qualified Education and Health Services”, “Financial and Political Corruption”, “Climate Change”, “Environmental Pollution”, “Crime and Violence”, “Gender Inequality”, “Terrorism”, and “Security”. On the other hand, the same ranking for Generation Z continues as follows, respectively: “Gender Inequality”, “Crime and Violence”, “Financial and Political Corruption”, “Lack of Access to Qualified Education and Health Services”, “Security”, “Climate Change”, “Terrorism”, and “Environmental Pollution”. Although the question asks what the most critical problems in the World and Türkiye are, it is seen that the participants gave more Türkiye-centred answers when analyzing the answers. This situation is very usual considering the fact that the entire sample lives in Türkiye.

The economic depression that Türkiye has been experiencing in recent years, the wave of migration from Syria to Türkiye, and the restriction of fundamental rights and freedoms, which is one of the most basic consequences of an oppressive power of the government, reflect the joint problem and discomfort of the young and old population in Türkiye. If we consider the Baby Boom generation, it is an expected response that one of the problems they prioritize is not access to qualified education and health services, as they have to cope with more health problems due to aging. In addition, the military coups, the transition to multi-party political life, political actions, and assassinations they have seen in Türkiye push them to carry out an evaluation based on financial and political corruption when analyzing current problems. Apart from all these, this generation, which has a high sensitivity to climate change, considers environmental pollution as the most critical problem right after climate change, and climate change and environmental pollution problems are

interrelated. Unfortunately, crime & violence, and gender inequality are not very important in terms of importance in the ranking made by this generation. This ranking for this generation, which grew up in a period when a patriarchal order in which women were held back was more legitimized, and the feminist movement in Türkiye was not as strong as it is today, is consistent within itself considering the historical process in which the generation grew up.

The ranking of Boomers ends with terrorism and security problems. They think these two problems have recently decreased in Türkiye compared to the past, and now Türkiye has more critical issues as they mentioned in their five most serious problems in the World and Türkiye list, and here.

On the other hand, unlike the Baby Boom Generation, Generation Z attaches much higher importance to gender inequality. Considering the feminist associations that have been established in recent years in Türkiye, and the thousands of people these associations reach, it is possible to say that feminist consciousness among the younger generation is higher than in previous generations. For this generation, which ranks crime and violence as the most critical problem right after gender inequality, the concepts of crime and violence probably evoke violence against women. The ranking of Generation Z continues with financial and political corruption and lack of access to qualified education and health services, climate change, and environmental pollution, which can be considered in a related way, taking place as the last 3 in their ranking. Unfortunately, the sensitivity of Generation Z towards climate change, which will affect their future in the longer term, remains far below expectations. One of the main reasons for this situation is the lack of proper education for children and young people in Türkiye. It should not be forgotten that education is one of the most effective ways to build a collective consciousness in young generations representing the future. The economic and political instability in Türkiye today has increased the anxiety level of young people to such an extent that the younger generation focuses only on these problems. Therefore, the livelihood anxiety of young people trying to save the day keeps them away from a global problem, climate change, whose more devastating effects they will face in the future.

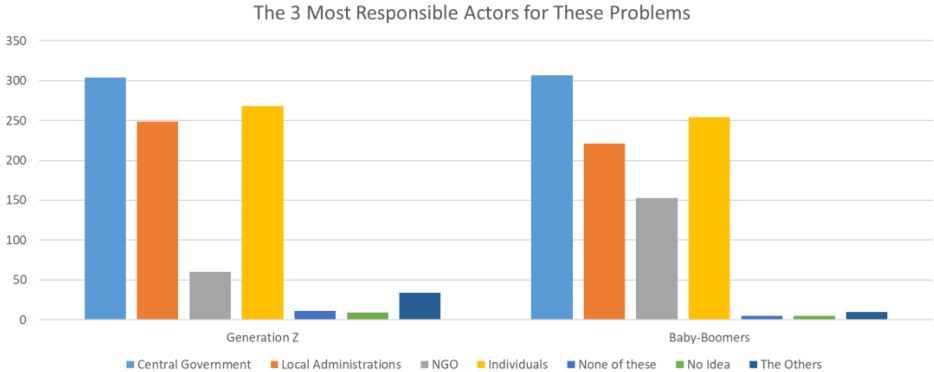


**Figure 25.** The Ranking of Climate Change for Both Generations

It is possible to say that the issue of “Climate Change”, which with 101 participants of Generation Z, i.e. 31.07% ranked 9th and with 128 participants of Baby-Boom Generation, i.e. 39.38% ranked 6th, is prioritized more by the Baby-Boom Generation. Even though Generation Z will be exposed to the effects of climate change for a long time compared to the older generations, it is contradictory that the Baby Boom generation attaches more importance to climate change. Most probably, the reason for this is, as stated in the previous sections, attributed to the Baby Boom generation, often considered the creators of the '68 generation, having a high sensitivity and a proactive spirit in addressing societal/global issues. If we base the problem of climate change and environmental pollution on the same ground, there may be a chance to elaborate this analysis a little more. For the Baby Boom Generation, the problem of environmental pollution is right after climate change in terms of importance. According to 128 respondents from the Baby Boom Generation (39.38%), climate change is the 6th most critical problem in Türkiye and the World, and environmental pollution is the 7th according to 120 respondents (36.92%). It means that this generation has analyzed by being aware of the relationship between these two problems. In total, 248 out of 325 Boomers (76.30%) showed an environmentally sensitive approach. On the other hand, Generation Z ranked climate change 9th and environmental pollution 11th. The last rank is 11. According to 101 participants from Generation Z (31.07%), climate change is the 9th most critical problem in Türkiye and the World, and for 60 participants (18.46%), environmental pollution is the 11th. It means this generation does not think there is a connection between these two problems, unlike the Boomers. In short, when the general

situation is analyzed, it is observed that Generation Z is not as environmentally sensitive as the Baby Boom Generation.

**4.3.2. The 3 Most Responsible Actors for These Problems**

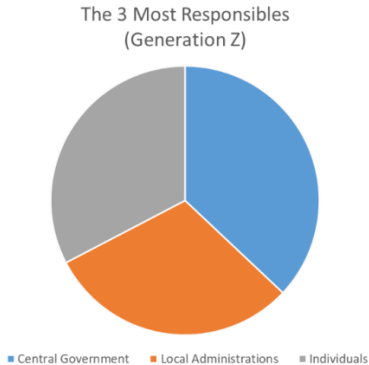


**Figure 26.** The 3 Most Responsible Actors for these Problems

As indicated in Figure 26, out of a total of 650 participants,

- 611 held “Central Government”,
- 522 held “Individuals”,
- 470 held “Local Governments”,
- 213 held “Non-Governmental Organizations” responsible as the source of the issues they identified before.

16 selected the “None of These” option and 14 selected the “No-idea” option. 44 selected the “The Other” option and held “Capitalism”, “Media”, “Opposition Parties”, “International Institutions” and “Lack of Education” etc. responsible as the source of the problems they identified before.

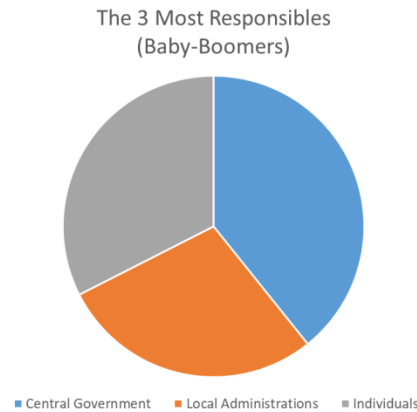


**Figure 27.** The 3 Most Responsible Actors for these Problems According to Generation Z



As indicated in Figure 27, out of 325 participants of Generation Z,

- 304 (93.5%) held “Central Government”,
- 268 (82.46%) held “Individuals”,
- 249 (76.61%) held “Local Governments” mostly responsible as the source of the issues they identified before.



**Figure 28.** The 3 Most Responsible Actors for these Problems According to Baby-Boomers

As indicated in Figure 28, out of 325 participants of the Baby-Boom Generation,

- 307 (94.46%) held “Central Government”,
- 254 (78.15%) held “Individuals”,
- 221 (68%) held “Local Governments” mostly responsible as the source of the issues they identified before.

To sum up, for both generations, the rankings of the top 3 most responsible actors are the same and respectively, “Central Government”, “Individuals”, and “Local Governments”. When the share of NGOs in these problems is approached separately for these two generations, there is a noticeable difference. NGOs, which ranked 4<sup>th</sup> for both generations, were held responsible by 60 participants of Generation Z (18.46%) and 153 participants of the Baby Boomers (47.07%). The culture of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which was recently starting to emerge during the youth years of the Baby Boom generation members, has become established in the Generation Z period. In today's context, NGOs, with their broad authority and scope, take an active role in addressing many societal/global issues. Therefore, for

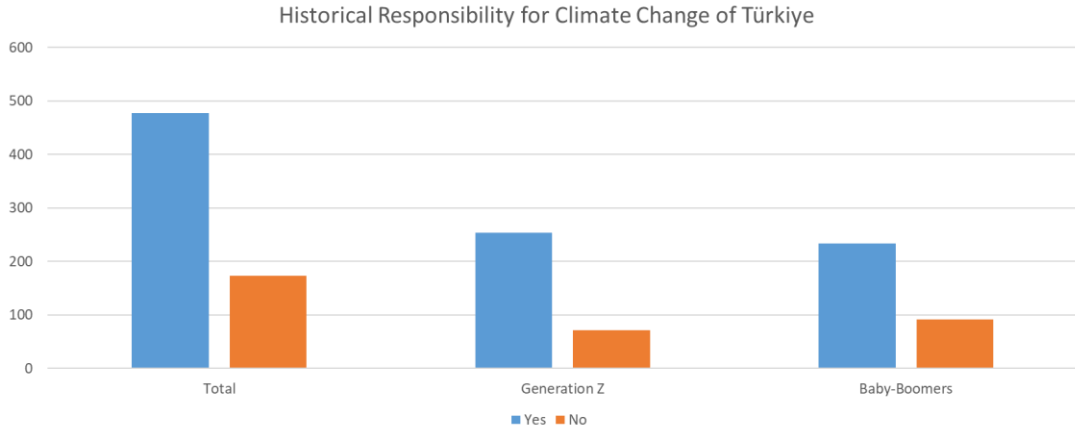
Generation Z, who may not trust the government and local authorities, NGOs hold an alternative position.

Consequently, they are not considered responsible or, in a more assertive expression, the culprits of this societal/global order going wrong. Another important inference that can be drawn, relevant to the response provided by participants from both generations to the question, is that although local governments are the closest and most accessible units to the public and their issues, in the face of such a global crisis that affects even the smallest unit of society, neither generation deems them sufficiently or relatively responsible. It is essential to elaborate on and emphasize this part of the study about local governments. As the consequences of climate change vary everywhere, local governments need to facilitate action to address these particular consequences. Local governments are responsible for dealing with all risks and finding local solutions. In other words, it is very important for each municipality to prepare local adaptation strategies and action plans to combat climate change.

Concordantly, local governments came together in a panel organized on February 24th, 2022 as part of Türkiye's first Climate Council and shared the impacts of climate change on municipalities and local methods to combat the crisis. As a part of this initiative, UNDP conducts vulnerability analyses at the sectoral level for 4 pilot municipalities in Konya, Muğla, Sakarya, and Samsun, and develops adaptation actions by measuring the impacts of climate change in the city. Considering the responsibility and sphere of influence of local governments, there may be two different explanations for the fact that local governments remain in the background in the ranking of responsible actors according to the participants in the face of climate change, which has a devastating impact at the global level.

The first is that they may not be sufficiently aware of the power and reach of local governments. The second is that local governments in the regions where the participants reside are doing their best to combat the climate crisis and are therefore not held responsible. According to the second possibility, the participants may tend to blame the central government to such an extent because the efforts of local governments alone are not enough.

### 4.3.3. The Historical Responsibility For Climate Change Of Türkiye

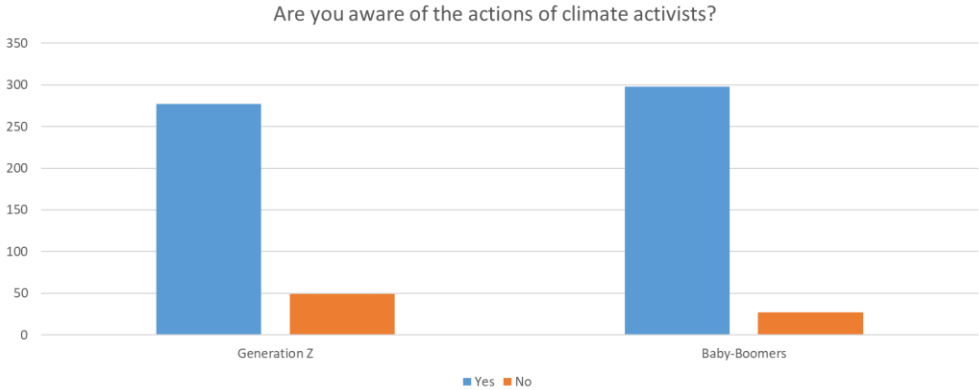


**Figure 29.** Historical Responsibility for Climate Change of Türkiye

As indicated in Figure 29, out of a total of 650 participants; 477 (73.38%) stated that Türkiye had historical responsibility for climate change while 173 (26.61%) stated that Türkiye had no historical responsibility for climate change. 254 (78%) participants from the Baby Boom Generation stated that Türkiye had historical responsibility for climate change, while 233 (66%) were from Generation Z. Similar to the prioritization of climate change by the Baby Boom generation, with 78% and 66% respectively, it is possible to say that Baby Boom Generation participants are more likely to accept Türkiye's historical responsibility with a higher level of awareness than Generation Z participants. The Baby Boom Generation, as a witness generation to the history of Türkiye for a long time, has more sophisticated perspectives on the responsibility of their country in the face of a critical situation such as climate change. On the other hand, as emphasized in the previous chapters of this thesis and introduced to the literature by Strauss and Howe, the Baby Boom Generation, whose childhood coincides with the 1st Turning, is a generation that has a high tendency to question the social order and is committed to its principles due to the characteristics of this period. Therefore, it might be expected for this generation to embrace the idea that their country has a historical responsibility in the face of climate change. On the contrary, for Generation Z, whose childhood coincides with the 3rd/4th Turning, individual utilitarianism is essential, and their sense of responsibility is not very developed compared to the older generations. According to

Generation Z, who grew up in the Unraveling Period, the concept of self-interest is more prominent than the concept of responsibility. Therefore, similarly, it might be expected that they do not hold their own countries as responsible as older generations in the face of a global problem, specifically climate change.

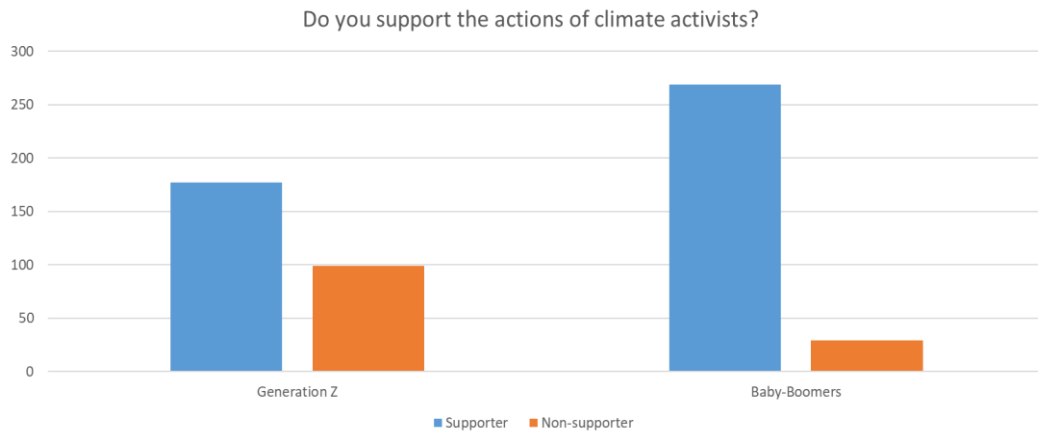
**4.3.4. The Awareness and Support of Climate Activism**



**Figure 30.** The Awareness of the Actions of Climate Activists

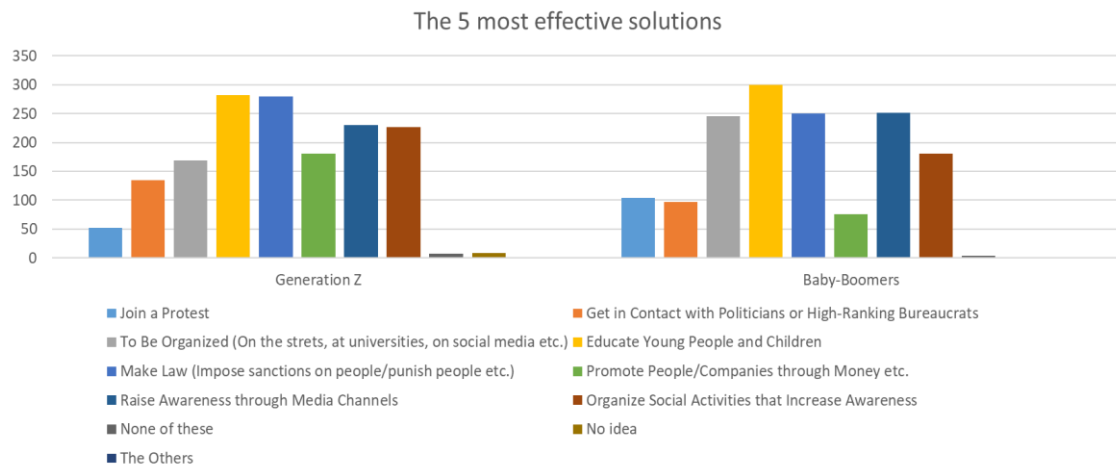
As depicted in Figure 30, out of 325 participants of Generation Z 276 (84.92%) stated that they were aware of the actions of climate activists while 49 (15.07%) stated that they were not. Also, as depicted in Figure 31, out of 276 participants of Generation Z who are aware of the actions of climate activists, 177 (64.13% ) stated that they supported their actions while 99 (35.86) stated that they did not. However, out of 325 participants of Baby-Boom Generation, 298 (91.69%) stated that they were aware of the actions of climate activists while 27 (8.30%) stated that they were not. That is, the Baby Boom Generation is more aware of climate activism than Generation Z. Moreover, out of 298 participants of the Baby-Boom Generation who are aware of the actions of climate activists, 269 (90.26%)stated that they supported their actions while 29 (9.73%) stated that they did not. That is, the Baby Boom Generation is not only more aware of climate activism but also more supportive than Generation Z. The Baby Boom Generation, associated with the prophet archetype and born in the 1st Turning, as clearly explained in Figure 1 of Chapter 2, believes in what “*society can do*” and supports collective action because Boomers perceive that “*social demand for order peaks as political supply of order*” rises (Strauss and Howe, 1997). So, these social actions, born out of the social demand to raise

awareness against climate change, are reinforced by the belief that society can do. Especially for the Baby Boom Generation, whose youth coincided with the 1980s in Türkiye, protesting and organizing are essential in solving both a social and a global problem. Therefore, these survey results pair off with the characteristics of their generation.



**Figure 31.** The Support of the Actions of Climate Activists

#### 4.3.5. The Most Effective Solutions for Climate Change both Socially and Individually



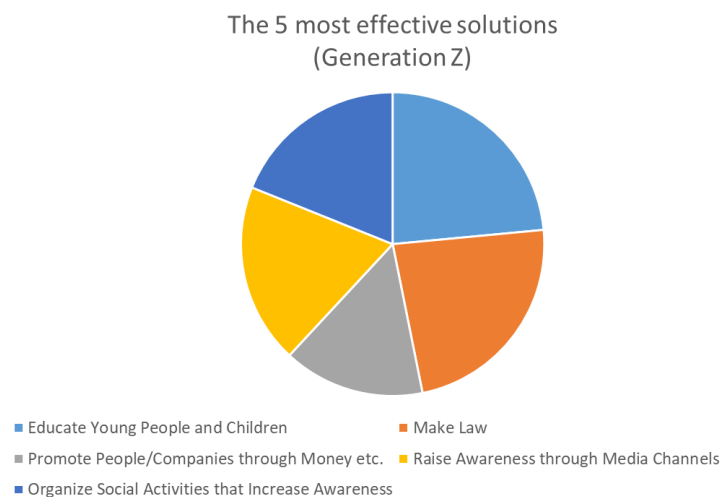
**Figure 32.** The 5 Most Effective Solutions

As depicted in Figure 32, out of a total of 650 participants,

- 156 included “Join a Protest”,

- 232 included “Get in Contact with Politicians or High-Ranking Bureaucrats”,
- 414 included “To be Organized”
- 582 included “Educate Young People and Children”,
- 530 included “Make Law”,
- 257 included “Promote People/Companies through Money etc.”
- 481 included “Raise Awareness through Media Channels”,
- 508 included “Organize Social Activities that Increase Awareness” as the top 5 most effective solutions to the issues that they identified before.

11 selected the “None of these” option and 10 selected the “No idea” option. 1 selected “The Other” option and included “Overthrow Capitalism” as the top 5 most effective solutions to the issues that they identified before.



**Figure 33.** The 5 Most Effective Solutions According to Generation Z

As depicted in Figure 33, out of 325 participants of Generation Z,

- 282 (86.84%) included “Educate Young People and Children”,
- 280 (86.15%) included “Make Law”,
- 230 (70.76%) included “Raise Awareness through Media Channels”,
- 227 (69.84%) included “Organize Social Activities that Increase Awareness”,
- 181 (55.69%) included “Promote People/Companies through Money etc.” as the top 5 most effective solutions for the issues that they identified before.

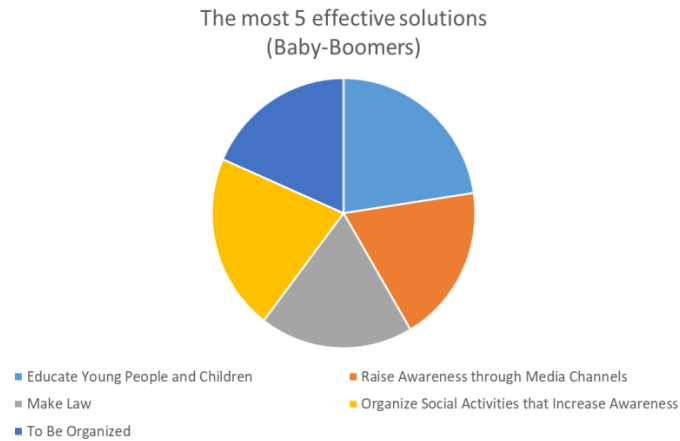


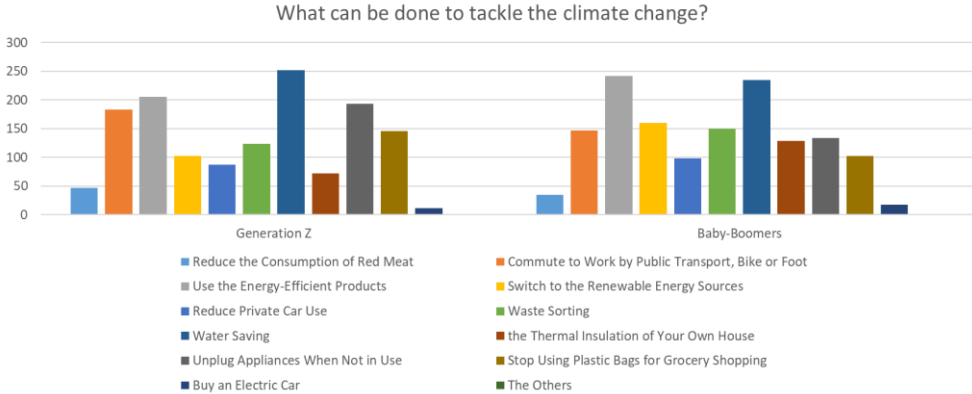
Figure 34. The 5 Most Effective Solutions According to Baby-Boomers

As depicted in Figure 34, out of 325 participants of the Baby-Boom Generation,

- 300 (92.30%) included “Educate Young People and Children”,
- 281 (86.46%) included “Organize Social Activities that Increase Awareness”,
- 251 (77.23%) included “Raise Awareness through Media Channels”,
- 250 (76.92%) included “Make Law”,
- 245 (75.38%) included “To Be Organized”, as the top 5 most effective solutions for the issues that they identified before.

To sum up, although the rankings are different for both generations, 4 of the 5 most effective solutions are common. The only different solution in the top 5 is “To Be Organized” for Generation Z while “Promote People/Companies through Money, etc.” for the Baby Boom Generation. Both generations prioritize the education of young people and children at similar rates. Indeed, education is the most effective way to solve many problems. Only an educated and conscious generation can become a part of the solution to existing problems. This ranking for the Baby Boom Generation continues as follows, respectively: “Organize Social Activities that Increase Awareness”, “Raise Awareness through Media Channels”, “Make Law”, “To Be Organized”, “Join a Protest”, “Get in Contact with Politicians or High-Ranking Bureaucrats”, and “Promote People/Companies through Money, etc.” On the other hand, the same ranking for Generation Z continues as follows, respectively: “Make Law”, “Raise Awareness through Media Channels”, “Organize Social Activities that Increase Awareness”, “Promote People/Companies through Money,

etc.”, “To be Organized”, “Get in Contact with Politicians or High-Ranking Bureaucrats”, and “Join a Protest”. This situation clearly shows that the most effective solution for the Baby Boom Generation is to raise awareness through education, social activities, and media channels. After that, the most effective way is to participate in protests and organize themselves with the spirit of the Creator of the 68 Generation. The least effective way is to communicate with politicians or high-level bureaucrats to find a solution and to incentivize people or companies with money, etc. This result is reasonable considering the military coups, memorandums, and fascist regimes experienced by this generation. In fact, it is likely that this generation has lost faith in politicians, senior bureaucrats, governments, and even the state in the historical process they have experienced. In other words, The Baby Boom Generation, born in an era dominated by strong institutions during the High/Rebirth Period, characterized by their commitment to values and identified with the prophet archetype, has lost faith in institutions and laws over time due to coups and authoritarian regimes in Türkiye. In contrast to the Baby Boom Generation, Generation Z considers making laws, incentivizing people or companies with money, etc., or contacting politicians or high-level bureaucrats as effective solutions. It is clearly seen that Generation Z has more faith in the state and possible sanctions of the state compared to the Baby Boom Generation.



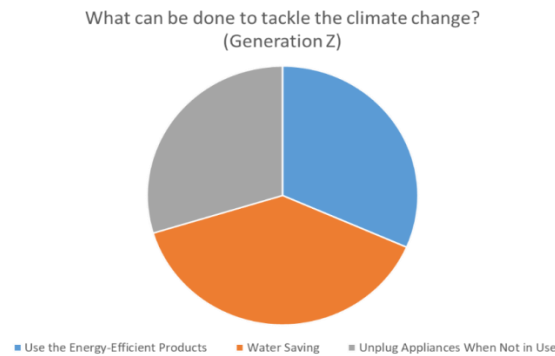
**Figure 35.** Individual Actions to Fight Climate Change

As depicted in Figure 35, out of a total of 650 participants,

- 82 found that “Reduce the Consumption of Red Meat”,
- 330 found that “Commute to Work by Public Transport, Bike or Foot”,



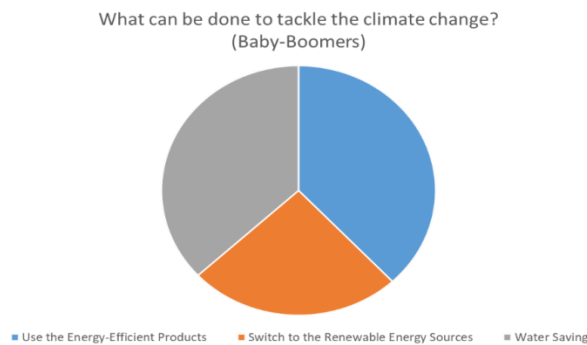
- 447 found that “Use the Energy-Efficient Products”,
- 262 found that “Switch to the Renewable Energy Sources”,
- 185 found “Reduce Private Car Use”,
- 273 found that “Waste Sorting”,
- 487 found that “Water Saving”,
- 201 found that “The Thermal Insulation of Your Own House”
- 327 found that “Unplug Appliances When Not in Use”
- 248 found that “Stop Using Plastic Bags for Grocery Shopping”
- 28 found that “Buy an Electric Car” as an individually feasible method in combating climate change.



**Figure 36.** Individual Actions to Fight Climate Change According to Generation Z

As depicted in Figure 36, out of 325 participants of Generation Z,

- 252 participants (77.5%) found that “Water Saving”,
- 205 participants (63.07%) found that “Use the Energy-Efficient Products”
- 193 participants (59.38%) found that “Unplug Appliances When Not in Use” as an individually most 3 feasible methods in combating climate change.



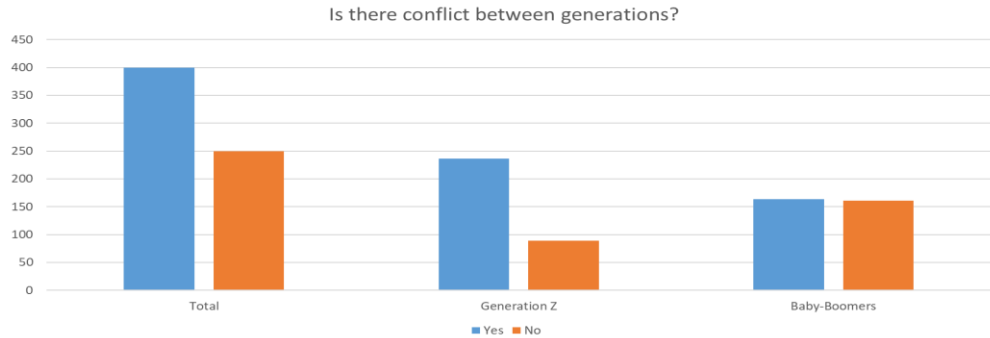
**Figure 37.** Individual Actions to Fight Climate Change According to Baby-Boomers

As depicted in Figure 37, out of 325 participants of the Baby-Boom Generation,

- 242 participants (74.46%) found that “Use the Energy-Efficient Products”,
- 235 participants (72.30%) found that “Water Saving”,
- 160 participants (49.23%) found that “Switch to Renewable Energy Sources” as an individually most 3 feasible methods in combating climate change.

Although not at the same rate, both generations have resorted to “Use the Energy-Efficient Products” and “Water Saving” in individual struggles against climate change at a high rate. This situation can be associated with water scarcity and water-related hazards, which are the most frightening threats for both generations in the face of climate change. In addition, both generations included solutions related to energy efficiency among the most common individual solutions.

**4.3.6. Intergenerational Conflict and The Reflection & Interpretation of it on Generations**



**Figure 38.** Intergenerational Conflict

As depicted in Figure 38, out of a total of 650 participants; 400 (61.5%) stated that there was a conflict between generations, while only 250 (34.46%) stated that there was not. 73% of participants of Generation Z (236 people) state that there is conflict between generations while 27% of them (89 people) state the exact opposite. However, the proportion of the Baby Boomer participants who think that intergenerational conflict exists or not is almost half and half. In other words, out of 325 participants of the Baby-Boom Generation, 164 stated that there was a conflict between generations while 161 stated that there was not. That is, Generation Z

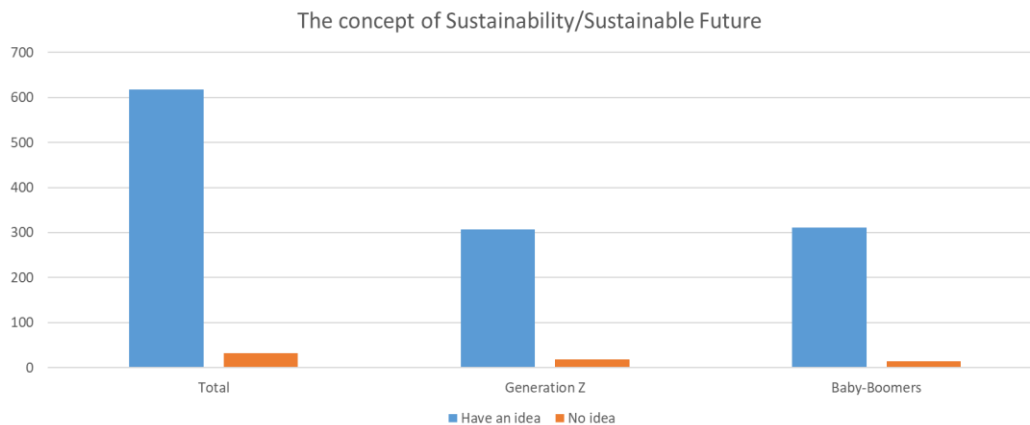
experiences the difference between generations more intensely than the Baby Boom Generation and defines this difference as conflict.

According to the survey results, Generation Z participants stated that older generations were not as sensitive and conscious about climate change as their generation and that older generations had a more callous approach because they would not be affected by the crisis as much as young people and children. Some Generation Z participants, on the contrary, found their generation more unconscious and stated that the propensity to save and the consumption habits of older generations were more sensitive. In addition, Generation Z criticized the fact that older generations did not benefit from technology and therefore had poor access to information. They stated that the older generations did not adopt innovative solutions (using environmentally friendly products, being vegan, not using plastic bags, etc.) in the fight against climate change and held the older generations responsible for the deterioration of the balance in nature. They stated that the older generations are only concerned with their struggle to earn a living and cannot prioritize an issue such as climate change.

The Baby Boom Generation, on the other hand, stated that Generation Z as a product of the consumer society and accused them of not saving. Generation Z participants, who are often accused of being irresponsible youth who do not think about the future, are honored with being much more conscious and modern in the eyes of some Baby Boom Generation participants. As a matter of fact, as explained in the analysis of the previous questions in the survey, the level of awareness and sensitivity of the Baby Boom Generation regarding climate change is higher than Generation Z. In this context, the criticisms made by Generation Z about the previous generations are not in line with the survey results.

Those 250 participants who stated that there is no intergenerational conflict stated that climate change was the responsibility of all generations. In other words, they stated the issue was a transgenerational issue. They found the difference of the way of thinking between generations is usual when considering the time difference between them and could not describe this difference as a conflict.

#### 4.3.7. The Concepts of “Sustainability” and “Sustainable Future”



**Figure 39.** The Concept of Sustainability/Sustainable Future

As depicted in Figure 39, Out of a total of 650 participants; 618 could define the concepts of “Sustainability” / “Sustainable Future” while 32 of them could not. Out of 325 participants of Generation Z, 307 could define the concepts of “Sustainability” / “Sustainable Future”, while 311 Boomers could. While the ratio between them is close, as clearly seen here, it is evident that the Baby Boom generation has more knowledge about concepts that can be associated with climate change. Also, both generations have mostly defined the concepts of sustainability and a sustainable future by associating them with future generations and emphasizing the limitation of resources. The key words used during the definition are mostly; meeting the needs of future generations, balanced and efficient use of resources, and livable and clean environment.

*“For me, sustainable means ongoing, continuing. Whatever needs people have had access to in the past, they should also have easy access to in the future. This should cover all needs such as food, shelter, security, etc. This is sustainability. (A Boomer)*

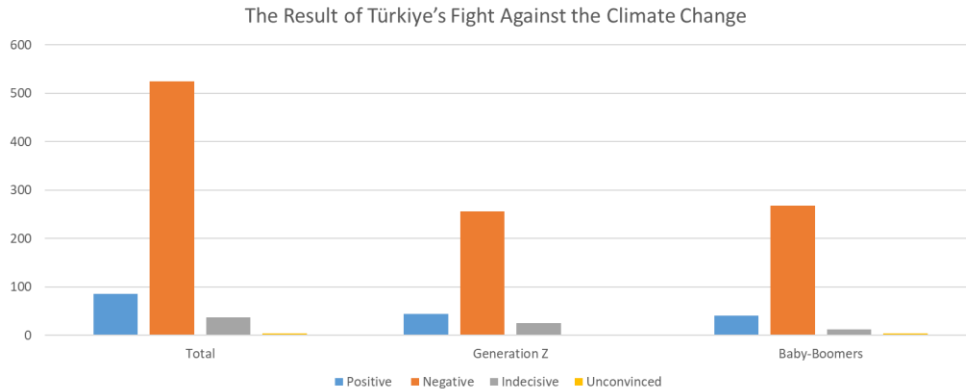
*“When we were children, my grandmother used to sew pajamas for us from ‘poplin’ or ‘pağzen’ produced and sold by Sümerbank. We used to wear those pajamas in summer and winter, and then we would give them to someone in need. This is what sustainability means.”(A Boomer)*

*“I would like to explain this concept with a proverb: We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” (A Boomer)*

*“It can be defined as being aware that resources are limited and spreading this awareness to a generation.” (A Generation Z)*

*“Reducing consumption and recycling products is the cornerstone of a sustainable future.” (A Generation Z)*

#### 4.3.8. The Result of Türkiye’s Fight against the Climate Change



**Figure 40.** The Result of Türkiye’s Fight Against the Climate Change

As depicted in Figure 40, out of a total of 650 participants; 524 stated that Türkiye’s fight against climate change would result in a negative outcome while 85 stated that it would result in a positive outcome. While 37 participants stated that they were indecisive and 4 of them stated that they did not convince or believe in the existence of climate change. In other words, 80.61% predict the outcome of the fight negatively, 13.07% positively; 5.69% are indecisive, and 0.61% state that they are not convinced/believe in the existence of climate change. If this ratio is analyzed separately for both generations, it can be said that, out of a total of 325 participants of Generation Z, 256 stated that Türkiye’s fight against climate change would result in a negative outcome, while 268 participants were from the Baby Boom Generation. 78.76% of Generation Z predicts the outcome of the fight negatively, 13.53% positively and 7.69% are indecisive. However, 82.46% of participants from the Baby Boom Generation predict the outcome of the fight negatively, 12.61% positively; 3.69% are indecisive and 1.2% do not believe in the existence of the crisis. This situation can be explained by the higher level of awareness in the Baby Boom Generation compared to Generation Z. That’s it, the picture drawn by the Baby Boom Generation participants in Türkiye’s fight against climate change is much

more pessimistic than that of Generation Z. On the other hand, the reason for the negative result, which is so high for both generations, is generally reflected in the answers that Türkiye has more important problems, that people do not sufficiently grasp the importance of the issue, and that Türkiye's political stance on the issue is not sincere and is only for claptrap. If approached specifically by the Z Generation, it is possible to make the following inference regarding the subject. Generation Z, associated with the Hero archetype and born in the Unraveling Period when individualism is strong, is a generation open to value differences. As a result of socio-political instabilities and economic problems in Türkiye, they are trying to deal with anticipatory anxiety. They have feelings of fear, despair, and worry regarding the future. Generation Z, desiring to change the existing order, must combine this desire with the sanction power of the Baby Boom Generation, which has the power to perform designated actions as competent authorities. Only in this way can the global and intergenerational climate crisis be solved.

#### **4.4. Results of the Survey**

As a general result of the survey, it has been determined that the Baby Boom Generation has a higher level of awareness regarding climate change compared to Generation Z. In the 5 most serious problems in the World and Türkiye part of this chapter, it is clearly shown that climate change, with 128 participants (39.38%), ranks 6th as the most serious issue for the Baby-Boom Generation. On the other hand, climate change, with 101 participants (31.07%), ranks 9th as the most serious issue for Generation Z. Unfortunately, climate change is not among the top 5 issues they prioritize for both generations. Both generations give more importance to economic problems, not having fundamental rights and freedoms, and the migration phenomenon. It means that both generations are suffering from and struggling with the same issues in Türkiye. It also means that these issues overshadow the issue of climate change.

Similar to the prioritization of climate change by the Baby Boom Generation, as depicted in the related tables, it is possible to say that Baby Boom Generation participants are more likely to accept Türkiye's historical responsibility for climate

change, more aware and supportive of climate activism around the World than Generation Z participants.

The results of the survey conducted within the scope of this thesis align with the findings of the Climate Crisis Perception Research published by the Yuvam Dünya Association in collaboration with KONDA in the years 2022 and 2023. According to the research of Yuvam Dünya and KONDA in 2023, 75% of the 2215 participants were aware that climate change poses a dangerous situation. According to the research of these mentioned institutions in 2022, individuals aged 15-17 are conscious of climate change but may not be as committed to taking responsibility as older generations. In other words, older generations have a responsibility to take action to mitigate climate change both for themselves and also future generations. The survey results indicate that there is an increasing tendency to engage in the fight against climate change as age increases. Indeed, older generations feel more vulnerable to the destructive effects of climate change than the younger generation. Consequently, these findings are in line with the results of the survey conducted within the scope of this thesis.

On the other hand, in the section titled ‘evaluation of the characteristics of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z in terms of Climate Change’ of the thesis, as depicted in Figure 8, table 7, and Table 8, research conducted outside of Türkiye find that younger generations are both more aware of and also experience more concern over the impact of climate change. Indeed, that section includes the results of surveys conducted in the United States, all EU countries, and the Philippines about the issue of climate change based on gender differences. So, in contrast to Türkiye, younger generations in these regions show higher awareness of the climate crisis. Besides the figure and tables in that section, according to another and current research conducted in the UK, “*while there are no generational differences in the acknowledgment of the reality and seriousness of climate change, emotional engagement among older generations appears to be lacking.*” (Poortinga, Demski and Steentjes, 2023). One significant area of this study revolves around exploring how communication strategies and interventions can be employed to enhance the emotional involvement of older generations, ultimately benefiting both younger individuals and future

generations. Similarly, to investigate differences in generational perspectives on climate change, a team of researchers from Cardiff University and the University of Bath in the United Kingdom collected data nationwide through surveys conducted between 2020 and 2022. The surveys encompassed ten questions designed to assess respondents' beliefs, perceptions of risk, and emotions experienced about climate change. Results published in the journal 'Communications Earth & Environment' indicated that Generation Z and millennials reveal higher levels of fear, guilt, and outrage with more consciousness regarding the impacts of climate change when compared to Generation X, Baby Boomers, and post-war groups. In summary, the survey results conducted within the scope of this thesis align with regular climate crisis perception research in Türkiye but contradict studies conducted in the European Union, the United Kingdom, the U.S., and the Philippines.

Moreover, according to the results of the survey of this thesis, both generations mostly hold the central government responsible for the issues they have identified. In the research conducted by Yuvam Dünya Association and Konda in 2022, when asked which actors in society were responsible for combating climate change, 55% of the participants stated that they held the government and citizens responsible. A similar result has also been revealed within the scope of this thesis. More clearly, out of a total of 650 participants, 611 held central government and 522 held individuals as the most responsible for the most serious problems which they identified.

Both generations see educating young people and children, organizing social activities that increase awareness, raising awareness through media channels, and making the law a solution. Indeed, as a recommendation, the most effective solutions determined by the majority of participants regarding Türkiye's fight against climate change should be implemented as soon as possible. In this context, the central government, local administrations, non-governmental organizations, and individuals from each generation in society should collectively take action. Indeed, detailed recommendations related to this issue have been presented in the conclusion part of the thesis.

Lastly, from 2018 to the present, it has been observed in perception studies conducted by the Yuvam Dünya Association and Konda on climate change that the



level of concern about climate change has been increasing each year. Specifically, in the report published in 2023, the following three questions took part.

1. *“How worried are you about climate change?”*
2. *“How much do you think climate change will harm future generations of people?”*
3. *“How much do you think climate change will harm you personally?”*

According to responses to these questions, 67% of the society expressed concern about climate change. Similarly, in the survey conducted within the scope of this thesis, the majority of participants, regardless of generational differences, were concerned and pessimistic about the future of Türkiye regarding climate change.

Even though both generations have negative and hopeless thoughts about Türkiye's struggle with the climate crisis, they need to build the future by supporting each other. For members of these two generations who have no faith in either the central government or local administrations, the only way out from the crisis is to fight together. In conclusion, If the awareness level in society increases and generations can form a collective movement, the central and local governments may put more effort into this issue. Conversely, from another perspective, if the central and local governments put more effort into this issue, a solution will be generated as the awareness level in society rises. The key here is to ensure this two-way flow of information between Baby Boomers and Generation Z regarding past efforts, challenges, and potential solutions without further delay.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. Summary and Discussions

Climate change affects all natural habitats, ecosystems, and biodiversity. Temperature and precipitation patterns may upset the ecological balance and result in the extinction of entire species. Climate change may affect human health in a variety of ways, including the spread of infectious illnesses, an increase in heat-related disorders, and changes to the availability of food and water supplies. Extreme weather and environmental disturbances have a significant economic impact on infrastructure, insurance prices, agriculture, and overall productivity. In addition to these negative impacts, it might worsen already present inequality in society and fuel resource-related disputes, migration, and geopolitical tensions.

The fact that climate change affects all generations differently means it is a multi-generational issue. Different age groups may experience and perceive the impacts in distinctive ways. Amnesty International Report in 2021 sheds light on the challenges of marginalized individuals, particularly those younger and older. For example, younger generations bear the long-term consequences of climate change, such as rising sea levels, drought, severe hurricanes, and water and food shortages. They will inherit a world with potentially more significant challenges related to climate change. On the other hand, older generations may witness changes in their lifetime and may be concerned about the well-being of future generations. They may also be more accustomed to existing systems and infrastructure that could be affected by climate-related changes. Therefore, combating climate change requires collective and intergenerational action. This thesis emphasizes the significance of intergenerational communication in addressing climate change, asserting that older generations need to

transfer their experiences to younger ones to build a robust bridge for effective collaboration. In other words, recognizing the multi-generational nature of the issue with a shared responsibility is crucial for developing effective and sustainable solutions that consider the needs and perspectives of different generations. Mitigating climate change without further delay is essential for ensuring a sustainable and habitable planet for future generations.

As clearly emphasized in the literature section of the thesis, Strauss and Howe (1997), who developed the Generation Theory by conducting the most comprehensive generation study today, defined generation “*as the sum of people who were born at the same time, share a common place in history and thus have almost a shared personality.*” The widely accepted theory frankly shows that the matter of generations’ classification is more of a sociological matter than a biological one, with social changes shaping generational awareness and consciousness. In other words, what kind of environment generations are born and raised in determines their awareness and consciousness level in the face of any change, such as social, cultural, political, legal, economic, psychological, environmental, etc. By raising awareness and consciousness about any local or global crisis, individuals from each generation can contribute to a collective effort to address the crisis and create a more sustainable future for all. In this context, examining and comparing the awareness and consciousness levels of Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2010) and the Baby Boom Generation (born between 1946 and 1964) in Türkiye toward climate change constitutes the main focus of this thesis. The thesis emphasizes the importance of understanding the experiences and characteristics of the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z to comprehend their attitudes and behaviors regarding global challenges, specifically climate change. For example, for the Baby Boom Generation, as mentioned in the literature section of the thesis in a detailed manner, the historical events Baby Boomers lived through, such as the Cold War, 1968 Student Uprisings, and social revolutions, are considered influential factors in shaping their perspectives. The section related with the Baby Boom Generation directly concludes by acknowledging the need to examine how the Baby Boom Generation responds to climate change, given the unique challenges and experiences of the period between 1946-1964. Similarly, in the literature section of the thesis, the

historical process of Generation Z is outlined, highlighting remarkable technological developments and their impact on their personal lives. The generation is characterized by its dependence on technology, globalization, and a blurred distinction between virtual and physical space. Thus, an assessment has been made based on their past experiences generally related to digitalization and how they shaped the attitude the generation has adopted/will adopt towards climate change. The reason for choosing Generation Z and the Baby Boom Generation as the young and old generations, respectively, is that these two generations represent historically different extremes and are, in terms of the majority of the population, the youngest and oldest generations. The thesis mentions the widening gap between these generations, particularly accelerated by the Covid-19 Pandemic and increased digitalization. It also highlights the demographic significance of the two generations, with Baby Boomers representing a significant portion of the World's and Türkiye's population, while Generation Z is identified as the future dominant generation.

In the literature section of the thesis, there is some academic research related to generational perspectives on climate change all around the World. The presented research and articles include the results of surveys conducted in the United States, all EU countries, and the Philippines about the issue of climate change based on gender differences. The results show that younger generations in those regions, particularly Generation Z, experience a more personal connection to climate change and feel more concerned about climate change than older generations, with a higher percentage considering it a top priority. On the other hand, the results of the research conducted in cooperation with KONDA, and the survey conducted within the scope of this thesis, both covered in Chapter 4 in detail, show that older generations feel more sensitive to the climate crisis. Considering that the generations in each region are exposed to different historical processes in the same period of history, it is very usual to experience this differentiation.

Moreover, there is particular importance and notable differentiation here that such a study was carried out in Türkiye because the Mediterranean Basin, including Türkiye, is indeed identified as one of the areas that will face considerable challenges due to the destructive effects of climate change, as highlighted by the

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its 5th Assessment Report in 2014. Besides its geographical disadvantages, another reason that put Türkiye in such a critical position in the process of combating the climate crisis is that Türkiye taking place as one of the developing countries with limited power in all international agreements, clearly explained in Chapter 3, is an OECD and G20 member and a candidate country for the European Union. That extensive chapter emphasized the historical context of Türkiye's participation in climate-related agreements, particularly UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement. So, Türkiye's attitude in this process is worth examining.

To make a specific comparison regarding the climate crisis between both generations in Türkiye, the required information was gathered through the survey with 28 questions posed to 650 participants, with 325 participants from each generation. The survey results were analyzed in the light of the generational archetypes and turnings defined by Strauss and Howe and how the historical periods in which generations were born and raised influence their perspectives towards a global issue today. Overall, the thesis seeks to provide insights into the attitudes of different generations, particularly the Baby Boom Generation and Generation Z, towards climate change and proposes intergenerational solutions ve recommendations for Türkiye's fight against climate change.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

As emphasized in the previous chapters of the thesis and supported by data from the survey, intergenerational solidarity, and intergenerational collaboration are significant notions to find an efficient and effective solution for the destructive effects of climate change as soon as possible. Firstly, intergenerational collaboration is defined as the intentional gathering of two or more generations around a common purpose, facilitating beneficial information sharing. In the current state, the common purpose is fighting against climate change, with a two-way flow of information between Baby Boomers and Generation Z living in Türkiye regarding past efforts, challenges, and potential solutions. Consideration of social diversity is crucial when formulating and implementing climate policies. In this sense, the needs and

perspectives of different generations should be taken into account. The role of technology, specifically the digital divide between Generation Z and Baby Boomers, is highlighted as a significant factor influencing intergenerational dynamics. Therefore, in the light of the study, as a beneficial recommendation for the future, it emphasizes the importance of social networks, government policies, and mentorship programs in fostering intergenerational collaboration and contributing to social welfare for combating climate change. Secondly, intergenerational solidarity is introduced, referring to activities or programs that enhance cooperation and interaction between generations. The thesis argues that intergenerational solidarity is crucial for social cohesion and forms the basis of community welfare and informal care systems. As a matter of fact, both intergenerational collaboration and intergenerational solidarity are at the core of the notion of sustainable development. So, there is a need to approach global problems, which is climate change in this case, collectively, utilizing the wealth of perspectives from different generations for fair and inclusive solutions. Formal tools, such as government-supported programs, and complement informal methods, can create a solid bridge between younger and older generations. Thanks to these government-supported programs, it can have a chance to avoid the worst future impacts of climate change. Beside of these government-supported programs, it is a prerequisite to implement generation-inclusive policies to combat climate change at local, national, and global levels. Suppose the right decisions are made today to save the planet from the consequences of climate change. In that case, these decisions promote sustainable development and a healthy environment for tomorrow's generations. When governments implement ambitious and adequate climate policies or programs, they should encourage young generations to be involved in these policy-making or decision-making processes. It is significant that all individuals take action for a more sustainable future. In other words, improving the public participation of especially younger generations in climate politics plays a crucial role in finding effective and sustainable solutions in the fight against climate change. Since younger generations will have to live with the worst effects of climate change and become the decision-makers of tomorrow, they need to contribute to finding the right solutions today. As the official UNDP website states, it is no longer possible to speak about the Global Goals apart from intergenerational

solidarity. UN Secretary-General António Guterres' speech at the International Youth Day 2023 emphasizes the importance of intergenerational solidarity. During his speech, he mentioned he launched a policy brief calling for governments to make youth participation in policy and decision-making processes the norm. He also emphasized the need to equip young people with the knowledge and skills to shape a cleaner, greener, and more climate-resilient future. He stressed the importance of supporting young people for a just and sustainable world and to stand with them rather than against them. According to the Intergenerational Solidarity The Way Forward Report, The Netherlands for instance has for years been selecting two official youth delegates for sustainable development to represent in the national delegation to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), and also attend other meetings such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of Parties (UNFCCC COP). Hence, participatory processes consisting of a young generation of participants can help policymakers, who are the Baby Boomers in general, understand the needs and concerns of the public. Therefore, Generation Z, desiring to change the existing order, expresses this desire with their knowledge and skills by taking place in public participation and merging it with the sanction power of the Baby Boom Generation, which has the power to perform designated actions as government authorities. These climate policies and programs implemented by governments and the participation of young generations in these policy processes will become more effective, with local governments taking an active role in the process. Like many environmental issues, local governments are at the core of finding a solution for climate change. Since the local and regional authorities are the implementers of national and international policies at the local level, they play a fundamental role in contributing to the decisions related to environmental, political, social, and economic. They have the power to educate all generations in their regions about what climate change is, what the effects of climate change are, and so on. Thanks to this, the local population can raise awareness of the need to fight against climate change. According to the report published by the King Baudouin Foundation in 2010, the mentality should be based on thinking globally and acting locally for a sustainable future. For example, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), has launched a program called

"Carbonn". This program ensures the development of the cities to be low-carbon cities. It consults the cities by providing climate expertise, especially concerning carbon emission monitoring. If all local units fulfill their responsibilities in an issue that should be acted upon with a global mindset, and if programs such as the Carbonn Programme become widespread worldwide, serious progress will be made in the fight against the climate crisis. The best example for Türkiye is the climate change related analyses in 4 pilot municipalities identified after the first Climate Council in Türkiye, as mentioned in Chapter 4. The dissemination of these and similar studies in all provinces of Türkiye is necessary in combating the climate crisis. Apart from all of these recommendations, competent authorities should also organize awareness-raising initiatives such as educational campaigns, seminars, and media coverage, and the people should get involved in these climate-friendly and sustainable development initiatives. Especially educational campaigns and a broader expression of education itself for a more climate-resilient future are the main points to build a bridge between the generations. Education should interactively target and improve all generations of society. Thanks to this, it establishes a mutual relation between generations. Moreover, financial incentives should be provided to guide the people towards climate-friendly tools such as reusable shopping bags, grabber tools, energy-efficient appliances, and so on, or products that meet high environmental and performance standards. If all of these initiatives can be made more attractive by the competent authorities to the people and an awareness can be created in society, it can contribute to environmentally and socially sustainable outcomes.

Consequently, according to the survey results obtained within the scope of this thesis, it is essential to raise the awareness level of Generation Z in Türkiye about climate change. Educating the generation, as explained above and supported by examples similar to the initiatives abroad, and participating in decision-making processes on this issue that will directly affect their future will increase the likelihood of a positive outcome in the fight against climate change. On the other hand, increasing the capacity of local governments in Türkiye to tackle climate change will contribute positively to the struggle by leading to an overall capacity increase at a central level. In addition, for all 81 provinces of Türkiye to become carbon neutral, local governments should try to protect their own regions against such a severe



global crisis by making them resistant to climate change. In this context, international organizations' projects and programs to develop local governments should be followed. A road map suitable for Türkiye should be drawn, and the decisions taken by the climate council should be followed faithfully. Apart from all these, traditional and social media tools in Türkiye should more frequently include news and content that will raise public awareness of climate change and increase the sensitivity level in society. In addition, the public should be encouraged to use climate-friendly products. All these initiatives to combat climate change should be spread to all societal generations. If individuals from all generations in society can fight this struggle together and a collective consciousness can be created, it will be possible to get out of this crisis.

To create this consciousness, it is essential that Boomers, who have the power of authority, listen to the demands of Generation Z, who will dominate the future, and provide them with the necessary tools. Only in this way will a way out of this crisis become possible. It is vital to recognize a space for the past experiences of older generations to contribute to the future of younger generations and the World in general. As emphasized throughout this study, the most important thing not to forget is that climate change is not only a global issue but also an intergenerational one. This is why, as UN Secretary-General António Guterres has made clear, older generations must support younger generations and stand alongside them with the wisdom of their past experiences to build a climate-resilient, sustainable future.

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## APPENDICES

### A. QUESTIONNAIRE OF SURVEY / ANKET SORULARI

9.02.2024 17:38

İklim Krizi Duyarlılığı Anketi

## İklim Krizi Duyarlılığı Anketi

\* Gerekli

⋮

1. Adınız soyadınız nedir? (İsterseniz yalnızca isminizi belirtmeniz yeterli olacaktır.) \*

2. Doğum tarihiniz nedir? \*

3. Kendinizi aşağıdaki seçeneklerden hangisi ile tanımlamayı tercih edersiniz? \*

- Kadın
- Erkek
- Trans
- Genderqueer / Non-binary
- Belirtmek istemiyorum.

## 4. Eğitim durumunuz nedir? \*

- Okuma yazması yok
- Okur yazar
- İlkokul mezunu
- Ortaokul mezunu
- Lise mezunu
- Üniversite mezunu
- Yüksek lisans
- Doktora

## 5. Şu anki iş durumunuz nedir? \*

- Çalışmıyor/Çalışmak istemiyor
- İşsiz/İş bulamıyor
- Öğrenci
- Yarı zamanlı çalışıyor/Ücretli
- Tam zamanlı çalışıyor/Ücretli
- Kendi işine/iş yerine sahip
- Aile işinde çalışıyor
- Emekli

6. Eğer çalışıyorsanız, yaptığınız işi niteliğine göre nasıl sınıflandırırsınız?  
(Birden fazla yanıt verebilirsiniz.)

- Kamu sektöründe memur/işçi
- Özel sektör çalışanı
- Üst düzey bürokrat
- Üst düzey yönetici (özel sektör)
- Profesyonel meslek grupları (Akademisyen, eğitimci, doktor, avukat, mühendis, mimar vb.)
- Teknisyen/Tekniker/Makine operatörleri/Yardımcı profesyonel meslek grupları
- Hizmet ve satış elemanları (Garson, kuaför, bina sorumlusu, temizlik ve bakım işleri sorumlusu vb.)
- Nitelikli tarım, ormancılık ve su ürünleri çalışanları (Bahçıvan, bitkisel ürün ve hayvan yetiştiricisi, balıkçı vb.)
- Sanatkarlar ve ilgili işlerde çalışanlar (Boyacı, demirci, el sanatları çalışanı, ahşap mobilya imalatçısı, tekstil ve giyim eşyası ile ilgili işlerde çalışan vb.)
- Yoğun fiziksel emek gerektiren işlerde çalışanlar
- Zamanın çoğu dış ortamda geçirilen işlerde çalışanlar (kamu veya özel sektörde işçi statüsünde olanlar, dış ortamda iş yapan şoför, bekçi vb.)



7. Oturduğunuz evin mülkiyet durumu nedir? \*

- Ev sahibiyim
- Kiracıyım
- Lojmanda yaşıyorum
- Aile evinde ücretsiz yaşıyorum
- Arkadaşlarımla paylaşımlı bir evde yaşıyorum
- Diğer

8. Oturduğunuz evin niteliği nedir? \*

- Bahçeli müstakil ev
- Tek katlı apartman dairesi
- Dupleks vb. çok katlı daire
- Gecekondu
- Diğer

9. Hanede arabanız var mı? \*

- Yok
- Var, bir tane
- Var, iki tane
- Var, üç tane veya daha fazla

10. Eğer arabanız varsa, aracı ne sıklıkla kullanıyorsunuz?

- Her gün
- Gün aşırı
- Haftada birkaç kez
- Sadece hafta sonları
- Nadiren/özel durumlarda

11. Türkiye'deki hayat pahalılığı sosyalleşme sıklığınızı olumsuz yönde etkiledi mi? \*

- Evet
- Hayır

12. Haftada kaç kere, sosyalleşme amacıyla dışarıda vakit geçirebiliyorsunuz? (Arkadaşlarla buluşup yemek yemek/içmek, sinemaya/tiyatroya/konsere/müzeye gitmek, yeni bir şehre/ülkeye gitmek) \*

- Haftada birden az/Nadiren
- Haftada bir kere
- Haftada iki kere
- Haftada üç veya daha fazla

13. Sizin için, küresel ölçekteki ve Türkiye'deki en önemli 5 sorun nedir? \*

Lütfen 5 seçenek belirleyin.

- 1) Ekonomik sorunlar (Gelir eşitsizliği, Hayat Pahalılığı/Enflasyon, İşsizlik, Ekonomik İstikrarsızlık vb.)
- 2) Terörizm
- 3) Çevre kirliliği
- 4) İklim değişikliği
- 5) Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliği
- 6) Göç
- 7) Nitelikli eğitim ve sağlık hizmetlerine erişim olmaması
- 8) Temel hak ve özgürlüklerin kısıtlanması
- 9) Güvenlik
- 10) Mali ve siyasi yolsuzluk
- 11) Suç ve şiddet olayları
- Bunlardan hiçbiri
- Bir fikrim yok
- Diğer

14. Yukarıda seçmiş olduğunuz 5 sorunu, lütfen önem sırasına göre, sırasıyla yazınız. \*

15. Tanımlamış olduğunuz sorunların kaynağı olarak, en çok kimleri sorumlu buluyorsunuz/tutuyorsunuz? \*

Lütfen 3 seçenek belirleyin.

- 1) Merkezi hükümet
- 2) Yerel yönetimler
- 3) Sivil toplum kuruluşları
- 4) Bireyler
- Bunlardan hiçbiri
- Bir fikrim yok
- Diğer

16. Yukarıda seçmiş olduğunuz 3 sorumluyu, lütfen önem sırasına göre (size göre, sorumluluk düzeyi en yüksek olandan en düşük olana doğru) sırasıyla yazınız. \*

17. (Sanayi devriminden bu yana yayılan kümülatif karbondioksit miktarı, iklim adaleti hakkında yapılan tartışmaların merkezinde yer alıyor. Gelişmiş ülkeler, bu salımda büyük bir paydaya sahip olmakla beraber, kriz ile başa çıkmak için gereken küresel mücadelede devletlerin katlanması gereken yüklü ekonomik maliyetlerden, Türkiye gibi gelişmekte olan ülkelere kıyasla, mevcut kaynakları sebebiyle daha az etkilenmektedirler. Dolayısıyla, daha adil bir durum inşa edebilmek adına, gelişmiş ülkelerin, bugüne dek olan faaliyetlerinin tarihsel sorumluluğunu kabul edip, olan/olası yaptırımlardan daha fazla mesul tutulması şeklinde uluslararası bir normun benimsenmesinden bahsetmek mümkündür. Bu norm kapsamında Türkiye'nin tarihsel sürecini ve bugünkü gelişmişlik düzeyini değerlendirerek aşağıda yer alan soruyu yanıtlamanızı rica ediyorum.)

Küresel ölçekte en riskli ve en büyük sorunlardan biri olarak kabul edilen İklim Krizi'ne karşı, Türkiye'nin 'tarihsel bir sorumluluğu' olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? \*

Evet

Hayır

18. Tanımlamış olduğunuz sorunların temsili, yansıtılması ve takibi konusunda 'geleneksel medyayı' mı yoksa 'sosyal medyayı' mı tercih ediyorsunuz? \*

Geleneksel medya (Televizyon, Radyo, Dergi, Gazete)

Sosyal medya (Twitter, Instagram, Youtube vb.)

19. Dünya'nın pek çok yerinde son dönemde 'iklim aktivistlerince' çeşitli protesto eylemlerinde artış gözlemleniyor. Medyada da bu konu önemli bir yer tutuyor ve insanların iklim aktivistliği algısını kimi zaman olumsuz yönde etkileyebiliyor. Siz bu eylemlerden haberdar mısınız? \*

Evet

Hayır

20. Haberdar iseniz, bu tür eylemleri destekliyor musunuz?

Evet

Hayır

21. Tanımlamış olduğunuz sorunlar için, en etkin çözüm yolu/yolları nelerdir? \*

Lütfen 5 seçenek belirleyin.

- 1) Protestoya katılmak
- 2) Politikacılarla veya üst düzey bürokratlarla iletişime geçmek
- 3) Örgütlenmek (Sokaklarda, üniversitelerde, sosyal medya üzerinden vb.)
- 4) Gençleri ve çocukları eğitmek
- 5) Yasal düzenlemeler yapmak (insanlara yaptırım uygulamak/ceza vermek vb.)
- 6) Parasal vb. yollarla insanları/firmaları teşvik etmek
- 7) Medya kanalları ile farkındalığı arttırmak
- 8) Bilinç düzeyini arttırabilecek sosyal faaliyetler düzenlemek
- Bunlardan hiçbiri
- Bir fikrim yok
- Diğer

22. Yukarıda seçmiş olduğunuz 5 çözüm yolunu, lütfen, size göre en etkili olacak olandan başlayarak sıralayınız. \*



23. İklim Krizi ile mücadelede bireysel olarak neler yapılabilir/neler yapıyorsunuz? (Birden fazla yanıt verebilirsiniz.) \*

- Kırmızı et tüketimini azaltmak
- İşe toplu taşıma, bisiklet veya yürüyerek gitmek
- Enerji tasarruflu ürünler kullanmak (Led ampüller, pencere izolasyon yalıtım filmi, akıllı termostatlar, vb.)
- Yenilenebilir enerji kaynaklarına yönelmek
- Daha az özel araç kullanmak
- Çöpleri ayrıştırmak
- Su tasarrufu yapmak
- Evin ısı yalıtımını güçlendirmek
- Kullanmadığınız elektrikli aletlerin fişini çekmek
- Market alışverişlerinden sonra plastik poşet kullanmamak
- Elektrikli otomobil almak
- Diğer

24. İklim Krizi kuşaklar üstü bir kriz olmakla birlikte, her kuşağın gerek toplumsal gerek küresel sorunlar ile baş etme yöntemleri farklılık gösterebiliyor. Bunu göz önüne aldığınızda, iklim krizinin aciliyetine dair kuşaklar arası bir çatışmadan söz edilebilir mi? \*

- Evet, kuşaklar arası bir çatışma mevcuttur.
- Hayır, kuşaklar arası bir çatışmadan söz edilemez.

25. Bir önceki soruya "evet" ya da "hayır" cevabını vermenizdeki sebep nedir? Kendi hayatınızda bu çatışmayı örneklendirebileceğiniz herhangi bir deneyiminiz mevcut mudur? Örneğin, kendinizi hiç çocuklarınızla veya büyüklerinizle benzer bir çatışmanın içerisinde buldunuz mu? \*

26. Sürdürülebilirlik kavramı sizin için ne ifade ediyor? / Sürdürülebilir bir gelecek tasarlamak size göre nasıl tanımlanabilir? \*

27. Türkiye'nin iklim krizi ile mücadelesinin nasıl sonuçlanacağını düşünüyorsunuz? \*

28. Öncelikle, bu soruya kadar gelip, çalışmamıza katkı sağladığınız için çok teşekkür ederiz. Bu konuda, sizinle daha sonra iletişime geçmemizi ve biraz daha kapsamlı bir görüşme yapmamızı arzu ederseniz, lütfen isim-soyisim ve iletişim bilgilerinizi (email ve/veya cep telefonu) belirtiniz.

## B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Günümüzde dünyanın her yerinde açıkça etkileri gözlemlenebilen iklim değişikliği, dünyanın geleceği için ciddi bir tehdit unsuru oluşturmaktadır. Doğadaki tüm unsurları doğrudan veya dolaylı bir biçimde etkileyen bu küresel sorun giderek bir kriz haline dönüşmektedir. Genel olarak iklim koşullarında meydana gelen dengesiz değişimler ve bu değişimlerin yol açtığı zararlı sonuçların tümü olarak tanımlanabilen iklim değişikliği, yadsınamayacak ölçüde insan etkisini de kapsamaktadır. Birleşmiş Milletler İklim Değişikliği Çerçeve Sözleşmesi (BMİDÇS)'ne göre (1992), iklim değişikliği; insan etkisini de kapsayacak şekilde, karşılaştırılabilir bir zaman periyodunda gözlenen doğal iklim değişikliğine ilaveten, doğrudan ya da dolaylı olarak küresel atmosferin bileşimini bozan insan etkinlikleri sonucunda iklimde oluşan bir değişiklik olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Deniz seviyesinde meydana gelen artış, kuraklık, şiddetli kasırgalar, su ve gıda kıtlığı gibi sonuçları olan iklim değişikliğini önlemek için bütün devletler kendi içlerinde ve birbirleriyle koordineli bir şekilde çözüm yolları geliştirme çabası içerisinde. Bu anlamda küresel ölçekte bir sorun olan iklim değişikliğinin gerek oluşumunda ve hatta söz konusu değişimin bugün bir kriz olarak addedilmesinde; gerek ise olası çözümünde ciddi bir paya sahip olan insan faktörünün iklim krizi hakkındaki bilinç ve duyarlılık seviyesinin önemli bir ölçüt olduğu değerlendirilmiştir. Özetle, bugün Dünya'nın karşı karşıya kaldığı en büyük sorunlardan biri olan iklim değişikliği karşısında devletlerin sorumlu, eşgüdümlü ve yasal yükümlülüklerine bağlı; bireylerin ise duyarlı bir yaklaşım gözetmesi çözüm üretim süreci içerisinde elzemdir.

21. yüzyılın en önemli küresel sorun ve tehditlerinden biri olan iklim değişikliğinin, mevcut toplumlardaki insanları etkileyip genel karakteristiğini şekillendirmesi gibi, en genel haliyle; insanların yaşadıkları dönemde meydana gelen olaylar, gerek kendi hayatlarını gerek toplum hayatını etkilemiş ve bunun sonucunda her kuşak kendine özgü karakter özellikleri ve değer yargıları geliştirmiştir. En yalın haliyle, Hazlett (1992), kuşak kavramını ortak değerler ve yargılar etrafında bütünleşerek farklı kuşaklardan ayrılabilen ortak bir karakter ve davranış olarak tanımlamıştır. Bu

tanımlamada sözü geçen karakter ve davranışlar, hayata dair her meselede bireylere farklı bakış açıları getirebildiği gibi bu çalışma özelinde, iklim acil durumu karşısında oluşmuş farklı bakış açılarını sunmaktadır. Bu sebeple, yerel ve/veya küresel düzeyde yaşanan siyasal, ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel değişimlere karşı her bir kuşağın nasıl bir tavır sergileyeceği ve bu tavrın diğer kuşaklar tarafından nasıl algılanacağı noktasında kuşaklar arasında yaş (doğum yılı) faktörü referans alınarak bir sınıflandırma ve analiz yapmak yararlı olacaktır.

Uluslararası Af Örgütü tarafından yayınlanan raporda (2021) “İklim değişikliğinin yol açtığı durum eşi benzeri görülmemiş bir insan hakları krizidir” ifadesi yer almaktadır. Aynı rapordaki şu ifadeler de dikkat çekicidir. “İklim krizi aslında köklü adaletsizliklerin bir tezahürüdür. İklim değişikliği herkesi etkileyen küresel bir sorun olmasına rağmen, hâlihazırda çeşitli ve kesişen ayrımcılık biçimlerine maruz kalmış veya yapısal eşitsizlikler ve kökleşmiş uygulamalar nedeniyle veya kaynakları, gücü ve ayrıcalıkları adaletsiz bir şekilde dağıtan resmi politikalar sonucunda ötekileştirilen kişi ve grupları orantısız bir şekilde etkilemektedir.” (UAÖ, 2021). Raporun devamında; “ötekileştirilen” olarak atfedilen kişi ve grupların cinsiyet, sınıf, kast, ırk, azınlık statüsü, engellilik, “yaş” ve göç durumu üzerinden ötekileştirildiğini ve bu insanların iklim değişikliğine uyum sağlamada daha fazla zorluk çektiğine değinilmiştir. Birleşmiş Milletler İnsan Hakları Konseyi, iklim değişikliğinin olumsuz etkilerine müdahale edebilmesi için hem kırsal hem de kentsel alanlardaki yaşlı bireylerin direncini ve uyum sağlama kapasitelerini desteklemek amacıyla; devletleri, diğerlerinin yanı sıra, iklim mücadelesinde yaşı da kapsayan bir yaklaşım benimsemeye davet etmiştir (BM İnsan Hakları Konseyi, 44/7 Sayılı Karar, 2020). Bu durumun temel sebepleri arasında; yaşlıların acil durumlar karşısında daha kırılgan olması, sosyal dışlanmaya daha açık olması, Dünya nüfusunun gün geçtikçe yaşlanıyor olması ve iklim krizinin kuşaklararası bir mesele olması ile birlikte, yıllardır süregelen yanlış toplumsal düzenin bir an evvel değişme zarurietini yer almaktadır.

Benzer şekilde, Birleşmiş Milletler İnsan Hakları Konseyi’ne göre, iklim değişikliğine karşı en savunmasız gruplardan bir diğeri de çocuklar ve gençlerdir. Hatta Birleşmiş Milletler İnsan Hakları ve Çevre Özel Raportörü (2018)’ne göre,

hiçbir grup çevresel zarara karşı çocuklar kadar savunmasız değildir. Üstelik UNICEF'in 2015 yılında yayınladığı rapora göre, dünya çocuklarının ve onların da çocuklarının karşı karşıya kaldığı, iklim değişikliğinden daha büyük, gitgide artan başka bir tehdit daha mevcut değildir. Birleşmiş Milletler İnsan Hakları Yüksek Komiserliği'nin 2019 yılında yayınladığı bildiriye göre, iklim değişikliğinden en çok etkilenen insanlar sadece mağdur olarak görülmemeli, daha ziyade iklim değişikliğiyle mücadele için yerel, ulusal ve uluslararası çabalarda değişimin taşıyıcıları ve esas ortakları olarak kabul edilmelidirler. Bir diğer ifade ile çocuklar ve gençler, iklim değişikliğini hafifletme ve uyum sağlama girişimlerine katılma fırsatına sahip olmalı, bu tür tartışmalara anlamlı bir şekilde katılmaları için gereken bilgi ve eğitimle donatılmalı, kendilerini doğrudan etkileyen karar alma süreçlerine dâhil edilmeli ve devletin, risk altındaki çocukları koruma görevini yerine getirmemesi durumunda yasal yollara erişimleri sağlanmalıdır. (Uluslararası Af Örgütü, 2021). Günümüzde Dünya Sağlık Örgütü tarafından yapılan çocuk ve genç tanımlaması, bugün kuşak çalışmalarında Z Kuşağının doğum yıllarını kapsar haldedir.

Uluslararası Af Örgütü tarafından 2021 yılında, Birleşmiş Milletler'in ilgili konularda bugüne dek yayınlamış olduğu raporlara referansla yayınlanan rapora göre iklim değişikliği meselesinde yaş ölçütü üzerinden dezavantajlı/mağdur/öteki olarak değerlendirilen iki kuşak bu tezin yapıtaşını oluşturmuştur. Bu bağlamda kuşak teorisi sosyolojik bir perspektiften yola çıkılarak ve sonrasında iklim değişikliği ile ilişkilendirilerek açıklanmıştır.

Bugünkü anlamda kuşak teorisine, Neil Howe ve William Strauss'un 1991 yılında yapmış olduğu araştırmaların derinlik kazandırdığını söylemek mümkündür. Strauss ve Howe'nin (1991) kuşak teorisi günümüzdeki en kapsamlı kuşak çalışması olmasının yanı sıra, yakın tarihi dönemleri kapsayan bir sistematığe sahip olması bakımından da ayrı bir öneme sahiptir. Ancak, teorinin Amerika tarihi esas alınarak ortaya konmuş olması, diğer bölgelerdeki kuşak çalışmaları açısından bir sınırlılığa yol açabilmektedir. Öte yandan her toplum; farklı tarihsel süreçlerden ve sosyal, kültürel, ekonomik aşamalardan, yapılanmalardan geçmiş olsa dahi Dünya üzerindeki tüm kuşaklar, evrensel olarak sınırları belirlenen yaş aralıkları ve kuşak

tanımlamalarıyla paralellik gösteren pek çok özelliğe sahiptir. Bu da, Strauss ve Howe'nin kuşak teorisinin, belirli sapsmalara rağmen, herhangi bir bölgedeki kuşak analizi için anlamlı bir zemin oluşturduğu gerçeğini deęiřtirmemektedir. Strauss ve Howe, kuşak kavramını, aynı dönemde doğan ve tarihte aynı dönemi paylaşan bir grup insanın bu sebeple ortak bir karakter geliřtirmesi olarak tanımlamaktadır. Öyle ki, aynı tarihsel olayları deneyimleyen aynı kuşak mensubu bireylerin belirli ve tarih boyunca kendisini tekrar eden “arketipler” doğrultusunda benzer karakteristik özellikler taşıdığı iddia edilmektedir. 25 ayrı kuşanın varlığından bahseden ve günümüzde pek çok kiři tarafından kabul görmüş olan Strauss - Howe Kuşak Teorisi, dört ana arketip ile bir döngü halinde ilerleyen kuşaklardan bahsetmektedir. Bu dört arketip; kahin, göçebe, kahraman ve sanatçı arketipleridir. Her bir arketipin farklı bir yaşam döngüsünde olduğu döngü ise sırasıyla; yükseliş, uyanış, çözülme ve kriz dönemleridir.

Literatürde kuşakların sınıflandırılması meselesiyle ilgili farklı referans noktalarının benimsenmesine baęlı olarak gelişen farklı yaklaşımlar olmasının yanı sıra hangi kuşanın hangi yıl aralıklarını kapsadığı konusu da çeşitlilik göstermektedir. Her ne kadar ülkelere ve kültürlere göre deęişiklik gösterse de birçok çalışmada genel olarak kuşaklar aşağıda yer aldığı şekilde beş kuşak temelinde sınıflandırılmıştır:

<b>KUŞAKLAR</b>	<b>YIL ARALIKLARI</b>
Sessiz Kuşak	1926 - 1945
Bebek Patlaması Kuşanı	1946 - 1964
X Kuşanı	1965 - 1979
Y Kuşanı	1980 - 1999
Z Kuşanı	2000 ve sonrası

Son dönem bazı çalışmalar Z Kuşanın doğum tarihinin başlangıcını 1995'e çekerek 2010-2012 yıllarında bitirmiş ve bu tarihten itibaren doğanları Alfa Kuşanı olarak adlandırmıştır. Bu tez kapsamında; daha maddi, daha teknolojik, daha küresel bir Dünya'ya doğan ve dijital kapitalizm ve tüketim kültürünü yoğun bir şekilde deneyimleyen Z Kuşanın doğum yılı son dönem çalışmalarda literatürde yer aldığı haliyle 1995 – 2010/2012 yıllarını kapsar şekilde sınıflandırılmıştır. Çalışma kapsamında bu sınıflandırmanın kabul edilmiş olmasındaki en önemli sebep

dijitalleşmeye olan bağımlılıkları sebebiyle Dijital Yerliler (Digital Natives) olarak da isimlendirilen Z Kuşağının, bu isimlendirmeyi ve bu isimlendirmenin ona kattığı özellikleri taşımasında büyük öneme sahip olan çoğu teknolojik gelişmenin 1995 – 2010/2012 seneleri arasında vuku bulmasıdır.

Bu tez kapsamında, tarihsel açıdan farklı iki ucu temsil etmesi ve nüfus çoğunluğu bakımından yaşayan en genç ve en yaşlı kuşak olmaları sebebiyle, Z Kuşağı (1995 – 2010/2012) ile Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı (1946 – 1964) , kuşaklararası ve küresel bir kriz olan iklim krizine karşı duyarlılık ve bilinç seviyesi açısından kıyaslanmış ve Türkiye'nin iklim krizi ile mücadelesine ve bu vesileyle diğer Dünya ülkelerine katkı sağlayabilecek çözüm yolları sunulmuştur. Bu kıyaslama, Strauss ve Howe tarafından geliştirilen kuşak teorisindeki arketipler ile ilişkilendirilerek yapılmıştır. Bu bağlamda; Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı, kahin arketipi ile, Z Kuşağı ise kahraman ve sanatçı arketipi ile bağdaştırılmıştır.

Tarihsel ve özellikle dijitalleşme bakımından iki zıt ucu temsil eden Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı (1946 – 1964) ve Z Kuşağı (1995 – 2010/2012) arasındaki mesafe Covid-19 Pandemi süreci ile birlikte iyice açılmıştır. “Dijital Yerliler” olarak da addedilen Z Kuşağı ile “Dijital Göçmenler” olarak anılan Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı arasındaki mesafe pandemi dönemindeki dijitalleşme talebi ve sonrasındaki dijital dönüşümler ile gittikçe belirgin hale gelmiştir. Bu sebeple, bu çalışmanın Pandemi sonrası yakın süreçte yapılmış olması anket sonucu ortaya çıkan verilerin analizinde çarpıcı bir öneme sahiptir.

Ayrıca, zamansal boyut bir yana, tezin yazılma amacı düşünüldüğünde, mekânsal boyutta Türkiye'nin araştırma konusu olarak seçilmiş olması kritiktir. Hükümetler Arası İklim Değişikliği Panelinin (IPCC) 2014'te yayımladığı 5'inci Değerlendirme Raporu'na göre Türkiye'nin de içinde bulunduğu Akdeniz Havzası, iklim değişikliğinin olumsuz etkilerinden en çok zarar görecektir. Bu açıdan, Türkiye'de böyle bir çalışma yapılıyor olması ayrı bir önem taşımaktadır. Nitekim son yıllarda küresel ısınmaya bağlı olarak çeşitli ekolojik bozulmaların görülmeye başlandığı Türkiye'yi, iklim değişikliği ile mücadele sürecinde bu kadar kritik bir konuma taşıyan tek neden elbette ki yalnızca

coğrafi konumu değildir. Türkiye'nin aynı zamanda bir OECD, G20 ve AB aday ülkesi olması ve uluslararası iklim değişikliği anlaşmalarda sahip olduğu özel statüsü sebepleriyle de bu süreçteki tutumu incelenmeye değerdir.

Öte yandan, tez konusuna bir de nüfus çoğunluğu perspektifinden yaklaşılacak olursa, bugün dünya nüfusunun %14,97'sini (1 milyar 168 milyon kişi); Türkiye nüfusunun da %12,6'sını (10 milyon 315 bin kişi) 58-76 yaş grubunda olan Bebek Patlaması Kuşağının (1946 – 1964) oluşturduğunu söylemek mümkündür (TÜİK, 2023). Ayrıca, Dünya genelinde Z Kuşağına mensup 1 milyar 253 milyon 463 bin insan yaşamaktadır. Bu sayı ile Z Kuşağı Dünya nüfusunun %16,07'sini oluşturmaktadır. Türkiye'deki Z Kuşağının genel nüfus içerisindeki payı %16,25 (13 milyon 595 bin)'tir (TÜİK, 2023). Bu da Z Kuşağının ileriki yıllarda demografik açıdan en baskın kuşak haline geleceğinin ve şüphesiz ki iklim krizinin etkilerine daha uzun vadede maruz kalacağı için krizin en büyük mağduru olacağını göstermektedir. Ancak, iklim krizinin etkilerinin doğrudan gelecek kuşaklar tarafından tecrübe edilecek olması krizin kuşaklar arası bir mesele olduğu gerçeğini değiştirmemektedir. Toplumsal düzenin yanlış oluşturulması ve yanlış oluşturulmuş bu düzenin sonraki nesillere devredilmesi krizin süregelmesine neden olmaktadır. Krizin çözümü noktasında, Z Kuşağı'nın Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı'ndan farklı bir yaklaşım benimsemesi önemlidir. Bu noktada, kuşaklar arasında sağlıklı bir iletişim ağının kurulması, geçmiş deneyimlerin gelecek kuşaklara aktarımını sağlayacaktır. Bu aktarım da krizin etkileri daha da derinleşmeden geçmişte yapılan hataların fark edilip tekrarlanmasına izin vermeksizin krizin önlenmesini sağlayacaktır. Öte yandan günümüzde karar alıcılar ve hükümet yetkilileri çoğunlukla Bebek Patlaması Kuşağından oluştuğu için Z Kuşağının geleceklerini daha uzun vadede ve daha ciddi boyutlarda etkileyecek olan bu krizle alakalı karar alma süreçlerine dâhil olması ve Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı üzerinde bir yaptırım gücüne sahip olması elzemdir. Pek çok açıdan iki ucu temsil eden bu iki kuşağın söz konusu meselenin çözümü hakkında ortak bir zeminde buluşması ise ancak iklim krizine karşı benzer bir bilinç ve duyarlılık seviyesini yakalamasıyla mümkün olacaktır.

Bu bağlamda, bu tez kapsamında her iki kuşak arasında iklim değişikliği özelinde bir duyarlılık ve bilinç seviyesi kıyası yapılabilmesi için gerekli bilgiler nitel araştırma



yöntemi ile elde edilmiştir. Kuşak değişkeni üzerinden bir inceleme yapılmış olmakla beraber; katılımcıların cevaplarının cinsiyet, eğitim durumu/mesleki durum, medya kullanımı ve sosyoekonomik durumlarına bağlı olarak bir farklılaşma gösterip göstermediğine de dikkat çekilmiştir. Toplamda, her iki kuşaktan 325'er katılımcı olacak şekilde 650 katılımcıya 28 soru yöneltilmiştir. 28 soruluk anket analizinde, açık uçlu olan 4 soru için içerik analizi yapılmış olup çoktan seçmeli 24 soru için ise istatistiksel raporlama yapılmıştır. Anket çalışması çeşitli sosyal medya platformlarında paylaşılarak kişilerin gönüllük esasına dayalı katılımına sunulmuştur. Bebek Patlaması Kuşağından doğum yılı 1946'ya yaklaşan katılımcıların internet okuryazarlığı olmadığı ya da düşük olduğu için anket çalışması ancak yüz yüze ya da telefon görüşmeleri ile tamamlanabilmiştir. Dolayısıyla katılımcıların doğum yılı 1946'ya yaklaştıkça yüz yüze görüşme zarurietiyi ortaya çıktığından ileri yaşlar için örneklem İzmir ili ile sınırlanmak durumunda kalmıştır. Bu, çalışmanın sınırlılıklarından birini oluşturmaktadır. Öte yandan, Z Kuşağı katılımcılarla veya doğum yılı 1964'e yaklaşan Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı katılımcılarla yapılan anket çalışması sorunsuz bir şekilde çevrimiçi olarak tamamlanabilmiştir. Ancak katılımcı profili incelendiğinde, Z kuşağı katılımcıların çoğunluğunun ODTÜ öğrencisi ve mezunu iken, Bebek Patlaması kuşağı katılımcıların çoğunluğunun ODTÜ mezunu olduğu görülmektedir. Ankete katılan 650 kişiden 560'ı (%86,15) en az üniversite diplomasına sahip olduğunu belirtmiştir. Katılımcıların %34,9'u ise yüksek lisans veya doktora derecesine sahiptir. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, Z kuşağından 76 (%23,3) ve Bebek Patlaması Kuşağından 38 (%11,6) katılımcı, yüksek lisans veya doktora derecesine sahiptir. Ancak, TÜİK İstatistiklerine (2022) göre, Türkiye'de 25 yaş ve üzeri yükseköğretim mezunlarının toplam nüfusa oranı %23,9'dur. Dolayısıyla, bu tez araştırmasındaki örneklem çoğunlukla iyi eğitilmiş bireylerden oluştuğundan Türkiye'deki eğitim seviyesinin gerçekliğini yansıtmamakta ve tezin bir diğer sınırlılığını oluşturmaktadır. Yine de bu istenmeyen bir durum değildir, çünkü toplumların iyi eğitilmiş grupları iklim değişikliği konusunda daha bilinçli olanlardır. Tez kapsamında yürütülen anket çalışmasından önce, Bebek Patlaması ve Z Kuşağının iklim değişikliğine karşı bilinç ve duyarlılık seviyesini şekillendiren genel karakter yapısını anlayabilmek adına bu kuşakların doğup yetiştiği dönemdeki tarihsel süreçler incelenmiştir. Bu tarihsel süreçler ve Inglehart'ın Değer Dönüşüm Teorisi üzerinden bu iki kuşağın sahip olduğu genel özellikler kıyaslanmıştır.

Inglehart'a göre, genç kuşaklar eski kuşaklara kıyasla daha fazla post-materyalist değere sahiptir. Bunun temel sebebi, Inglehart tarafından, eski kuşakların kıtlık içerisinde ve güvensiz bir şekilde büyümesine; genç kuşakların ise refah içerisinde ve güvenli koşullarda büyümesine dayandırılmaktadır. Kıtlık içerisinde büyüyen eski kuşaklar maddi değerlere, refah içerisinde büyüyen genç kuşaklar ise "bireycilik/birey olma olgusu" gibi post-materyalist değerlere fazlaca önem vermiştir.

Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı bireylerin doğduğu 1946 – 1964 yılları Refah Devleti'nin Altın Çağı olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Söz edilen dönemde, yalnızca kapitalist devlet anlayışı modifiye edilip yerine güçlü refah devleti anlayışı benimsenmemiş aynı zamanda bu anlayış kurumsallaşmıştır. Bu kurumsallaşma sürecinde, sosyal güvenlik sistemi içerisinde aktif bir şekilde yer alan ve sosyal harcamaların finansmanının sağlanmasına her türlü katkıyı veren Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı'nın payı büyüktür. Türkiye özelinde; 1960'lı yılların başından itibaren Almanya başta olmak üzere Avrupa'ya yaşanan işçi göçünün öncüsü olan Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı, Avrupa'da göçmen işçiler olarak çalışıp oradaki refah seviyesinin yükselmesinde ve refah devletinin oluşumunda önemli bir role sahip olmuş, o dönemde Avrupa'daki işçi sınıfının temelini oluşturmuştur.

Söz edilen dönemde, 24 Ekim 1945'te, uluslararası barışı sağlamak ve güvenliği korumak amacıyla ABD'de Birleşmiş Milletler'in kurulması, uluslararası ekonomik, toplumsal ve kültürel iş birliğinin sağlanması açısından öne çıkan bir diğer gelişmedir. Üye ülkelerin güvenliğinin korunması bakımından 1949'da NATO'nun kurulması bu dönemin bir diğer özelliğidir. Benzer şekilde, 1951 yılında altı ülkenin ekonomilerini geliştirme ve pazarı genişletme amacıyla kurduğu Avrupa Kömür ve Çelik Topluluğu'nun Avrupa Birliği'nin temellerini oluşturmadaki rolü yadsınamayacak ölçüde büyüktür. Bu gelişmeler, başlangıç tarihi 1946 yılı olarak kabul edilen Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı'nın ilk yıllarında yer tutan önemli gelişmelerdir.

Ayrıca, iki kutuplu Dünya düzeninin hüküm sürdüğü o yıllarda, 1957 yılında SSCB'nin Sputnik 1 ve ABD'nin Explorer 1 uydusunu uzaya göndermesi öne çıkan kültürel gelişmeler arasında yer almaktadır.

Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı'nın gençlik yıllarına denk gelen Hippi hareketi, cinsel devrim hareketleri ve kadın hak ve özgürlüklerine yönelik yaşanan toplumsal devrimler bu dönemin şekillenmesinde belirleyici diğer unsurlar olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Sözü geçen toplumsal devrim hareketleri, 1965 – 1979 yılları arasında doğan X Kuşağı'nın etkilendiği küresel olaylar arasında yer alsa da kendisinden evvelki kuşak olan Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı'nın gençlik yıllarına denk gelmesi bakımından bu kuşağın sosyal olaylara bakış açısını şekillendirmiştir. Bir diğer ifade ile deneyimlenen sosyal olaylar kuşakların farklı yaşam evrelerine denk gelerek her kuşağı farklı şekillerde etkilemiştir.

John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X gibi liderlere karşı düzenlenen suikastların ve Vietnam Savaşı'nın yaşandığı yıllarda genç yetişkinler olan Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı, 68 Kuşağı'nı yaratan kuşaktır.

Dünya'da bu gelişmeler vuku bulurken, Türkiye'de ise Bebek Patlaması Kuşağının temsilcileri askeri darbelere, tek partiliden çok partili hayata geçiş sürecine, radyonun altın yıllarına ve televizyonun evlere girmesine şahitlik eden kuşaktır (Aydın,2020, s.12).

Öte yandan, Z Kuşağının doğum yılı aralığı olarak kabul edilen 1995 ve 2010/2012 yılları arasındaki döneme dair en önemli özellik akıllı telefonlar aracılığıyla, insanların sanal ortamlarda sürekli çevrimiçi olmasıdır. Öyle ki Z Kuşağını diğer kuşaklardan ayıran en önemli özellik internetin olmadığı bir dünyayı tanımıyor olmalarıdır. Bu sebeple Z Kuşağı, tüm kuşaklar arasında İnternet okuryazarlıkları sayesinde erişim tüketimini en çok deneyimleyen ve somut anlamda küreselliği yaşayan ilk kuşaktır.

1995 – 2012 döneminin ve Z Kuşağının genel karakteristiğini şekillendiren tarih şeridi aşağıdaki gibidir.

- **1995:** IBM'nin, 1994'te telefon özelliklerini barındıran bir cep bilgisayarı olarak tasarladığı Simon, 1995 yılında akıllı telefon olarak anılmaya başlandı.

- **1998:** Google kuruldu.
- **2001 ve sonrası:** Apple tarafından taşınabilirliği artarak devam eden gelişmiş dijital teknolojiler piyasaya sürülmeye başlandı ve bu tür cihazlar aracılığıyla küresel etkileşim hız kazandı.
- **2003:** Skype kullanıma açıldı.
- **2004:** Facebook kullanıma açıldı.
- **2005:** İlk Youtube videosu yapıldı.
- **2006:** Twitter kullanıma açıldı ve mesajlaşma yaygınlaştı.
- **2007:** Apple Iphone'un tanıtımını yaptı.
- **2010:** Ipad tanıtımı yapıldı.

Twenge (2018), **2011** ve **2012** yıllarını ise bu kuşağın iletişiminin evvelki kuşaklardan ayrıldığı milat yıllar olarak değerlendirmektedir. Bu yıllar akıllı telefonlar aracılığıyla, insanların sanal ortamlarda sürekli çevrimiçi olmaya başladığı yıllardır. Daha çarpıcı bir ifade ile, bu yıllar, Z Kuşağı ile önceki kuşakların arasındaki uçurumun derinleşmeye başladığı yıllardır.

Sanal ortamı, fiziksel hayatlarının bir gerçeği haline getiren bu kuşak için sanal ve fiziki mekân ayrımı gün geçtikçe yok olmaktadır. Fiziksel ve dijital kavramlarının bir araya gelmesiyle oluşturulan “fijital” kavramı; fiziksel ve dijital mekânı birbirinin içine geçmiş tek bir mekân olarak deneyimleyen Z Kuşağının gerçeği olmuştur. Fijital gerçeklik; iletişimlerini büyük oranda sosyal medya üzerinden yürüten, çevrimiçi alışverişten çevrimiçi online eğitime kadar geniş bir skalada fiziksel mekanda var olan her şeyin karşılığını dijitalde de bulabilen, aynı anda ağlar aracılığıyla farklı işleri bir arada yapabilen bu kuşağın gerçeklik algısının bir uzantısıdır. Nitekim günümüzde Z Kuşağı için pek çok farklı amacı olan sosyal medya, onlar için aynı zamanda bir politik katılım alanıdır. Onlar, önceki kuşaklara kıyasla, televizyon ve gazete gibi geleneksel medya araçları yerine, internet aracılığıyla ulusal ve uluslararası haber kanallarını takip ederek siyasi görüşlerini şekillendirebilmektedir. Bu kuşak kimi zaman dijital aktivist grupların kimi zaman ise sanal ortamda siyasi kutuplaşmaların içinde yer alabilmektedir. Nitekim bu noktada, bu tezin çıkış noktası olan ve bir Z Kuşağı olan Greta Thunberg ve bir

Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı olan Donald Trump arasındaki iklim tartışmasının sanal bir mecra olan sosyal medya üzerinden büyüyüp yaygınlaşması meselesi öne çıkmaktadır. 2018 yılından günümüze, milyonlarca insan Thunberg'in farklı sosyal medya platformlarındaki paylaşımlarını takip ederek ondan aldığı cesaretle çevreyi koruyan örgütlere destek vermeye ve sosyal medyada imza kampanyalarına katılım göstermeye başlamıştır. Thunberg'in konuşmalarından ilham alarak başlatılan çevrimiçi imza kampanyalarının en iyi örneklerinden biri, Türkiye'deki Z Kuşağı iklim aktivistleri Atlas Saraçoğlu, Seren Anaçoğlu ve Ela Naz Birdal'ın Türkiye'nin Paris İklim Anlaşması'ndaki hedefleriyle çelişen sera gazı emisyonlarını artırma kararını eleştiren imza kampanyasıdır. Nitekim kendileri, Türkiye'nin ilk iklim davasının öncüleri olmuşlardır. Bu bağlamda, bu tez kapsamında, Z kuşağının; çoğunluğu Bebek Patlaması Kuşağından oluşan devlet aktörleri, uluslararası hükümet kurumlarındaki yetkililer ve genel tabirle uluslararası sistem üzerinde bir etkisi olup olmadığı sorusu, Greta Thunberg ve Donald Trump arasındaki etkileşim üzerinden düşünülmüş ve iklim değişikliğinde kuşakların rolü meselesi çalışılmaya değer bulunmuştur. Kuşaklararası adalet, kuşaklararası eşitlik ve sorumluluk kavramları gelecek kuşakların hakları üzerinden incelenmiş ve sürdürülebilir kalkınma kavramı bağlamında Türkiye özelinde bir değerlendirmeye gidilmiştir. İklim değişikliğinde kuşakların rolü temel alındığında, Türkiye özelindeki değerlendirme sonuçlarının Amerika ve Avrupa'da yürütülen çalışma sonuçlarından farklılaştığı saptanmıştır. Sonuçlar, bu bölgelerdeki genç kuşakların, özellikle de Z kuşağının, eski kuşaklara kıyasla iklim değişikliğinin etkilerine karşı daha endişeli olduğunu ve bir çözüm yolu geliştirmenin geleceğe dair en önemli önceliklerinden biri olduğunu göstermektedir. Bunun tam aksine, KONDA'nın Türkiye'nin iklim değişikliği algısına dair yayınlamış olduğu son dönem raporları incelendiğinde, eski kuşakların genç kuşaklara kıyasla iklim değişikliğine karşı daha duyarlı olduğu görülmektedir. Nitekim bu tez kapsamında yürütülen anket çalışmasının sonuçları incelendiğinde, sonuçların KONDA tarafından yürütülen anket çalışmalarının sonuçlarıyla paralel olduğu saptanmaktadır. Daha açık bir ifade ile bu tez kapsamında toplam 650 kişi ile yürütülen 28 soruluk anket çalışması sonucunda Bebek Patlaması Kuşağının Z Kuşağına kıyasla iklim değişikliğine karşı daha duyarlı olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunun temel sebebi ise, Türkiye gibi gelişmekte olan ülkelerde yaşayan gençlerin ekonomik ve politik instabilitelere bağlı olarak gelecek kaygılarını bu sorunlar

üzerinde temellendirmesi ve çevre sorunlarını önceliklendirememesi ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Bu tez kapsamında yürütülen anketin sonuçlarına göre, her iki kuşak için de Türkiye'deki ve Dünya'daki en önemli sorun ekonomik sorunlar olmakla beraber, iklim değişikliği, katılımcılara sunulan 11 sorun arasından, Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı için 6. sırada önem taşırken, Z Kuşağı için önem sıralamasında 9. sıraya yerleşmiştir. Her iki kuşak da tanımlamış olduğu sorunların kaynağı olarak en çok merkezi hükümeti ve en az sivil toplum kuruluşlarını sorumlu tutmuştur. Bu soru bağlamında, yerel yönetimlerin yeri, önemi ve bunun toplumdaki farklı kuşaklardan bireylere ne ölçüde yansdığı incelenmeye değer bulunmuştur. Bu incelemede, Türkiye'nin ilk İklim Şurası'nda (2022) alınan kararlara bakılarak yerel yönetimlerin iklim değişikliği ile mücadeledeki rolünün yadsınamayacağı ve bu mücadele daha aktif rol alabilmeleri için gerekli çalışmaların bir an evvel yürürlüğe konması gerektiğine kanaat getirilmiştir. Öte yandan, anket sonuçlarında, Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı katılımcıların, Z Kuşağı katılımcılara kıyasla; Türkiye'nin iklim değişikliğine karşı tarihsel sorumluluğu olduğu fikrini daha yüksek bir oranda kabul ederek, iklim aktivizmi konusunda daha bilinçli ve daha destek olduğu görülmektedir. Her iki kuşak için de tanımlamış oldukları sorunların çözüm yolları arasında gençleri ve çocukları eğitmek, yasal düzenlemeler yapmak, medya kanalları ile farkındalığı artırmak ve bilinç düzeyini arttıracak sosyal faaliyetler düzenlemek; ilk 5'te yer almaktadır. Her iki kuşağın temelde farklılaştığı çözüm yolunun ise örgütlenmek olduğu görülmektedir. Bu durum ise, 68 Kuşağının yaratıcısı olarak addedilen Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı için örgütlenmenin tarihi bir zeminde etkili bir yol olarak görülmesi ile bağdaştırılmış ve Z Kuşağının yasal zeminde karşılık bulan çözüm yollarına dair hala bir inanca sahip olmasıyla açıklanmıştır. Her iki kuşak da iklim krizi ile mücadelede bireysel olarak en çok su tasarrufu yaptığını ve led ampüller, pencere izolasyon yalıtım filmi, akıllı termostatlar vb. gibi enerji tasarruflu ürünler kullandıklarını belirtmiştir. Z Kuşağı, iklim krizinin aciliyetine dair kuşaklararası bir çatışmadan söz edilebilirliği, Bebek Patlaması Kuşağına kıyasla daha yüksek bulmakla beraber, eski kuşakları kendi gençlik dönemlerinde toplumsal ve küresel sorunlarla yeterince mücadele etmemeleri ile itham etmişlerdir. Benzer şekilde, Bebek Patlaması Kuşağı ise, genç kuşaklara yeterince tasarruf etmemeleri üzerinden bir eleştiri getirmişlerdir. Her iki kuşak da sürdürülebilirlik ve sürdürülebilir gelecek kavramlarına tanıdık olduklarını belirtmiştir. Anketin son sorusu olan "Türkiye'nin

iklim krizi ile mücadelesinin nasıl sonuçlanacağını düşünüyorsunuz?” sorusuna her iki kuşaktan katılımcı da %80.61’lik bir oran ile olumsuz yanıt vermiştir.

Sonuç olarak, tez kapsamında yürütülen anket çalışmasına dair sonuçlar ilgili literatür incelemesi ile harmanlanarak, tezin son bölümünde Türkiye’nin iklim değişikliği ile mücadelesine katkı sağlayabilecek çeşitli öneriler sunulmuştur. Tezin önceki bölümlerinde de sıklıkla vurgulandığı ve anket verileriyle de desteklendiği üzere, kuşaklar arası dayanışma ve kuşaklar arası işbirliği, iklim değişikliğinin yıkıcı etkilerine karşı kısa sürede etkili ve verimli bir çözüm üretebilmek için önemli kavramlar olarak görülmüştür. Bir diğer ifade ile iklim krizi gibi küresel sorunlar karşısında adil ve kapsayıcı çözümler üretebilmek için farklı kuşakların bakış açılarının zenginliğinden doğan kolektif bir yaklaşıma ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Devlet destekli programlar ve yerel, ulusal ve/veya küresel düzeylerde iklim değişikliğiyle mücadele etmek için tüm nesilleri kapsayan politikalar, eski ve yeni kuşak arasında sağlam bir köprü oluşturmanın ön koşuludur. Hükümetler kapsayıcı ve yeterli iklim politikaları veya programları ürettiklerinde ve uyguladıklarında, eğer ki genç nesilleri bu politika oluşturma ve/veya karar alma süreçlerine dâhil olmaya teşvik ederlerse iklim değişikliğiyle mücadelede sürdürülebilir çözümler bulunma ihtimali artmış olur. Genç nesiller iklim değişikliğinin en kötü etkilerine uzun vadede maruz kalacak nesiller olmasının yanı sıra geleceğin karar vericileri oldukları için bugünden çözüm üretme süreçlerinin bir parçası haline gelmeleri/getirilmeleri iklim krizi ile mücadelede elzemdir. Tüm bunlar haricinde, daha önce de vurgulandığı üzere yerel yönetimlerin iklim krizi ile mücadeledeki rolü arttırılarak mücadelenin yerelde başlayıp küresel etkiler düşünülerek büyütülmesi sonucu iklim krizi ile baş etme kapasitesi yükseltilebilir. Bu bağlamda, Uluslararası Yerel Çevre Girişimleri Konseyi ve Birleşmiş Milletler Çevre Programı iş birliği ile yönetilen Carbons Projeksi benzeri projeler Türkiye tarafından da yakın takibe alınarak uygulamaları Türkiye genelinde yaygınlaştırılmalıdır. Özellikle bilinçlendirici ve eğitici kampanyalar ile toplumun tüm nesilleri hedef alınarak, bireyleri iklim dostu ürünlere yönlendirmek için finansal teşvikler sağlanmalıdır. Eğer tüm bu girişimler, yetkili otoriteler tarafından toplumdaki bireyler için daha çekici hale getirilebilir ve toplumda bir farkındalık yaratılabilirse, çevresel ve sosyal açıdan sürdürülebilir sonuçlar ortaya çıkabilir. Bu farkındalığın yaratılabilmesi için, günümüzde yaptırım gücüne sahip Bebek

Patlaması Kuşuğunun geleceęin mimarı Z Kuşuğunun taleplerini dinlemesi ve onlara gerekli araçları sağlaması esastır. Yalnızca bu şekilde krizden çıkış yolu mümkün hale gelecektir. Geçmiş deneyimlerin, eski kuşaklar aracılığıyla genç kuşaklara aktarımı için bir alan yaratmak küresel ve kuşaklar arası bir sorun olan iklim deęişikliği karşısında iklim dayanıklı, sürdürülebilir bir gelecek inşa edebilmenin tek yoludur.



## C. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU

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