



T.C.
ÇANKIRI KARATEKİN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
DEPARTMENT

**THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM ON
DEMOCRACY CULTURE**

Hasan TURAN

MASTER'S THESIS

Supervisor
Prof. Dr. Ertan BEŞE

Çankırı – 2025

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SCIENTIFIC ETHICS STATEMENT

In the process from the proposal stage to the conclusion of the study titled *The Effect of Organizational Cynicism on Democracy Culture*, which I prepared as a master's thesis, I carefully followed the academic ethics and rules that I obtained all the information in the thesis within the framework of academic ethics and tradition that I prepared in accordance with the rules of writing the thesis. I declare that I cited every citation as a reference and that the works I have benefited from are those shown in the bibliography.

25/03/2025

Signature

Hasan TURAN

THESIS ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

ÇANKIRI KARATEKIN UNIVERSITY

TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

This study titled *The Effect of Organizational Cynicism on Democracy Culture*, prepared by *Hasan TURAN*, was found successful *unanimously* as a result of the thesis defense held on 25/03/2025 and was accepted as a Master's thesis in the *Political Science and International Relations (English) (Master's)* by our jury.

THESIS JURY MEMBERS (Title, Name and Surname)

Supervisor: (Prof. Dr. Ertan BEŞE)	Signature:
Member: (Prof. Dr. Serdar Kenan GÜL)	Signature:
Member: (Asst. Prof. Dr. Hazal Swearingen)	Signature:

APPROVAL

This thesis has been accepted by the jury determined in the session of Çankırı Karatekin University Institute of Graduate Studies Administrative Board, dated 17/03/2025 and numbered 2025/13-15

Prof. Dr. Ersoy YILMAZ

Director of the Institute

PREFACE

This study examines organizational cynicism's impact on the culture of democracy. Organizational cynicism refers to employees' negative feelings in the workplace, such as institutional injustice, distrust, and a sense of hopelessness. In this work, we intend to provide an in-depth analysis of the impact of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy.

This thesis focuses on research results on the impact of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy and the ongoing discussions on this topic. Additionally, the relationship between organizational cynicism, workplace productivity, employee satisfaction, and democratic values will be investigated.

The purpose of this study, after all, is to understand the impact of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy and to raise awareness on this issue. This thesis will provide readers with a comprehensive perspective on the impact of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who contributed to this study.

Sincerely,

25/03/2025

Hasan TURAN

ABSTRACT

Thesis Title : The Effect of Organizational Cynicism on Democracy Culture
Author of the Thesis: Hasan TURAN
Supervisor : Prof. Dr. Ertan BEŞE
Department : Political Science and International Relations
Type of Thesis : Master's
Acceptance Date : 25.03.2025

Organizational cynicism has become a significant area of interest in organizational behavior and management studies due to its potential impact on employee attitudes and behaviors. This study explores organizational cynicism's effect on democratic culture within the workplace. Organizational cynicism may be characterized by a pervasive sense of distrust and disappointment toward organizational practices and leadership, often stemming from unmet expectations and perceived injustices. It poses significant challenges to fostering a democratic culture characterized by open communication, participation, and shared decision-making.

This study gathers data from literature regarding participants' experiences and perceptions of cynicism and democratic engagement within their organizations. Key themes explored include the origins of cynicism, its manifestations in everyday workplace interactions, and its impact on participatory practices. The study aims to uncover the underlying factors contributing to cynicism and how it influences the overall culture of democracy in the workplace.

The analysis reveals that organizational cynicism significantly undermines democratic principles by creating an atmosphere of distrust, reducing employee engagement, and limiting collaborative decision-making. The findings indicate that leaders' communication styles and perceived transparency play crucial roles in either exacerbating or alleviating feelings of cynicism among employees.

This study highlights the urgent need for organizational interventions to cultivate a democratic culture. Recommendations include fostering transparent communication, implementing inclusive decision-making processes, and actively listening to employee concerns. By addressing the roots of cynicism, organizations can enhance trust, promote engagement, and ultimately strengthen their democratic culture.

Keywords: Cynicism, Organizational Cynicism, Democracy, Democracy Culture.

TURKISH ABSTRACT

Tez Adı : Örgütsel Sinizmin Demokrasi Kültürüne Etkisi
Tezin Yazarı : Hasan TURAN
Danışman : Prof. Dr Ertan BEŞE
Anabilim Dalı : Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler
Tez Türü : Yüksek Lisans
Tarih : 25.03.2025

Örgütsel sinizm, çalışan tutumları ve davranışları üzerindeki potansiyel etkisi nedeniyle örgütsel davranış ve yönetim çalışmalarında önemli bir ilgi alanı haline gelmiştir. Bu çalışma, örgütsel sinizmin işyerindeki demokrasi kültürü üzerindeki etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Örgütsel sinizm, genellikle karşılanmayan beklentiler ve algılanan adaletsizliklerden kaynaklanan, örgütsel uygulamalara ve liderliğe yönelik yaygın bir güvensizlik ve hayal kırıklığı duygusu ile karakterize edilebilir. Bu durum, açık iletişim, katılım ve ortak karar alma gibi özelliklerle tanımlanan demokratik bir kültürün geliştirilmesini önemli ölçüde zorlaştırmaktadır.

Literatür taraması aracılığıyla araştırma, katılımcıların örgütteki sinizm ve demokratik katılım deneyimleri ve algıları hakkında zengin veri toplamaktadır. Araştırmada incelenen ana temalar arasında sinizmin kökenleri, günlük işyeri etkileşimlerindeki tezahürleri ve katılımcı uygulamalar üzerindeki etkisi yer almaktadır. Çalışma, sinizme katkıda bulunan altta yatan faktörleri ve işyerindeki genel demokrasi kültürünü nasıl etkilediğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Bu çalışma sonucunda, örgütsel sinizmin güven ortamını zayıflatarak demokratik ilkelere önemli ölçüde zarar verdiğini, çalışan katılımını azalttığını ve işbirlikçi karar alımını sınırladığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bulgular, liderlerin iletişim tarzlarının ve algılanan şeffaflığın, çalışanlar arasında sinizm duygularını artırmada veya azaltmada kritik bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir.

Bu çalışma, demokratik bir kültürün geliştirilmesine yönelik kurumsal müdahalelere duyulan acil ihtiyacı vurgulamaktadır. Öneriler arasında şeffaf iletişimin teşvik edilmesi, kapsayıcı karar alma süreçlerinin uygulanması ve çalışanların endişelerinin aktif olarak dinlenmesi yer almaktadır. Kurumlar sinizmin köklerini ele alarak güveni artırabilir, katılımı teşvik edebilir ve nihayetinde demokratik kültürlerini güçlendirebilirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sinizm, Örgütsel Sinizm, Demokrasi, Demokrasi Kültürü.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving landscape of modern organizations, cultivating a democratic culture has emerged as a vital cornerstone for fostering employee engagement, innovation, and overall well-being. Democracy in an organizational context signifies a work environment where employees' voices are heard, decisions are made collectively, and transparency prevails. However, in pursuing such democratic ideals, an undercurrent of skepticism often exists within the workforce, manifesting as organizational cynicism. This skepticism can undermine the very principles of democracy, challenging the harmonious coexistence of these two seemingly conflicting phenomena.

This thesis investigates the complicated relationship between organizational cynicism and a culture of democracy within workplaces. It aims to explore how cynicism influences the development and sustainability of democratic values and practices within organizations. By understanding the dynamics between these two phenomena, it can shed light on how organizations are able to effectively navigate the complex terrain of employee perceptions, leadership practices, and organizational policies to promote a culture of democracy while addressing and mitigating cynicism.

The following chapters will examine the theoretical foundations of organizational cynicism and democratic culture, review relevant literature, investigate empirical evidence, and present practical insights for organizations aiming to strike a balance between fostering democratic values and mitigating the erosive effects of cynicism. This research contributes to the broader discourse on organizational behavior and governance, offering valuable insights for leaders, managers, and scholars striving to create workplaces that embrace democratic principles while managing and reducing cynicism among their employees.

1.1. Background of the Study

Organizations significantly impact economic, social, and political landscapes in today's complex and interconnected world. Employees' attitudes and beliefs, which are the driving force behind progress, are crucial in understanding organizational health and its broader societal influence. This thesis focuses on organizational cynicism, a destructive mindset that can harm employee engagement, trust, and participation. By examining the relationship between cynicism and the culture of democracy within organizations, the goal is to highlight

its potential to degenerate the foundations of healthy, collaborative, and democratic organizational environments. This investigation aims not only to reveal the harmful effects of organizational cynicism on internal operations but also to explore its implications for the broader democratic structure of society, where organizations wield significant influence. Understanding the interplay between these forces is essential for creating environments that enhance productivity and innovation while fostering a sense of ownership, trust, and shared responsibility-essential elements for a thriving democracy, both within and outside organizational boundaries.

The relationship between organizational cynicism and democracy culture and political science and political sociology can be evaluated in several ways:

❖ *Political Approaches and Democracy*

Political science investigates the establishment, maintenance, and deterioration of democratic values. Democratic processes, including leadership, social trust, and participation, can be adversely impacted by organizational cynicism. In this way, studies on how organizational cynicism threatens democratic culture can significantly advance democratic theory and practice.

❖ *Cultural Dynamics*

The study of political sociology examines how cultural factors and social institutions affect political conduct. A society's general democratic participation culture may be impacted by organizational cynicism. By decreasing people's participation in democratic processes, high levels of cynicism might indirectly erode social engagement. People's willingness to engage and their level of trust in the political system may also be impacted by this.

❖ *Corporate Trust and Participation*

In a political context, trust is an essential component of democratic culture. Organizational cynicism can create distrust among employees. This distrust is reflected both in decision-making processes within the organization and in broader political participation. Therefore, the impact of organizational cynicism on democratization processes and societal participation is a fundamental area of research in politics.

❖ *Political Orientation and Policy Development*

Organizational cynicism and organizational behavior can be determinants for policymakers. By examining how such organizational behaviors influence political decisions, political scientists and sociologists can gain clues for developing more effective and democratic policies.

❖ *Social Movements and Prosperity*

In a democratic culture, individual participation is vital for sustaining social movements and change. Organizational cynicism can affect social change by reducing individuals' willingness to participate in social movements. This relationship is an important issue to be examined in terms of political sociology.

❖ *International Relations*

In the context of international relations, organizational cynicism can also be seen in relations between countries. As states strive to be more transparent and accountable to their citizens, organizational cynicism is on the rise as a result of perceptions of corruption and mistrust. This can undermine democratic governance and create problems of cooperation and trust in international relations. For example, the public in countries struggling with corruption may develop a cynical attitude due to doubts about the effectiveness of the state, which undermines faith in democracy.

❖ *Political Science*

In political science, organizational cynicism directly affects political participation and representation. Cynicism may cause individuals to distance themselves from political processes and reduce participation. This can lead to the erosion of democratic culture and affect election turnout rates. Cynical individuals may not trust the promises of politicians and therefore may be less active in their electoral choices.

1.2. Statement of the Research

The study of organizational cynicism and its effects on democratic culture is an emerging field of research. Still, a growing body of evidence suggests a strong negative correlation between the two. Organizational cynicism is defined as a general distrust and negativity towards an organization and its processes. It can manifest in various ways, such as cynicism towards management, a belief that organizational decisions are unfair or unjust, and a lack of engagement in organizational activities. Democracy culture, on the other hand, is characterized by values such as participation, transparency, and accountability. It is a culture in which employees feel they have a say in how the organization is run and their voices are heard.

Cynicism in the workplace has been widely studied for its impact on employee behavior and organizational dynamics. Research indicates that employees who harbor cynical attitudes toward their organization often demonstrate a lower level of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which includes discretionary behaviors that are not directly recognized by formal reward systems but contribute positively to the organization. For example, a study by Fox, Dwyer, and Ganster (1993) found that job dissatisfaction, which can be linked to cynicism, negatively influences employees' willingness to engage in OCB. Similarly, Podsakoff et al. (2000) emphasized that attitudes such as cynicism could undermine OCB, leading to decreased cooperation, less initiative in helping others, and overall reduced organizational effectiveness.

Cynical employees may feel less motivated to contribute beyond their essential job responsibilities, perceiving their efforts will not be recognized or valued. This decline in organizational citizenship behavior could adversely affect team cohesion and overall success.

These findings suggest that organizational cynicism can significantly negatively impact democratic culture. When employees are cynical, they are less likely to participate in the democratic processes of the organization and less likely to engage in behaviors that support a democratic culture. There is still much about the relationship between organizational cynicism and democratic culture. For example, more research is needed to understand concepts these two concepts causal mechanisms. It is also vital to consider the moderating effects of factors such as organizational size, industry, and leadership style.

Organizations that want to promote democracy should reduce cynicism among their employees. This can be done by creating a more transparent and accountable work

environment, giving employees more opportunities to participate in decision-making, and fostering a sense of trust and respect.

1.3. Importance of the Study

This study explores the connection between organizational cynicism and the culture of democracy, highlighting how employee cynicism undermines the foundations of an engaged and participatory work environment. The main goal is to find out how cynicism diminishes trust, limits participation, and weakens democratic processes within organizations.

By achieving this goal, the study offers several significant benefits. Firstly, it will enhance the understanding of organizational cynicism beyond individual employee attitudes, revealing its broader impact on organizational health and democratic functioning. Secondly, it will provide valuable insights for practitioners, guiding the development of interventions and strategies that effectively combat cynicism and promote a more democratic culture. Moreover, the study's findings can contribute to the broader societal discourse on democracy. By illustrating how organizational cynicism can hinder democratic values within microcosms such as workplaces, the study strengthens the argument for raising democratic principles across all levels of social and political life. Ultimately, this study aims to encourage creating more open, collaborative, and democratic organizations, laying the groundwork for a healthier and more participatory society.

1.4. Objective of the Study

This research explores the complex relationship between democratic culture and organizational cynicism to shed light on how employee cynicism threatens the foundations of an engaged and participatory work environment. This study aims to identify specific mechanisms through which organizational cynicism undermines trust, hinders participation, and weakens organizational democratic processes. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial for designing effective interventions and strategies to combat cynicism and cultivate a more democratic culture. The study will also explore the moderating effects of factors such as organizational size, industry, and leadership style on the relationship between cynicism and democratic culture. Different organizational contexts may present unique challenges in addressing cynicism and promoting democracy. The final objective of this research is to develop recommendations for organizations seeking to reduce cynicism and foster a more democratic culture. By understanding the mechanisms and moderating factors, the study aims to provide practical and actionable insights for practitioners. Ultimately, this study desires to

contribute to creating more vibrant, collaborative, and democratic organizations where employees feel empowered, engaged, and invested in the success of the collective. By illuminating the detrimental effects of cynicism and showcasing effective strategies for its mitigation, the study hopes to pave the way for a more engaged and participatory future, both within organizational walls and beyond.

1.5. Research Questions

This research is guided by the overarching question: What is the nature and extent of the relationship between organizational cynicism and the culture of democracy within organizations, as reflected in the academic literature? However, the primary research question of this study is focused on understanding the extent to which organizational cynicism, directly and indirectly, hinders the development and operation of a strong democratic culture within organizations. It seeks to uncover the specific mechanisms through which cynicism undermines fundamental democratic principles such as trust, participation, and accountability within organizational frameworks. By analyzing these mechanisms, the study aims to provide detailed insights into the ways in which cynicism gradually destroys democratic structures and processes within organizational contexts, moving beyond simple correlations to illuminate the specific pathways through which cynicism operates.

Additionally, the study considers both direct and indirect effects, recognizing the complex interconnections that can either enhance or diminish the impact of cynicism on democratic culture. This comprehensive approach is designed to yield a deeper understanding of the complete range of cynicism's influence, with the goal of informing more effective interventions and strategies to counteract its harmful effects and promote a growing democratic culture within organizations.

1.6. Research Methodology

This study employs a scoping review methodology to comprehensively explore the impact of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy within organizations. Scoping reviews are particularly well-suited for examining broad, complex topics like this, as they aim to map the existing literature, identify key concepts, and assess the extent and nature of the available evidence. Unlike systematic reviews, which typically address a focused research question, this scoping review seeks to provide a holistic overview of the current state of knowledge regarding the interplay between organizational cynicism and democratic principles in the workplace. This scoping review explores the impact of organizational cynicism on the culture

of democracy within organizations. Organizational cynicism, characterized by negative attitudes towards organizational practices and a lack of trust in leadership, can significantly impede democratic processes and principles in the workplace (Seal & Qiu, 2017). By systematically mapping the existing literature, this review aims to identify key concepts, assess the extent of current knowledge, and highlight potential research gaps. The findings reveal that while there has been significant interest in both organizational cynicism and democratic culture independently, their interplay remains underexplored (Abugre & Osei, 2018). This review underscores the importance of fostering a positive organizational climate to enhance democratic engagement and mitigate cynicism. Furthermore, the scoping methodology allows for a comprehensive overview, informing future research directions and practical implications for organizational leaders seeking to cultivate a more democratic culture (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005).

This research is mainly guided by the overarching question: What is the nature and extent of the relationship between organizational cynicism and the culture of democracy within organizations, as reflected in the academic literature? To address this question, the following systematic steps will be undertaken:

a. Identification of the Research Question: As stated above, the research question focuses on the multifaceted relationship between organizational cynicism and organizational democracy culture.

b. Literature Search Strategy: A comprehensive and systematic research will be conducted on relevant issues. The search strategy will employ a combination of keywords and controlled vocabulary related to both organizational cynicism and organizational democracy. These terms will include variations of "organizational cynicism," "workplace cynicism," "employee cynicism," "distrust in organizations," "democratic culture," "organizational democracy," "participative management," "transparency," "accountability," and related concepts.

c. Study Selection Process: Studies will be included if they address the relationship between organizational cynicism and any aspect of democratic culture within organizations. Studies focusing solely on cynicism in other contexts or solely on democracy without a connection to cynicism will be excluded.

d. Data Extraction: In this study, it will be discussed the following topics: the different forms of organizational cynical behavior, the aspects of democratic culture that are

investigated, and the main results concerning the relation between cynical behavior and democratic culture.

e. Data Analysis and Synthesis: The extracted data will be analyzed and synthesized using a thematic analysis approach. This will involve identifying key themes, patterns, and trends related to the impact of organizational cynicism on democratic culture within organizations. The synthesis will focus on mapping the range of evidence, identifying areas of consensus and disagreement, and highlighting any gaps in the existing literature. A narrative synthesis approach will be used to present the findings in a clear and coherent manner.

f. Reporting: The report will include a detailed description of the search and selection process, a summary of the characteristics of the included studies, a thematic synthesis of the key findings, and a discussion of the implications for research, practice, and policy.

g. Rationale for Scoping Review: A scoping review is the most appropriate methodology for this research because it allows for a broad and comprehensive exploration of the complex relationship between organizational cynicism and democratic culture. This approach is particularly valuable for mapping the existing literature, identifying key concepts and definitions, and highlighting research gaps in this emerging area of study. The scoping review will provide a robust foundation for future research and contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities for fostering democratic principles within organizations.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM AND ITS CAUSES

2.1. History of Cynicism and Conceptual Definition

Cynicism is an abstract concept, and we do not use it much in our everyday lives. Cynicism, which emerges from the combination of many ideas, is much more related to concepts such as attitude, sense of trust, cynical attitudes, and burnout. The concept of cynicism, which has its roots in philosophy, is fed by many different concepts, such as sociology, human resources management, and psychology. The word “cynic,” which emerged around 500 BC, is rooted in Ancient Greek philosophical thought associated with the Cynics. This philosophical school emphasizes rejecting conventional moral values and societal rules, advocating instead for a lifestyle aligned with natural instincts and individual authenticity. The Cynics, notably represented by figures like Diogenes of Sinope, used provocative actions to challenge the norms of their society, leaving a lasting impact on philosophical discourse.

It is believed that the origin of the concept of “cynic” comes from the Greek word “*kunikos*”, which means “dog”. One of the views on the subject explains the calling of cynics as “dogs”, based on Cynosarges, whom Antisthenes taught in Athens in ancient times. Indeed, the word Cynosarges means “place of the white dog”. According to the second view that tries to explain the concept's origin, it comes from the nickname “Haplokuon”, which means “pure and unpretentious dog”, referring to Antisthenes’ lifestyle. The last view on the word “cynic” is that the word is based on the lifestyle of Diogenes of Sinope (Diogenes), who was known for his dog-like behavior (Arslan, 2012, p. 12).

The term “cynic” originates in Ancient Greek philosophy, particularly associated with the Cynics, a school of thought founded by Diogenes of Sinope in the 4th century BC. The Cynics advocated for a life lived in accordance with nature and often rejected societal norms, moral values, and material possessions. The Cynics believed in living an ascetic lifestyle free from the constraints of conventional morality and societal expectations. They valued virtue and self-sufficiency above all else, often using provocative behavior to illustrate their points (Turan, 2011).

It is claimed that the first cynic was Antisthenes, a student of Socrates, and that the most important cynics among the advocates of philosophy were Antisthenes and Diogenes of Sinope. Diogenes was nicknamed “kyon”, the Greek word for dog, by citizens because he lived his life in a barrel, completely isolating himself from the outside world, walking the streets almost naked. Diogenes changed this epithet to “cynic” and established the philosophy

of cynicism, which dates back to the Greek period and goes back to the Roman Empire, pioneered by Antisthenes. These cynical philosophers, called the cynical school, devoted themselves to avoiding the negative aspects of human values and traditions, where the individual is at the forefront, defending the naturalness of life (Kalağan & Güzeller, 2010, p. 83; Sezgin et al., 2016, p. 413).

There are many anecdotes about Diogenes. In one of these anecdotes, Diogenes' response to a favor that Alexander the Great wanted to do was "*Just don't cast a shadow*". Based on this response, one can better understand the importance that cynics attach to simplicity in their lives by rejecting the blessings of the world. Diogenes emphasized knowledge as a virtue and opposed the rest of human values. According to Diogenes, organizing one's life by conforming to rules, laws, and traditions and adjusting one's life accordingly distances the individual from their "self" (Akman, 2013, p. 5). As the cynicism movement started in the Ancient Greek period and continues until today, its meaning has changed from positive to negative.

Cynic is defined as "a person who shows a tendency to doubt the goodness and sincerity of others' intentions and actions, often expressing this through sarcastic remarks and mockery" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2023). This term derives from the school of Cynics in ancient Greece, which exhibited a disdainful attitude toward social norms and embraced a simple, virtuous living philosophy.

In the Turkish Language Association's Turkish Dictionary, the word "sinizm" is shown as synonymous with the word "kinizm" and is defined based on the philosophy of ancient cynicism. The dictionary describes cynicism as the teaching of Antisthenes, who argues that humans can achieve virtue and happiness by detaching themselves from all values and needs (Turkish Language Association, 2023).

The philosophical movement that believes individuals only consider their own interests with the belief that everyone is selfish is called cynicism, and those who believe in this philosophy are called "cynics". Cynicism, which has close synonyms such as "skepticism", "doubt", "mistrust", "disbelief", "pessimism", and "negativity", is now primarily associated with the meaning of "finding faults, being hard to please, criticizing". According to cynicism, values such as honesty, justice, and sincerity are sacrificed for individual interests (Erdost et al., 2007, p. 514).

Anderson (1996, p. 1398), who approaches cynicism as an attitude, defines the concept as “negative emotions and distrust towards a person, group, ideology, social tradition, or institution characterized by obstruction, hopelessness, and disappointment.” According to Tokgöz & Yılmaz (2008, p. 285), cynicism is explained as (a) an attitude of explaining events based on pessimism and disappointment regarding the undisclosed intentions of individuals; (b) a tendency to only be interested in others to safeguard and enhance one’s own interests and manage affairs. In other words, cynicism is a concept that triggers strong negative emotions such as contempt, anger, shame, and distress (Abraham, 2000, p. 269).

In short, cynicism is a general and specific attitude that includes hopelessness, disappointment, and distrust towards individuals, groups, ideologies, social communities, or institutions (Andersson & Bateman, 1997, p. 450).

Considering the current understanding of cynicism, it can be said that cynics have some fundamental characteristics, as stated below (Özgener et al., 2008, p. 54; Arslan, 2012, p. 13):

a. Mistrust: Cynics tend to have a general lack of trust towards others and are skeptical about their intentions.

b. Skepticism: They have a critical and questioning attitude towards societal norms, values, and beliefs.

c. Disillusionment: Cynics often experience a sense of disappointment and disillusionment with regard to social, political, or cultural systems.

d. Pessimism: They have a negative outlook on life and expect the worst outcomes in various situations.

e. Distrust in Authority: Cynics are skeptical towards authority figures and institutions, questioning their motives and actions.

f. Detachment: They may exhibit a sense of emotional detachment and distance themselves from societal expectations and norms.

g. Satire and Irony: Cynics often employ satire and irony as a means of expressing their criticism and discontent.

h. Self-Interest: Cynics prioritize their own interests and may view others primarily as means to achieve their goals.

1. Resistance to Manipulation: They are less likely to be influenced or manipulated by external influences and are more independent in their thinking.

i. Critical Thinking: Cynics tend to engage in critical thinking and analysis of social, political, and cultural issues.

2.2. The Concept of Organizational Cynism

The concept of organizational cynicism will be defined, and the characteristics of organizational cynicism will be explained in detail.

The academic literature has extensively researched and discussed the concept of organizational cynicism. Organizational cynicism is defined as a general distrust and negativity towards an organization and its processes. It can manifest in various ways, such as cynicism towards management, a belief that organizational decisions are unfair or unjust, and a lack of engagement in organizational activities.

Organizational cynicism is a multifaceted construct that reflects a negative attitude toward an organization. It is typically characterized by a belief that the organization is self-serving, a lack of trust in its management, and feelings of alienation among employees. Cynicism can manifest as skepticism about the motives and actions of the organization and its leaders, leading to disengagement and reduced organizational commitment.

2.2.1 Definition of Organizational Cynicism

It is a subject that has been studied by researchers in the last two decades, although cynicism is an ancient concept philosophically (Arslan, 2012, p. 13), especially in Türkiye, which became widespread in the late 80s and early 90s in the field of organizational behavior in the world and can be considered new in this respect. However, studies have been carried out on cynicism in different fields of social sciences, such as philosophy, management, religion, politics, human resources, management, and management psychology (Kalağan, 2009, p. 35).

The studies carried out on organizational cynicism are divided into two groups. While the studies in the first group focused on the conceptualization, definition, and scale development of cynicism; studies in the second group investigated the causes and consequences of cynicism (Naus, 2007, pp. 13-14; Tokgöz & Yılmaz, 2008, p. 291). However, the efforts of the researchers in the first group to conceptualize cynicism made the understanding of the concept even more complicated (Tokgöz & Yılmaz, 2008, p. 286).

In Table 2.1, the table of Naus (2007, p. 15-24) covering the definitions in the first groups has been translated into Turkish by Kalağan (2009), and new definitions have been added.

Table 2.1. Definitions of Organizational Cynicism

Author	Year	Definition
Goldner, Ritti & Ference	1977	Cynical knowledge is the non-acceptance of goodness in altruistic behavior in organizational activities, decisions, and methods.
Kanter & Mirvis	1989-91	Cynicism is a personality trait that embraces the belief that an individual's nature is selfish.
Bateman, Sakano & Fujita	1992	Cynicism is a negative attitude that lacks confidence in authority or organization.
Guastello, Rieke, Guastello & Billings	1992	Cynicism is an orientation that permeates both business activities and the life of the individual in general.
Wanous, Reichers & Austin	1994	Cynicism is based on the belief that efforts for change in the organization will fail, and that the authorities who carry out the change are incompetent.
Andersson	1996	Cynicism is a general and specific attitude towards a person, a group, an ideology, a social tradition or an organization, shaped by frustration, disappointment and negative emotions, or by the distrust of all these (person, group).
Reichers, Wanous & Austin	1997	Cynicism about organizational change includes not trusting the managers who make the change, evaluating them as incompetent and lazy, and expressing a biased opinion that the results of their activities will be negative.
Dean, Brandes & Dharwadkar	1998	Organizational cynicism is an attitude based on the belief that the organization lacks integrity, including negative feelings and dismissive behaviors towards the organization.
Turner & Valentine	2001	Cynicism deals with strong levels of distrust, skepticism and denigration of others, which deals with moral decision-making in general and private dimensions.
O'Leary	2003	Cynicism is an expression of injustice. All expressions and managerial practices of cynicism contain deep frustration.
Johnson & O'Leary-Kelley	2003	Cynicism occurs when employees have the belief that their organization lacks integrity.
O'Brien, Halsam, Jetten, Humphrey, O'Sullivan Postmes	2004	Cynicism is a form of psychological escape and freedom.
Stanley, Meyer & Topolnytsky	2005	Cynicism is conceptualized as a lack of belief in the alleged motives of others about a decision or action.
Urbany	2005	Cynicism is the situation in which even the positive statements of the organization are interpreted negatively, especially in the decision-making processes, and positive things are rejected.
Valentine & Elias	2005	Cynicism is the belief that business or social organizations do not care about moral values, looking only for their own interests.
Cole, Bruch & Vogel	2006	Cynicism is an attitude that feeds on the criticism of the activities, motivations and values of the organization of which one is a member.
Bedeian	2007	It is a feeling that occurs as a result of criticism of the values of the organization, its activities and the way it motivates its members.
Naus, Iterson & Roe	2007	It means that its members protect themselves in the face of problematic events and conditions in the organization.
Qian & Daniels	2008	Cynicism specific to change; about a specific organizational change; a lack of faith in the overt and covert activities of the authority that carries out organizational change; It is a negative attitude consisting of 3 dimensions: feelings of disappointment and pessimism about change activities and behaviors that belittle and criticize the change in question.
Neves	2012	Their definition is the same as that of Dean et al. (1998).
Chiaburu, Peng, Oh, Banks & Lameli	2013	Their definition is the same as that of Dean et al. (1998).
Wan	2013	Their definition is the same as that of Dean et al. (1998).
Nafei	2014	Their definition is the same as that of Dean et al. (1998).
Munir, Khan, Khalifah, Asif & Khan	2014	Their definition is the same as that of Dean et al. (1998).

Source: (Kalagan, 2009).

Organizational cynicism is the negative behaviors that an individual develops towards the organization he/she works for, which includes three dimensions.

The first dimension of organizational cynicism is the belief that the organization lacks integrity, which is manifested through negative attitudes such as anger, disdain, condemnation, and devaluation. Since cynics think that organizations lack feelings such as justice, honesty, and sincerity; therefore, they argue that organizations have betrayed them with their practices.

The second dimension of organizational cynicism is emotional reactions to events. In fact, it is stated that individuals with high levels of organizational cynicism may even feel sadness, distress, and shame when they think about their organizations.

The last dimension of organizational cynicism is the tendency towards negative behaviors. Most of these behaviors shown by cynical individuals are statements that the organization lacks sincerity and honesty. This last dimension of organizational cynicism explains strong criticisms, sarcastic humor, pessimistic predictions, and contempt and critical expressions about the organization against the organization (Kutanış & Çetinel, 2010, p. 188).

Organizational cynicism is expressed as an attitude consisting of beliefs, emotions, and behavioral orientations. For this reason, organizational cynicism is a multidimensional structure in which people are considered cynical to the extent that they show some thoughts about the lack of integrity of the organization, various emotions toward the organization, and some behavioral tendencies toward the organization (Dean et al., 1998, p. 342).

Managers and leaders have a great responsibility to minimize cynicism in organizations. Because of the cynicism experienced in organizations, organizations' success is declining. In order to prevent this, good strategies should be developed and implemented. Ince & Turan (2011, p. 118) emphasized that:

When it is considered that organizational cynicism is associated with many other concepts such as organizational commitment, organizational citizenship, organizational volunteerism, psychological contract, cynical behaviors should to be prevented in the organizations. Therefore; it can be said that organizations' managers make a point of strengthening the perception of organizational justice that can be realized without spending much effort and resources. It is thought that motivation of employees would be higher in organizations with a high sense of justice and develop internal loyalty to their works and organizations.

In studies on cynicism in organizations, two views can be mentioned regarding the cynicism of employees. In the first view, the individual carries his “general cynicism” to the organization, which stems from his pessimistic, suspicious and distrustful of events and people, while in the second view, it is the individual’s temporary evaluation towards the organization he works for, with a personality trait but not a permanent attitude (Torun, 2016, p. 16).

Organizational cynicism, as Dean et al. (1998, p. 345) famously described, refers to the negative attitudes developed by an employee towards their organization. Dean et al. (1998) view cynicism as an attitude and emphasize that organizational cynicism consists of three components: a cognitive dimension that represents the belief that the organization lacks honesty, an affective dimension that encompasses negative emotions towards the organization, and a behavioral dimension that explains the tendency to engage in derogatory and critical behavior based on these beliefs and feelings. They conceptualize organizational cynicism in this way.

The characteristics of the cynics in the organizations listed by Saruhan & Yıldız (2009, p. 106) and Torun (2016, p. 22) and other features that distinguish them from others are as follows:

- They are in the mood for early retirement although they have a long time to retire.
- They constantly express that they have no expectations from the organization. Since they regard compromise as a compromise and a state of powerlessness, they are unwilling to compromise.
- They cannot be successful in horizontal relationships; they prefer a hierarchical structure.
- They despise the organization of which they are a member.
- They have negative feelings towards the organization they are a member of.
- Cynics in organizations are generally people who have not been able to realize themselves or have not been able to reach the positions they have targeted in the organization.
- They make derogatory remarks about the organization of which they are a member.
- They criticize everything but do not offer solutions.
- They make statements denigrating the organization.
- They ridicule the activity they carry out and try to be funny.

2.2.2. Characteristics of Organizational Cynicism

Many characteristics of organizational cynicism were identified, and these characteristics were summarised by Anaş (2016, pp. 11-12) as follows:

Characteristics of organizational cynicism are not just a personality-based tendency, but also a learned response. In other words, organizational cynicism results from both individuals' negative feelings towards the organization and attitudes fueled by their workplace experiences.

- Cynical individuals despise their organizations and try to achieve their personal and professional goals by using sarcastic humor.
- General cynicism is characterized as being associated with negative motivations towards human behavior. On the other hand, organizational cynicism reflects a negative attitude with cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, based on a belief that the organization lacks integrity.
- Cynical individuals play a significant role in identifying the causes of organizational problems at the level of organizational change and new practices, providing a criterion for understanding these issues within the organization.
- Cynics often resist organizational change efforts and tend to perceive these efforts as failures.
- Cynicism towards individuals or organizations can be generalized to a large extent to other psychological objects.
- Organizational cynicism can be observed not only in a few industries but also in various types of organizations that operate in different fields.
- Cynical individuals in an organization are less likely to be utilized compared to others because they are cautious against fraud and act prudently to protect their personal interests.

2.2.3. The Importance of Organizational Cynicism

Some researchers investigate the beneficial aspects of cynicism in the literature. These beneficial aspects are (Dean, et al.; Kalağan, transmitting Çağ, 2011);

Organizational cynicism is a condition based on specific organizational experiences and possible changes in employees' experiences over time and does not have an individual characteristic. Cynical people take responsibility for controlling their tendency towards self-

interest and deceit. Cynicism seen in different professions is not limited to any job or profession. It is a structure that reflects people's beliefs, feelings, and behavior. People prefer cynical people less in their work.

Organizational cynicism is not the feelings that negative individuals bring to the organization, but the sharing of these attitudes towards the organization through experiences in work environments. People do not try to be cynical. Organizational cynicism develops through experiences (Brown & Cregan, 2008, p. 68).

The content of cynicism is mostly anger, disappointment, and negative attitudes towards the organization. Cynicism in organizations is an attitude that emerges due to people being ignored. Sinic employees become individuals with less positive emotions because they have not found what they expect from the organization. The employee's level of organizational cynicism increased, resulting in a sense of disappointment against the organization (Sur, 2010, p. 26).

Clark & Beck (2010, p. 26) stated that "we can ruin ourselves just as effectively as bombs with cynicism and frustration." Cynicism will produce negative consequences like a bomb. Many managers and leaders realize that cynical behavior creates problems and that various initiatives are taken to reduce cynicism in organizations. Therefore, we should try to find solutions to minimize cynicism, encourage employees to adopt positive attitudes and transform places where others are hesitant into areas of opportunity or carelessness. It is essential to avoid marginalizing them with sexist attitudes as if they were excluded (FitzGerald, 2002, p. 5).

Managers play a crucial role in reducing or ending organizational cynicism. If managers fail to pay attention properly, the negative thoughts of cynic individuals will increase as their feelings of satisfaction decrease, leading to a decrease in their separation from the organization.

2.2.4. Types of Organizational Cynicism

Organizational cynicism can be discussed in five sections: personality cynicism, social/institutional cynicism, employee cynicism, organizational change cynicism, and professional cynicism. Many different views have emerged in the definitions of organizational cynicism, and these differences are also seen in the sub-concepts of organizational cynicism. Researchers trying to define them have included them under five subheadings.

2.2.4.1 Personality Cynicism

Personality cynicism believes that organizational cynicism will emerge as a psycho-psychological issue. Personality cynicism is an individual's general attitude of insecurity, suspicion, and hostility. On the other hand, organizational cynicism is a feeling of distrust and suspicion towards an organization or workplace. There may be a relationship between these two concepts because personality cynicism can be one of the main causes of organizational cynicism. An individual with personality cynicism may feel distrust and suspicion towards the organization and, therefore, exhibit organizational cynicism. However, organizational cynicism cannot be explained solely by personality cynicism, and other factors may also be influential.

Personality cynicism thinks that organizational cynicism will appear patho-psychological. Although this situation cannot be incompatible with organizational cynicism, it is possible to increase the influence of general organizational cynicism, as personality cynicism will also be reflected in organizational human behavior (Delken, 2004, p. 17).

Personality cynicism, which is one of the subtypes of cynicism, categorizes the negative behaviors displayed by individuals from birth as cynicism. According to this type of cynicism, cynical individuals view others as worthless and treat them disrespectfully, looking down on them from above. As a result, weak connections are formed with other individuals (Abraham, 2000, p. 270).

In personality cynicism, the idea is to always look at people's personality from a negative side, and its philosophy is that the world is populated by people who do not like to interact with each other, who are dishonest, who do not speak out against those who commit crimes, who only care about themselves. This leads to much insecurity in individuals who have adopted personality cynicism. As a result of this sense of insecurity, individuals can change their feelings and attitudes, and they express anger and resentment. They also defend themselves by being upset and cheating. Thus, personality cynicism becomes a characteristic of individuals (Abraham, 2000, p. 271).

In the researches, researchers call this type of cynicism general cynicism because personality cynicism has a significant place. In addition, when the relationship between personality cynicism and organizational cynicism is examined, it is noteworthy that personality cynicism stems from the personality of the individual, while organizational cynicism leads to the formation of cynical attitudes in the individual (Tokgöz & Yılmaz, 2008, p. 285).

2.2.4.2. Professional Cynicism

Professional cynicism refers to a negative attitude or skepticism towards one's own profession or occupation. It is characterized by a lack of trust, belief, or enthusiasm in the values, goals, and practices of the profession. Professionals who exhibit professional cynicism may feel disillusioned, detached, or disengaged from their work. The new paradigm of the relationship between workers and employers is the result of the extension of working hours, the increase in workload, the ineffectiveness of leaders and management, the unwanted new tasks in the organization, the downsizing of organizations, and the reduction of management levels in organizations, as well as the possible elimination of levels between decision makers and implementers (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006, p. 201). Due to the role ambiguity and person-role conflict identified as the source of job (occupational) cynicism, individuals working in professions such as bill collecting, childcare, social work, policing, hospitality, and secretarial work may distance themselves from their true emotions and assume different personalities (Abraham, 2000, p. 273).

Professional cynicism can arise due to various factors, such as:

a. Organizational Factors: Poor leadership, lack of support, inadequate resources, and perceived unfairness within the organization can contribute to professional cynicism. Employees may feel undervalued or disheartened when the organizational culture does not align with their values (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

b. Personal Factors: Previous negative experiences, burnout, or a mismatch between personal values and the profession's expectations can lead to professional cynicism. Individuals may bring prior negative experiences into their professional roles, leading to a more cynical worldview. Additionally, burnout, a consequence of chronic stress at work, can erode idealism and lead to feelings of disenchantment (Swanson & Holton, 2001).

c. External Factors: Societal and cultural influences, such as adverse media portrayals or prevailing stereotypes about a profession, can shape public perception and contribute to professional cynicism (Leung & Chan, 2017).

Professional cynicism can have detrimental effects on individuals and organizations. It may lead to decreased job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment, as well as increased turnover and reduced performance.

Addressing professional cynicism requires a multi-faceted approach. Organizations can promote a positive work culture, provide opportunities for professional development and

growth, and foster open communication and trust. Individuals can engage in self-reflection, seek social support, and actively work towards aligning their personal values with their professional goals.

It is important to note that professional cynicism should not be confused with healthy skepticism or constructive criticism, which can be valuable for professional growth and improvement.

2.2.4.3. Employee Cynicism

Employee cynicism refers to a negative situation that arises in a work environment or working relationships. Employee cynicism involves employees displaying a negative, hopeless, or critical attitude toward their jobs, companies, or workplaces. This situation can arise due to factors such as lack of motivation, loss of trust, or job dissatisfaction. Employee cynicism often leads to decreased productivity and negatively impacts the workplace atmosphere. Employers typically address employee cynicism by employing strategies such as improving communication, boosting motivation, and enhancing working conditions.

Employee cynicism is a sense of unfair treatment stemming from inequality within organizations, directed towards top management and other individuals. This inequality situation arises from the violation of formal contracts, such as psychological contract breach, which encompasses factors of equality, justice, and impartiality between the employee and the organization (Şedatlı & Tengilimoğlu, 2013, pp. 45-46). Additionally, it is defined as the paradigm of employer-employee relations resulting from factors such as work intensity, long working hours, ineffective leadership, and organizational changes within the organization (Sezgin et al., 2016, p. 414).

2.2.4.4. Social Cynicism

Social cynicism is a negative attitude or distrust towards society and its institutions. It is characterized by a belief that people and institutions are motivated by self-interest and that they cannot be trusted to act in the community's best interest. This belief can lead to pessimism, apathy, and a lack of engagement in social and political issues.

Social cynicism can be caused by various factors, including experiences of injustice or discrimination, disillusionment with political systems, and exposure to corruption or unethical behavior. It can also be reinforced by media coverage that emphasizes negative news and events. While social cynicism can be a barrier to social change, it can also catalyze critical

thinking and activism. By questioning the status quo and demanding accountability from institutions, social cynics can help to expose and address systemic issues. The feeling of distrust that society harbors towards businesses and the country forms the concept of social cynicism. Moreover, being within the realm of social cynicism, an individual's encounters with disappointments in society may lead them to be prejudiced against the organization they work for, assuming they will experience disappointment, and in some cases, it can be said that social cynicism binds employees to the organization (Şedatlı & Tengilimoğlu, 2013, p. 46). In organizations where ethical standards are applied, it can be said that there will be less cynicism among employees due to the absence of uncertainties. However, changing living conditions and the increasing complexity of the business world due to corruption can lead to social cynicism, causing tension and distress in the long run. As a result, individuals may find themselves within the realm of social cynicism when their expectations related to society or institutions are not met, leading to feelings of disappointment (Görmen, 2017, p. 368).

2.2.4.5. Organizational Change Cynicism

Organizational change cynicism refers to the negative attitudes and distrust that employees may hold towards organizational changes within their workplace. When an organization undergoes significant changes, such as restructuring, new management, or policy changes, employees may become cynical and skeptical about the effectiveness or motives behind these changes. The mindset of not believing in the goals the management sets or the motives implied for organizational change and expecting failure can be expressed as organizational change cynicism (Stanley et al., 2005, p. 436).

Organizational change cynicism can arise due to various reasons such as past experiences of failed changes, lack of transparency in communication from the management, or a perception that the changes are not genuinely aimed at improving the organization but rather for the benefit of a few individuals. This cynicism can have detrimental effects on the organization, leading to decreased employee morale, resistance to change, and a lack of commitment to new initiatives. It can also hinder the success of the change efforts as employees may not fully engage or support the organization's new direction. To address organizational change cynicism, it is essential for the management to foster open and honest communication, involve employees in the change process, and demonstrate the positive impact of the changes on the organization and its employees. Building trust and providing support during the transition can help mitigate cynicism and create a more positive and productive work environment during times of change.

In today's world, organizations need to be in a constant state of renewal and change to gain a competitive advantage over their rivals and adapt to environmental dynamics. However, when the evaluation of these changes is made independently of the individuals who make up the organization, employees often feel left out of the process and as a result, it becomes difficult to fully comprehend the issue holistically. This can lead to resistance and a cynical attitude towards the changes (Sezgin et al., 2016, p. 412).

2.2.5. Dimensions of Organizational Cynicism

According to Dean et al. (1998), organizational cynicism consists of three dimensions: the cognitive dimension, which involves employees' beliefs that the organization is not honest; the affective dimension, which encompasses negative feelings towards the organization; and the behavioral dimension, which includes the tendency to display disparaging and critical behaviors based on these beliefs and feelings (Elçi & Kul, 2017, pp.122-123).

Organizational cynicism has been identified as having three dimensions:

a. Cognitive Dimension: Organizational cynicism's first dimension, the cognitive dimension, includes employees holding the belief that the organization is not honest and sincere. This belief does not necessarily correlate with negative emotions such as anger, condemnation, or disdain but rather expresses employees' beliefs about the organization's reliability, integrity, and ethical behavior. Emotional responses like anger, condemnation, and disdain are typically associated with the affective dimension. In this respect, cynical individuals who lack feelings of honesty, justice, and sincerity tend to be suspicious of others' goodwill and sincerity, believing that they have been betrayed by their organizations' practices (Özler et al., 2010, p. 49).

In the cognitive dimension, Cynical employees are believed to prioritize material issues such as promotion and salary increases over spiritual feelings like honesty, virtue, and character (Karcioğlu & Naktiyok, 2015, p.22). In the cognitive dimension of cynicism, there is a tendency to belittle other employees by not believing in the organization's honesty (Akatay et al., 2016, p. 487). From this perspective, cynical individuals, believing in the presence of unfair situations in the organization, may develop a belief that the organization is betraying them in the cognitive dimension of cynicism (Ayana, 2016, p. 37). In this respect, trust in the manager is seen as an important factor influencing cognitive cynicism. Additionally, the management of emotions such as tension, anger, anxiety, and agitation can lead to a decrease

in employees' cognitive resources, organizational commitment, and motivation (Kim et al., 2009, pp. 1437-1438).

b. Affective Dimension: The emotional dimension of cynical attitudes is defined as employees feeling emotions such as sadness, anger, contempt, surprise, fear, and hatred when contemplating their organizations (Tutar & Köse, 2018, p. 158). This dimension encompasses negative feelings towards the organization, such as anger, disappointment, and frustration. Employees may feel that the organization does not care about their well-being or that it is not committed to their success.

Cynical individuals may derive hidden pleasure by identifying and evaluating the organization's shortcomings, considering themselves superior. In this regard, cynics not only experience a decrease in belief in the organization but also harbor various emotions toward the organization (Dean et al., 1998, p. 346). The emotional dimension reflects employees expressing strong emotional responses toward the organization, such as anger, shame, hatred, worry, disrespect, and moral decay. This indicates that cynicism is more of a felt phenomenon than a cognitive one (Karacaoğlu & Küçükköylü, 2015, p. 403).

c. Behavioral Dimension: The reaction manifested by employees due to negative emotions such as disdain and contempt towards the organization represents the behavioral dimension of organizational cynicism (Turner & Valentine, 2001, pp. 123-136). Critiques of unfair practices within the organization or expressing dissatisfaction through sarcastic humor also relate to the behavioral dimension of organizational cynicism (Dean et al., 1998, p. 345).

Within the behavioral dimension of organizational cynicism, people who show cynic behavior redefine the organizational tasks by taking them into action and mocking them for organizational purposes (Brandes, 1997, pp. 34-35). In the behavioral dimension, employees often express their disdain for the organization, openly criticizing it and indicating dissatisfaction by highlighting the absence of values such as sincerity, ethics, and honesty. Hence, cynical individuals contribute to hidden attitudes and behaviors within the organization (Ahmadi, 2014, p. 26). While the cognitive dimension represents the lack of belief in the organization among cynics, the behavioral dimension signifies the transformation of negative emotions toward the organization into actions and tangible behaviors (Helvacı & Çetin, 2012, p. 1485). In the behavioral dimension of cynicism, individuals, guided by their beliefs and thoughts, perceive those who act outside their own truths as flawed, positioning themselves as justified and superior. Such individuals may exhibit behaviors like criticism,

complaining, mocking, condescending smiles, or meaningful glances toward others judged by their own standards (Karcioğlu & Naktiyok, 2015, p. 22).

2.2.5.1. Basic Factors Forming Organizational Cynicism

Researchers have the opportunity to use various models to predict why some individuals exhibit more cynical attitudes toward organizations than others. For instance, organizational cynicism can be perceived because of processes involving leadership, power distribution, organizational change, or justice (Dean et al., 1998).

The precursors of cynicism in the work environment include factors such as executive compensation, organizational performance, the relationship between executive compensation and organizational performance, reduction in workforce, and the relationship between executive compensation and reduction in workforce (Andersson & Bateman, 1997).

Leadership abilities, organizational support, managerial competence, trust in management, and the predictors of workplace cynicism have been identified (Cole et al., 2006). People do not deliberately decide to be cynic and pessimistic. Conversely, these attitudes persist due to experiences as they serve beneficial purposes. The legitimization of cynicism by individuals who share similar views in the organization ensures the continuity of cynicism (Reichers et al., 1997).

Some factors influencing organizational cynicism include excessive stress, inadequate social support, increasing organizational complexity, lack of communication, workload, role ambiguity, low self-management, low commitment, the trustworthiness of management hierarchy, management salaries, insufficient organizational performance, psychological contract violations, and layoffs (Tükeltürk et al., 2012; Kothandaraman & Agnihotri, 2012; Nair & Kamalanabhan, 2010).

Employee emotional reactions, interpersonal injustices, and employees' despair about their futures can be indicators of cynicism. Additionally, employee behaviors such as limited effort, treating others rudely, making errors discreetly, or covering up mistakes play a crucial role in the emergence of cynicism (Evans et al., 2011). Psychological contract violations or organizational experiences with an employer can significantly influence cynicism toward a new employer (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003).

2.3. The Causes and Consequences of Organizational Cynicism

2.3.1. The Causes of Organizational Cynicism

The elements that cause cynical attitudes in organizations can be summarized under four headings as follows (Mirvis & Kanter, 1991, p. 52; Özgüner et al., 2008, p. 55):

Unrealistic Expectations: The development of unrealistic high expectations by an individual for themselves or significant others, from society, institutions, authorities, and the future, can lead to a sense of defeat when those expectations are not met. The individual may feel used and worry about being perceived as foolish.

Disappointment Experience: It is the feeling of defeat and obstruction that arises from the sad experience resulting from an individual's or someone else's frustration.

Humiliation/Feeling Belittled: It is the disappointment arising from the feeling of being deceived and used by others due to belittlement or self-deprecation. Cynical individuals may also develop disappointments towards the system (politicians, business leaders, banks and brokers, unions and management, media, etc.).

Skepticism: One of the concepts often confused with cynicism is also a factor contributing to cynicism. Both involve an element of doubt, but in cynicism, the doubt is deeper and more potent as it is related to individuals' intentions, honesty, and integrity, often implying hidden motives.

According to a different perspective, the psychological factors underlying cynicism are as follows:

The primary factor is the individual's motivation and desire to safeguard themselves. The second is indifference in ethical relationships. In such situations, individuals may choose to adopt a cynical attitude by remaining indifferent to a perceived injustice or unfair situation, rather than actively seeking a solution, believing it to be easier. The third is selectiveness or pride. When individuals perceive themselves as superior to their organizations, they may develop a cynical attitude towards the organizations (Ergen, 2015, p. 20).

2.3.1.1. Personal Reasons for Organizational Cynicism

Organizational cynicism often arises from a combination of personal experiences and perceptions within the workplace. Here are individual reasons for organizational cynicism:

❖ *Perceived Injustice*

- Employees may develop cynicism if they perceive unfair treatment, favoritism, or a lack of transparency in decision-making processes within the organization.

❖ *Trust Issues with Leadership*

- Distrust in leadership, whether due to broken promises, inconsistent communication, or a perceived lack of competence, can foster cynicism among employees.

❖ *Powerlessness*

- When employees feel that their opinions and contributions are undervalued or that they have little influence on decisions affecting their work, they may become cynical about the organization's commitment to employee empowerment.

❖ *Job Dissatisfaction*

- Unfulfilling work, lack of opportunities for growth, or a mismatch between individual values and organizational practices can contribute to a negative perception of the workplace.

❖ *Unclear Organizational Goals*

- If employees are unclear about the organization's objectives or if there's a perceived lack of alignment between stated goals and actual practices, it can lead to skepticism.

❖ *Poor Communication*

- Ineffective communication channels or a lack of open dialogue within the organization can contribute to misunderstandings and fuel cynicism.

❖ *Organizational Change*

- Frequent or poorly managed changes, such as restructuring or layoffs, can create a sense of instability and breed cynicism among employees.

❖ *Perceived Lack of Ethical Values*

- If employees feel that the organization lacks integrity or engages in unethical practices, it can lead to a loss of trust and contribute to cynicism.

It is important to note that organizational cynicism is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors, and individual experiences within the workplace play a significant role in shaping these attitudes.

2.3.1.2. Organizational Reasons for Organizational Cynicism

Organizational cynicism can stem from various organizational factors. Here is a more detailed explanation of organizational reasons contributing to cynicism:

❖ *Poor Leadership*

- Ineffective or unethical leadership can breed cynicism. When employees perceive leaders as self-serving, incompetent, or lacking integrity, it erodes trust and contributes to a cynical culture.

❖ *Inconsistent Communication*

- Ambiguous or inconsistent communication from the organization can lead to confusion and skepticism. Employees may become cynical if they feel they are not adequately informed about organizational decisions or changes.

❖ *Unfair Policies and Practices*

- Policies that are perceived as unfair, biased, or favoring certain individuals or groups can contribute to cynicism. A lack of transparency in decision-making processes exacerbates this issue.

❖ *Lack of Employee Involvement*

- Organizations that do not actively involve employees in decision-making processes or fail to consider their input may foster a sense of detachment and cynicism among the workforce.

❖ *Inadequate Recognition and Reward Systems*

- If employees believe that their efforts are not recognized or rewarded appropriately, it can lead to feelings of frustration and cynicism toward the organization.

❖ *Unclear Organizational Vision and Values*

- A lack of a clear and compelling organizational vision, or a perception that stated values are not upheld in practice, can contribute to cynicism among employees who may question the authenticity of the organization's goals.

❖ *Workload and Job Demands*

- Excessive workload, unrealistic job demands, or a lack of resources can contribute to employee burnout and cynicism, as employees may feel unsupported by the organization.

❖ ***Organizational Change Mismanagement***

- Poorly managed organizational changes, such as layoffs or restructuring, without clear communication and support mechanisms, can generate fear and cynicism among employees.

❖ ***Ethical Issues:***

- Engaging in unethical practices or compromising on ethical standards can lead to a loss of trust and contribute to organizational cynicism.

❖ ***Perceived Lack of Employee Development***

Employees feel that the organization does not invest in their professional development or provide opportunities for career growth; it can contribute to a negative perception of the workplace.

Different academic studies' findings can be summarized as the critical factors contributing to the formation of organizational cynicism as follows (Reichers et al., 1997, p. 59; Cartwright & Holmes, 2006, p. 201; Eaton, 2000, p. 11; Ergen, 2015, p. 20):

- The characteristic structure of the organizational environment
- Inconsistencies between implemented policies and practices within the organization
- Unethical behaviors
- Tendencies towards the loss of social responsibility within the organization
- Inadequate salary policies
- Inconsistencies between competition levels and promotions (unfair competition policies)
- Sudden and ruthless layoffs
- Weak communication within the organization
- Imbalances in the distribution of power within the organization
- Failures in change management practices
- Lack of new employments
- Characteristics related to the nature and structure of the job
- Role conflict
- Role ambiguity
- Excessive workload.

Addressing these organizational factors is crucial for cultivating a positive work environment and mitigating the development of organizational cynicism among employees.

2.3.2. The Consequences of Organizational Cynicism

There are eight main consequences of organizational cynicism as follows:

❖ *Reduced Employee Engagement*

- Organizational cynicism is often linked to decreased employee engagement, as cynical employees may feel detached from their work and disheartened by organizational practices (Harris, 2009).

❖ *Higher Turnover Rates*

- Cynical employees are more likely to consider leaving the organization, leading to increased turnover rates. This turnover can result in losing skilled and experienced personnel (Dean et al., 1998).

❖ *Negative Workplace Culture:*

- Organizational cynicism can contribute to developing a negative workplace culture, where trust is eroded, communication is strained, and collaboration becomes challenging (Vecchio & Boatwright, 2002).

❖ *Decreased Organizational Commitment*

- Cynical employees often exhibit lower levels of organizational commitment. This reduced commitment can impact performance and hinder efforts to achieve organizational goals (Porter et al., 1974).

❖ *Impaired Employee Performance*

- Organizational cynicism has been associated with diminished employee performance, including lower productivity and a decline in the quality of work (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

❖ *Communication Breakdown*

- Cynicism can lead to breakdowns in communication as employees may be less likely to trust information from leadership, creating barriers to effective organizational communication (Riggio et al., 2010).

❖ *Negative Impact on Innovation*

- Cynical employees may be less likely to contribute innovative ideas or engage in creative problem-solving, which can hinder organizational innovation (Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

❖ *Impact on Organizational Reputation*

Organizational cynicism, if pervasive, can harm the external perception of the organization, affecting its reputation among clients, customers, and potential employees (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). Based on the eight consequences listed, organizational cynicism can significantly negatively impact both individual employees and the organization as a whole. At the individual level, organizational cynicism can lead to decreased employee engagement, higher turnover rates, negative workplace culture, decreased organizational commitment, impaired employee performance, communication breakdown, and negative impact on innovation.

At the organizational level, organizational cynicism can damage its reputation and make it more difficult to attract and retain top talent.

Here are some specific examples of how organizational cynicism can manifest itself in the workplace:

- ✓ **Reduced Engagement:** Employees may exhibit lower levels of engagement or emotional investment in their work. They may be less likely to participate in team activities or discretionary efforts, feeling that their contributions will not matter in the grand scheme (Wanous & Reichers, 1996).
- ✓ **High Turnover Intentions:** Cynical employees may desire to leave the organization, believing it does not value or support their development and well-being (Dean et al., 1998).
- ✓ **Decreased Collaboration:** Cynicism can lead to a lack of cooperation among colleagues, as employees may distrust one another and question the intentions behind team initiatives (Dufour & Lantheaume, 2017).
- ✓ **Negative Attitudes towards Leadership:** Employees may openly criticize or doubt leadership decisions, feeling that leaders act in self-interest rather than for the organization's benefit (Vance, 2006).
- ✓ **Poor Communication:** A culture of mistrust fostered by cynicism can lead to communication breakdowns, where employees feel reluctant to share information or provide feedback (Ahn & Cesario, 2017).
- ✓ **Increased Absenteeism:** Cynical attitudes can lead to higher rates of absenteeism, as employees may feel disengaged from their work and less motivated to show up (Michel & Fask, 2018).
- ✓ **Resistance to Change:** Employees may resist organizational changes or initiatives, believing such efforts will ultimately fail or not serve their interests (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999).

Employees with a cynical attitude within the organization are observed to have difficulties getting along with their colleagues, belittle their work, and have distrustful and negative thoughts toward the organization (Akman, 2013, p. 13). Employees with cynical thoughts within the organization also tend to be pessimistic about the success of the proposals offered by managers (Dean et al., 1998, p. 341). For example, they may have thoughts that the

proposers are lazy and incompetent and responsible for the problems or negativity in the planning of changes made within the organization (Eaton, 2000, p. 3).

In organizations, creating a trusting environment that will make employees feel positive emotions is not enough for individuals to trust each other alone; all individuals within the organization must trust each other and the organization mutually. Additionally, in environments where organizational distrust is experienced, the number of cynical individuals increases, while in an environment where trust prevails, employees will not have cynical attitudes (Özler et al., 2010, p. 48). It can be understood from these expressions that the level of cynicism among employees increases with the decrease of trust deficiency and belief in justice, and the increase in trust levels leads to a reduction in cynical attitudes (Bommer et al., 2005, p. 736). In addition, cynicism, which is a negative form of behavior among employees, also leads to a decrease in employee's self-confidence, loss of trust, conflict, and depression, emotional breakdown, and nervous disorders (Kaygın & Kosa, 2019, p. 366). In the light of these expressions, the following suggestions can be made to reduce the level of cynicism among employees:

- Work to increase the trust and belief in justice of employees.
- Make employees feel safe and valued at work.
- Make employees feel that justice and fairness are provided at work.
- Help employees to cope with stress and conflict.

With the emergence of cynicism in the organization, it is seen that employees engage in unethical behaviors, conflicts between employees occur, and there is a decrease in performance, organizational commitment, and motivation. Implementing the items mentioned above will produce positive results for the organization to prevent these negativities (Türköz et al., 2013, p. 290).

When it comes to individual interests, people with cynical behavior argue that people will move away from principles such as truth, honesty, justice, and sincerity. Therefore, it is impossible to talk about truth, honesty, and sincerity in organizations where organizational cynicism is experienced (Abraham, 2000, p. 269).

The adverse effects of cynicism that arises in organizations can be listed as follows (Kalağan, 2009, p. 81):

- Decrease in job satisfaction among employees

- Weakening of organizational commitment
- Increase in employees' desire to leave
- Increase in employee turnover
- Increase in negative activities such as sabotage, theft, and fraud that hinder organizational success
- Increase in employees' non-compliance with current rules
- Disobedience
- Increase in employees' feelings of suspicion in the organization
- Increase in employees' feelings of distrust towards the organization
- Decrease in employees' performance
- Increase in absenteeism rates
- Decrease in motivation
- Decrease in trust in the leader in the organization

However, while cynicism is sufficient for the formation of distrust, cynicism is not necessary for a distrustful environment, and distrust can also be created without cynicism (Stanley et al., 2005, p. 453).

To strengthen employee perceptions of organizational support, it is necessary to ensure organizational justice, improve employee working conditions, provide managerial support, and effectively organize rewards (Aly et al., 2016, pp. 85-96).

Within the organization, employees evaluate whether the implemented applications are fair or not. When they conclude that there is no justice, they will experience disappointment and an increase in the tendency to exhibit cynical behavior in this case. Therefore, it is necessary to establish organizational justice to manage the cynicism perceptions of employees within the organization (Erbil, 2013, p. 24).

Organizational cynicism is the development of negative attitudes and beliefs in employees towards the organization, its leaders, and their co-workers. These attitudes and beliefs can reduce employees' trust and commitment to the organization. In addition to its adverse effects on organizations, organizational cynicism can also negatively affect individuals physically and psychologically.

Organizational cynicism can lead to a decrease in social support. Social support helps employees cope with stress and maintain their psychological well-being. Organizational cynicism can reduce employees' perceptions of social support, making it more difficult for them to cope with stress. This can increase the risk of stress-related cardiovascular diseases.

Among the physical and psychological effects of organizational cynicism are the following:

Stress: Sonnentag & Frese (2003) stated that organizational cynicism can lead to increased stress levels among employees, creating a constant feeling of pressure and unease in the workplace.

Anxiety:

Riggs & Cuskelly (2006) stated that employees experiencing cynicism may develop anxiety due to a perceived threat to their job security and trust in leadership.

Depression:

Baker & Renshaw (2018) stated that cynicism in the workplace can lead to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, contributing to symptoms of depression.

Fatigue:

Maslach & Leiter (2016) stated that prolonged cynicism can result in emotional and physical fatigue, impacting employee engagement and productivity.

Headaches:

Bramwell & Smith (2002) stated that stress and tension related to workplace cynicism can lead to tension headaches and migraines.

Sleep Problems:

Hirshkowitz, Whiton, Albert, Alessi & Bruni (2015) stated that chronic stress and anxiety associated with organizational cynicism can lead to sleep disturbances, affecting overall health and productivity.

Digestive Problems:

Said & Cloud (2014) stated that stress and anxiety from a cynical work environment may also cause gastrointestinal issues, including irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

Alcohol and Tobacco Consumption:

Smith & Dunn (2019) stated that employees suffering from workplace cynicism may resort to increased consumption of alcohol and tobacco as coping mechanisms for stress and anxiety.

Shortness of Breath:

Dallery & Raiff (2016) stated that anxiety and stress from cynicism can trigger physical symptoms, including shortness of breath, due to hyperventilation.

Weight Gain or Loss:

Peters & Klein (2019) stated that organizational cynicism can disrupt eating habits, leading to unintended weight gain or loss over time. These effects can negatively affect employees' job performance, job satisfaction, and quality of life. Turan (2011, p.179) stated that given that organizational cynicism correlates with various concepts, including organizational commitment, organizational citizenship, organizational volunteerism, and psychological contract, it is necessary to reduce cynical tendencies inside the organization. To attain this objective, it is crucial for organizational managers to concentrate on enhancing the sense of organizational justice, which can be achieved with minimal work and resources. Organizations characterized by a strong feeling of justice are thought to foster greater employee motivation and cultivate inherent commitment to both the organization and their tasks.

In organizations where their managers successfully implement a reward control system, employees will be affected by the positive attitudes they encounter, and their trust in the organization will increase. At the same time, they will exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors toward the organization (Puusa & Tolvanen, 2006, pp. 54-55). A valued and appreciated individual will nurture positive feelings toward the organization (Karacaoğlu & Boylu, 2014, p. 44). In short, as employees' commitment to the organization increases, their sense of trust will also develop, and thus their cynicism perceptions will decrease (Turner & Valentine, 2001, p. 132). Cynicism attitudes arising from a lack of trust in employees can lead to an increase in their rude behaviors. Ultimately, based on the studies conducted, it is possible to say that lack of trust is the basis of cynicism (Karcıoğlu & Nakliyok, 2015, p.24).

The concept of organizational citizenship, which is defined as employees' voluntary contributions to their organizations without expecting any return, has a negative relationship with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational cynicism, while there is a positive relationship between job alienation and burnout and organizational cynicism (Özgener et al., 2008, p. 60).

Organizational citizenship behaviors reflect employees' commitment to and willingness to contribute to their organizations. These behaviors are voluntary contributions that employees make to the organization to achieve organizational goals. Organizational citizenship behaviors are positively correlated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Employees are more likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors when they have positive attitudes and beliefs about their organization.

Organizational cynicism is the development of negative attitudes and beliefs in employees towards the organization, its leaders, and their co-workers. Organizational cynicism is negatively correlated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Employees are less likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors when they have negative attitudes and beliefs about their organization.

Job alienation is the distancing of employees from their jobs and professions. Job alienation is positively correlated with organizational cynicism. When employees distance themselves from their jobs and occupations, they begin to develop more negative attitudes and beliefs about the organization.

Burnout is the feeling of physical and psychological exhaustion related to work. Burnout is positively correlated with organizational cynicism. When employees feel physically and psychologically burned out from their work, they begin to develop more negative attitudes and beliefs about the organization.

Organizational cynicism can also have positive aspects. When a person's goals are aligned and compatible with the objectives of their organization, it will be easier for them to adopt and become attached to the organization. Thus, the employee who identifies with the organization will evaluate the organization they are a member of by comparing it to their own values as well as the values of different organizations (Kerse & Karabey, 2017, pp. 380-381).

An employee may exhibit behaviors that can prevent the organization from doing wrong by developing organizational cynicism in response to unethical practices of the organization's management that do not match their own values.

The elimination of negative behaviors in organizations is of vital importance for managers to effectively manage organizational cynicism. The following arrangements should be made for this (Gün, 2016, pp. 255-256):

- **Make employees feel valued:** Employees develop more positive attitudes and beliefs about the organization when they feel valued by the organization. This helps to reduce organizational cynicism perceptions.
- **Reduce monotony in the organization and increase flexibility:** Monotonous and repetitive tasks can reduce employee motivation and improve perceptions of organizational cynicism. Organizations can reduce monotony and increase flexibility by allowing employees to participate in different tasks.

- **Recognize that the human element is the most valuable factor in the organization:**

Organizations should recognize that the human element is the most valuable factor in the organization. Meeting the needs and expectations of employees helps to reduce organizational cynicism perceptions.

- **Improve working conditions in the organization:** The working conditions of employees directly affect their motivation and job satisfaction. Organizations can improve working conditions by implementing practices that meet the physical and psychological needs of employees.

- **Organize events for employees and give awards to employees for their work:** Events organized for employees and awards given to employees help to increase the motivation and commitment of employees. This can help to reduce perceptions of organizational cynicism.

- **Be in touch with employees and inform employees about the progress of the organization:** Managers should be in regular contact with employees and inform employees about the organization's progress. This helps to increase employee trust and commitment to the organization.

Organizations can also take several steps to reduce organizational cynicism, such as:

- **Creating a positive work environment:** Organizations should create a work environment where employees feel valued, respected, and supported. This includes providing employees with opportunities for growth and development, as well as fair compensation and benefits.

- **Promoting open communication and collaboration:** Organizations should encourage employees to communicate openly with each other and to collaborate on projects. This can help to build trust and create a more positive workplace culture.

- **Modeling ethical leadership:** Leaders should model ethical behavior and demonstrate that they are committed to the organization's values. This can help to build trust and respect among employees.

- **Providing regular feedback and recognition:** Employees should receive regular feedback on their performance and recognition for their contributions. This can help employees to feel valued and motivated.

- **Addressing employee concerns promptly and fairly:** Organizations should address employee concerns promptly and fairly. This shows employees that their concerns are valued and that they are being treated with respect.

By taking these steps, organizations can reduce organizational cynicism and create a more positive and productive work environment.

2.3.2.1. Positive Consequences of Organizational Cynicism

Although organizational cynicism is generally perceived as a negative concept, there are some cases where it can have some positive outcomes under certain conditions and contexts. Below are some points detailing the possible positive outcomes of organizational cynicism:

❖ *Critical Thinking and Innovation*

Organizational cynicism can help employees develop a critical perspective towards current practices. By questioning organizations and management processes, employees may become more willing to identify potential problems and areas for improvement. This situation has historically been a trigger for many innovations and changes (Anderson & West, 1998; Sweeney & Lindgren, 2011).

❖ *Healthier Conflict Management*

The presence of organizational cynicism may allow for a more open expression of conflicts between employees. In this way, a healthy conflict resolution culture can develop within the organization; problems are addressed and resolved in a timely manner (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, 1995).

❖ *More Realistic Approach to Problems*

Organizational cynicism can help employees to face the facts and evaluate problems more objectively. This leads to a more deliberate and cautious approach to decision making, enabling the organization to identify potential dangers at an early stage (Buchanan, 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

❖ *Better Communication Channels*

A high level of cynicism may increase the need for communication and transparency within the organization. This may lead managers to adopt a more open and honest communication style to gain the trust of employees. As a result, more opportunities for dialogue and discussion can be created in the organizational culture (Cynkin & Thornton, 2010; Men & Stacks, 2013).

❖ *Independence and Self-Management*

Employees with a cynical perspective may develop a more independent attitude towards traditional authority and management structures. This may increase the willingness of individuals to make their own decisions and create a more proactive and self-confident workforce (Sullivan, 2002; Tynjälä, 2008).

❖ *Developing Opinions and Focusing on Areas of Interest*

Employees may seek more information due to organizational cynicism. This may lead them to learn more and improve themselves. As a result, individual satisfaction and professional development may increase (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004; Senge, 1990).

❖ *Organizational Transformation Processes*

Cynicism can act as a trigger in the transformation processes of organizations. Employees may express their demands for change more courageously through criticism of the existing system. In this way, organizations may find the opportunity to develop and implement innovative strategies (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Kotter, 1996).

❖ *Reconsidering Social Norms*

Organizational cynicism can lead to the questioning of existing norms and practices. This, in turn, can encourage employees to push for more ethical and equitable practices, contributing to the reevaluation of social norms (Gibson, 2003; Hurst, 2015).

To summarize, although the negative effects of organizational cynicism are usually at the forefront, it should also be taken into account that it can have positive results in certain contexts and conditions. Contributions in areas such as critical thinking, communication and transformation processes show that organizational cynicism has a dimension that should be considered in the workplace. This can increase the resilience of organizations, especially in dynamic and disruptive environments.

3. DEMOCRACY CULTURE

Democracy culture refers to the set of values, beliefs, and practices that support and sustain democratic governance within a society. It encompasses the principles of political equality, individual freedoms, the rule of law, and civic participation. In a democratic culture, citizens are actively engaged in the political process, exercising their rights and responsibilities through voting, expressing opinions, and contributing to public discourse.

Key elements of a democratic culture include respect for human rights, tolerance for diverse perspectives, and a commitment to peaceful conflict resolution. Open communication and a free press are crucial components, as they enable the exchange of ideas and the dissemination of information, fostering an informed citizenry.

Education plays a vital role in nurturing a democratic culture by promoting civic awareness and critical thinking skills. Additionally, democratic societies often emphasize the importance of community involvement, social justice, and the protection of minority rights.

It is important to note that the specific manifestations of democratic culture can vary across different societies, reflecting historical, cultural, and contextual factors. Overall, a robust democratic culture is fundamental for the functioning and sustainability of democratic systems.

Democracy can be perceived and labeled in different ways by approaching it from various angles. Indeed, throughout history, thinkers have offered numerous interpretations and definitions of the concept. For some, democracy is merely the name of a form of governance; for others, it is a philosophy of life; and for others, it is a culture. Each perspective reflects the diverse dimensions of democracy, encompassing its role as a system of governance, a philosophy emphasizing equality among individuals, and a culture fostering values such as dialogue and collaboration. Every definition crafted to explain democracy holds validity from its own standpoint. However, when we refer to “democracy culture” and approach democracy as a culture, we encounter a new perspective. In this fresh approach, both concepts, democracy and culture, not only carry their inherent characteristics but also overlap, qualifying each other and even seeming to be an expansion of one another. Much like compound words taking on new meanings, when the words “democracy” and “culture” come together to form the expression “democracy culture,” the resulting concept takes on a new significance; it embodies a way of life, a societal characteristic, an order, a set of values, and

simultaneously becomes a tradition. While the distinction between humans and animals is commonly attributed to the ability to think, the most significant difference lies in the fact that humans are the sole beings capable of producing culture. Democracy, in essence, is a cultural product brought forth by humans. Now, what does the concept of 'democracy culture' convey? How did it emerge, undergo phases to reach the present, and experience changes over time? As democracy transforms into a cultural element beyond being a political form of governance, what universal aspects can symbolize it? What elements become indispensable in a culture influenced by democracy?

The impact of organizational cynicism on democratic culture is a multifaceted issue that intertwines leadership styles, employee perceptions, and the broader implications for democratic values within organizations. Organizational cynicism, defined as a negative attitude towards the organization stemming from perceived injustices and failures in leadership, can significantly undermine the democratic ethos that organizations strive to uphold. This phenomenon is particularly relevant in public institutions where democratic principles are expected to guide operations and employee interactions. Research indicates that democratic leadership plays a crucial role in mitigating organizational cynicism. Ince & Turan (2011) claims that there is a positive relationship between democratic leadership styles and lower levels of organizational cynicism among public employees.

This finding is supported by Terzi & Derin (2016), who assert that when teachers perceive low levels of organizational cynicism, it correlates with a more favorable view of their educational environment, suggesting that democratic leadership fosters a culture of trust and collaboration. The implication here is that organizations led by democratic leaders are more likely to cultivate an environment where employees feel valued and engaged, thereby enhancing democratic culture. Moreover, the relationship between perceived organizational support and cynicism further elucidates this dynamic. Kasalak & Aksu (2014) found that when employees perceive a lack of support from their organization, it leads to increased cynicism, which in turn can erode trust in leadership and democratic processes. This is echoed in the work of Doğan & Tezcan (2021), who note that diminished organizational trust is a direct consequence of heightened cynicism. Such a cycle can create a toxic environment where democratic values are not only undermined but actively resisted as employees become disillusioned with the organization's commitment to fairness and equity. The role of organizational culture cannot be overlooked in this context. Wicaksono & Muafi (2021) argue that a supportive organizational culture can significantly reduce cynicism, thereby enhancing

organizational commitment. This relationship suggests that organizations prioritizing democratic values in their culture are better positioned to foster employee engagement and trust.

In contrast, a culture characterized by cynicism can lead to disengagement and a lack of commitment to organizational goals, which is detrimental to the democratic process within the organization. Additionally, employees' emotional labor plays a significant role in shaping organizational cynicism. Çetin (2019) found a substantial relationship between emotional labor and cynicism, indicating that employees who are required to manage their emotions may develop cynical attitudes as a defense mechanism against perceived organizational injustices. This emotional toll can further alienate employees from the democratic ideals that organizations seek to promote, as they may feel that their voices and concerns are not being heard or valued. The interplay between organizational justice and cynicism is another critical factor in understanding the impact on democratic culture.

Research by Köybaşı et al. (2017) demonstrates that perceptions of organizational justice are inversely related to levels of cynicism. When employees perceive fairness in decision-making, they are less likely to develop cynical attitudes, fostering a more democratic culture. Conversely, cynicism flourishes when justice is perceived to be lacking, leading to a breakdown in trust and collaboration among employees. Furthermore, the implications of organizational cynicism extend beyond individual attitudes to affect collective organizational outcomes. Nafei (2013) emphasizes that cynicism can negatively impact job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which are essential components of a thriving democratic culture. When employees are cynical, they are less likely to engage in collaborative efforts that uphold democratic values, thus perpetuating a cycle of disengagement and mistrust.

The relationship between organizational cynicism and leadership styles also warrants attention. Marchlewska et al. (2021) suggest that leaders who exhibit narcissistic traits may foster an environment of cynicism, as their behaviors can lead to mistrust and negative attitudes toward democratic processes. This highlights the importance of leadership in shaping organizational culture and the necessity for leaders to embody democratic values to counteract cynicism. In educational settings, the impact of organizational cynicism on democratic culture is particularly pronounced. Research indicates that teachers' perceptions of cynicism can significantly influence their engagement with democratic practices in the classroom. For instance, Okçu et al. (2023) found that teachers' low levels of cynicism were associated with higher levels of organizational trust, which is essential for fostering a democratic learning

environment. This suggests that addressing cynicism within educational institutions is critical for promoting democratic values among future generations. Moreover, the effects of organizational cynicism on turnover intentions further complicate the relationship between cynicism and democratic culture. Çöl (2022) argues that higher levels of cynicism correlate with increased turnover intentions, which can destabilize organizations and hinder the establishment of a democratic culture. When employees leave due to cynicism, organizations lose valuable perspectives and contributions that are vital for fostering a democratic ethos. The implications of organizational cynicism also extend into the realm of employee empowerment.

Yıldırım & Yıldırım (2016) note that cynicism can act as a barrier to empowerment, as employees who feel disillusioned are less likely to take initiative or engage in democratic processes. This lack of empowerment can stifle innovation and collaboration, further entrenching cynicism within the organizational culture. In summary, the impact of organizational cynicism on democratic culture is profound and multifaceted. It is influenced by leadership styles, organizational support, emotional labor, perceptions of justice, and the broader organizational culture. To foster a healthy democratic culture, organizations must actively address the factors contributing to cynicism, promoting trust, fairness, and employee engagement. By doing so, they can create an environment where democratic values thrive, ultimately benefiting both the organization and its employees.

3.1. Democracy in Conceptual Terms

The concept of democracy also traces its roots back to Ancient Greece like many terms in political science. It is derived from the Greek words “demos,” meaning “people,” and “kratos,” meaning “rule” or “power.” It signifies the idea of people governing themselves. Democracy can be defined as the self-governance of citizens who, through their elected representatives, manage their own affairs.

In Ancient Greece, direct democracy was practiced in small city-states. Men over the age of 20, recognized as “citizens with voting eligibility,” participated directly in voting. This form of democracy, known as city-state democracy, was implemented in a limited space and population with a homogeneous societal structure. Contrastingly, in contemporary pluralistic representative democracies, each individual inherently possesses defined rights and freedoms (Köker, 1992, p. 162). In addition to the political rights that form the essence of democracy,

civil rights are the soul of civil society. When political rights and civil rights complement each other, democracy aligns with civil society (Saribay, 1998, p. 32).

Democracy entails citizens managing their affairs through representatives, serving as the bedrock of society. It guarantees the division of powers, safeguards individual rights, and protects personal privacy. Essential to democracy are diverse ideas, interests, and pluralism. The respect for diversity and prevention of majority oppression over minorities set democracy apart from other governing systems (Bayhan, 2005, pp.146-147).

Civil society plays a crucial role in promoting and institutionalizing values such as tolerance, moderation, compromise, and respect for opposing views, which constitute democratic culture. This contributes not only to limiting arbitrary actions of leaders by accommodating various social identities but also fostering the development of self-confidence, initiative-taking, and virtuous citizens (Tosun, 2005, p. 29).

Democracy should not be solely understood as a system where the public votes periodically in elections to choose their representatives. Democracy necessitates the protection of human rights, safeguarding minorities, and restraining the power of the state and economic centers through the rule of law. From a political institution perspective, it requires acknowledging fundamental rights that those in power must respect, the societal representation of leaders and policies, and a sense of citizenship based on adherence to the law (Touraine, 1992, pp. 358-360). Lipset (1986) stated that one of the numerous definitions of democracy is a political system that facilitates regular, constitutionally compliant changes to replace leaders. It serves as a mechanism allowing citizens, forming the electorate, to make choices among competing politicians for political power, influencing the country's governance and crucial decisions. Nation-states exhibit heterogeneous structures, and the distinctive feature of the modern democratic state lies in political competition for the representation of differences (Dahl, 1993, p. 23).

Democracy is a system built on the foundations of pluralism, transparency, and participation. It includes the voluntary restriction of citizens' freedom and sovereignty, as long as they adhere to laws, and the delegation of governing authority and sovereignty to elected representatives. Key elements in democracy are the separation of powers, the protection of individual rights, and safeguarding private life. Democracies value the diversity of ideas and interests, acknowledging that dictatorship over minorities by the majority is incompatible. In democracies, the rights of minorities and dissenters to exist, be represented, and express themselves are guaranteed (Morin, 2000, pp. 197-198).

European democracy has developed in conjunction with economic and cultural shifts throughout its social history. The rise of a trading bourgeoisie in urban centers notably influenced social and economic structure changes. In contrast to the inherent statuses prevalent in feudal and aristocratic systems, acquired statuses gained importance in the new order. Unlike the serf-lord dynamic of feudalism, urban masses were redefined through diversification supported by a commercial economy (Bostancı, 1995, pp. 46-47).

Democracy is considered superior to other forms of governance as it helps prevent oppressive and malevolent autocrats from coming into power. It provides citizens with essential rights that non-democratic systems lack, offers a broader range of personal freedom compared to other possibilities, assists individuals in protecting their fundamental interests, maximizes opportunities for people to determine their own fate, provides ample opportunities for fulfilling moral responsibilities, supports human development more than any alternative, ensures a relatively higher degree of political equality, and democracies generally avoid conflicts with each other, with democratic nations typically being wealthier than non-democratic ones (Dahl, 1993, pp. 49-62). As a result of societal developments, representative democracy cannot meet the increasing desire of the public to participate more in governance. Participatory democracy allows individuals in the community to influence decision-makers through their words and actions while forming decisions that concern themselves and the community. The need for a method other than elections to make collective decisions sets participatory democracy apart from representative democracy. It involves expressing opinions on non-political decisions, taking action, requesting information, and educating individuals (Çukurbayır, 2002, p. 13).

3.1.1. The Conceptual Definition of Democracy

Democracy is defined as a form of governance based on the people's sovereignty. Another definition characterizes it as a government formed by representatives elected through a free electoral system. In this context, it can be said that the will and desires of the people shape the direction of governance. In governments based on democratic principles, sovereignty lies with the people, specifically most of the people. Democracy indicates that sovereignty unequivocally resides with the public. Those who are not part of the majority form the opposition. The participation and right to voice opinions between the majority and minority result from equality in democracy (Kader & Özlem, 2014).

It is essential to delve into its history and origins to comprehend democracy. Democracy, as a political system or form of governance, is a fusion of norms and institutions. Our aspirations

for democracy stem from discontent with the current situation and, at the same time, serve as a reaction. Ideals symbolize the aspirations that states strive for but struggle to fully embody within existing definitions, as translating these symbols into action poses a formidable challenge (Doğan & İsmail, 2005, p.147). In this regard, the symbols in our ideals are never entirely real. Democracy is a form of civilization that reflects the world we inhabit. Political concepts coined by Aristotle, Locke, Hobbes, and Tocqueville have enriched the meaning of democracy over time. Democracy is described through concepts such as authority, independence, law, justice, and legality. Whether these terms lead to success or failure, they have played significant roles throughout history (David, 2005, pp. 332-334). Democracy is presented in new perspectives similarly: independence, legality, law, decision-making, norms, institutions, justice, equality, political culture, and civil society all play a role. According to some writers, these approaches are crucial for representatives, with voter opinions being paramount and decision-makers taking a secondary position. Others concentrate more on normative content, the methods to be adopted and state institutions. This situation influences how democracy is implemented or serves as the basis for exercising power.

3.1.2. Development of Democracy Concept

The development of democracy has been significantly influenced by historical and societal transformations such as urbanization, discoveries, the Renaissance and Reformation movements, secularization, the Age of Enlightenment, Positivism, Nationalism, Liberalism, and others. One of the fundamental characteristics in the development of democracy is the emergence of the indispensable concept of the “active citizen,” as stated by Bostancı (1995, p. 47).

The popularity of democracy can be explained in relation to social and economic changes, according to Anthony Giddens. Firstly, democracy tends to align with competitive capitalism as an economic system. Additionally, capitalism views itself as superior to communism in generating wealth and prosperity. As globalization increases and individuals compare their lives with different countries and communities, there is a tendency to have a better assessment of how they are governed, leading to a demand for more democracy. Thirdly, the influence of media, especially television, is crucial. Due to satellite and cable television broadcasts, political authorities cannot control the programs that citizens watch (Giddens, 2000, pp. 364-365).

Endeavors mark human history for the democratization of societies. Throughout the ages, almost all adjustments and rules in the communal life processes of humanity have revolved around the aspiration for “democratization.” The concepts of “democracy” and “democratization” have remained an enduring ideal, undergoing diverse social transformations until the contemporary era. The interpretation of the term “democracy” varies across societies and individuals, often viewed as a panacea for societal challenges. Even in Greek, the precise meaning of “demos” remains ambiguous. Aristotle characterized democracy as a corrupted form of “politeia,” potentially denoting a “good city-state,” indicating that “demos,” within Aristotle’s democracy definition, encompasses various elements. The term incorporates not just the masses and crowds but also the impoverished and additionally includes the masses or impoverished characterized by faults like selfishness, lawlessness, or other deficiencies (Sartori, 1996, p. 22).

Plato was the first thinker to work on democracy using a scientific methodology. According to Plato, democracy is the least favorable political order because it has the potential to quickly turn into the worst political system, leading to tyranny. Plato describes democracy as “a very pleasant, beautiful system, anarchic and colorful, attributing a kind of equality to both the equal and unequal without discrimination.” Aristotle considers democracy a deviation from what he perceives as the ideal political order, termed “politeia,” representing a balanced government serving the common good. In his view, democracy tends to favor the majority at the expense of justice and the best interests of all citizens. Immanuel Kant argues that while democracy may provide a degree of protection for the rights of the poorer sections of society or certain groups of citizens, it falls short of ensuring the common good. He critiques democracy as a system that can result in the majority imposing its will on the minority, leading to social inequalities. Kant introduces a regulation to address the confusion between republican and democratic organization and constitution, stating that forms of government can be evaluated from the perspective of those in powers and from the perspective of those in power governing the people. These forms include *formae imperii*, which are autocracy, aristocracy, and democracy; and *formae regiminis*, which are related to organization, i.e., the act of general will enabling a mass to become a people. There are two forms of governance based on how the state utilizes its power: republicanism and despotism (Kuçuradi, 1998, p. 21).

It can be understood from this that, despite the great significance and expectations that influential thinkers attribute to democracy, they also maintain a cautious approach. One of

their most significant concerns is the potential for the masses to become a form of tyranny when they come together. As a result, this desired and hoped-for concept has often fallen victim to individuals' and societies' meaningless and excessive ambitions. The world has witnessed interesting developments in the democratization process, with many states claiming to struggle for democracy being found to commit significant violations of democratic principles.

Societies attribute different meanings to democracy. One of the most fundamental characteristics of democracy is “social differentiation.” The real embodiment of the concept of democracy depends on the emergence of differences and their ability to coexist harmoniously. Individuality is the most fundamental requirement brought about by being human. Each person is different and possesses a unique set of codes from their creation. Considering this basic principle in human and state relations and regulations, democracy can continue to thrive in a healthy manner. The most common problem encountered is the refusal of those in power to accept the power of differences. Democracy agrees with every kind of difference, whether it is political differentiation, ideological, cultural, ethnic, gender, or based on life philosophy, as richness (Taylor, 1994). Although republics may view differentiation as the division, fragmentation, or even destruction of society, democracy places great importance on differentiation as a means to strengthen representation and enrich political meaning.

In sociology, all theories are explained by considering the processes of change and maturation experienced throughout historical periods. When interpreting the concept of democracy, it is beneficial to look back to the very foundations and examine its evolution and development over historical periods for a comprehensive understanding. The concept of democracy has undergone a fascinating yet challenging and intricate process from ancient Greece to the present day, making it difficult to comprehend (Kabasakal, 2008, p. 40).

In the historical context of Islam, the consultative mechanism established during the era of Prophet Muhammad can be viewed as the historical counterpart to contemporary democratic participation. This system was effectively implemented, as demonstrated in instances such as the Battle of Uhud, where adherence to public opinion prevailed despite the potential cost of defeat. Moreover, the selection of leaders through elections and their efforts to engage the public in governance during the reign of the four caliphs represented democratic principles uncommon for their time. However, challenges faced during the Umayyad period underscore the potential societal traumas resulting from suppressing differences, and these challenges have persisted and intensified over time. In essence, the absence of comprehensive democracy

in contemporary Islamic states is not inherently tied to the Islamic faith. Rather, the lack of legitimacy and competence from an Islamic perspective primarily lies with the rulers leading Islamic states. Any potential anti-democratic tendencies are directly attributed to these leaders rather than the principles of the Islamic religion (Çizakça, 2002, p. 114).

3.1.3. Civil Society and Democratization

Civil society plays a vital role in the process of democratization. Civil society organizations are crucial in supporting democratization, increasing social participation, and strengthening democratic institutions. Civil society organizations work to ensure government and other institutions' accountability, protect human rights and justice, and promote gender equality. Additionally, civil society organizations enable the voices and participation of different segments of society, thus contributing to greater participation in democratic processes. Furthermore, civil society organizations conduct educational and awareness-raising activities and work towards social change in the process of democratization. This helps to foster greater commitment to democratic values within society and strengthen democratic institutions.

The “community (cemaat)” structure, which describes rural life, is characterized by a prevailing sense of “we”. “Community” is defined as a closed economic system, fundamental relationships, and a homogeneous demographic structure. However, “society” is associated with urban life. Instead of the “we” mentality, this structure has individualism, differentiation, a greater division of labor, secondary relationships, and a varied population structure (Bayhan, 1996, p. 91).

“The process of urbanization leads to a shift from a community-based structure to a societal structure. In a ‘community’ structure, political parties and ideologies are perceived as akin to a sect or tribe. This can result in the social structure being embroiled in regional, sectarian, cultic, feudal, tribal, ethnic, or ideological conflicts. The resolution of issues through rational compromises and the functioning of democratic political mechanisms become unattainable within such a society. In a ‘society’ type of social structure, values such as region, sect, cult, ethnic group, and ideology are preserved in various forms but are interconnected through social and cultural activities” (Akyol, 1997, pp. 199-200).

Civil society develops more easily and rapidly in liberal societies than authoritarian regimes. This is due to the fact that in modern societies, individual rights, freedoms, and private property are accepted as fundamental values, and the state is constrained by law. In Western democratic regimes, the activities of the state are limited by law. Such states require self-

sufficient, autonomous groups and voluntary organizations. In these countries, civil society keeps the potential for democratic governments to abuse their power in check by establishing a public control mechanism (Gönenç, 2001, p. 47).

The modern state rises upon civil society. Therefore, civil society aligns not only with a democratic state but also with all types of modern states. There is no absolute parallelism between civil society and democratization” (Erözden, 2004, p. 67).

Civil society serves as the arena where organizations formed by individuals through their voluntary choices establish their presence. Civil society and democracy are mutually dependent concepts, each complementing and advancing the other. In a democratic system, ultimate power rests with the majority of the people, and sovereignty is vested in the nation's will. Democracy involves a system and organizational structure that allows the people to oversee government activities directly or through elected representatives (Yıldırım, 2004, p. 94)

Democratic civil society formations can coexist alongside anti-democratic structures and sentiments. Thus, the mere fact that civil society exists does not prove that a region is democratic or that it can play a key role in democratization (Tosun, 2005, p. 130).

The fundamental element needed for the democratization of the system, in terms of establishing a healthy relationship between civil society and the state, is creating and reinforcing a mutual atmosphere of trust. Individuals and institutions having a sense of mutual trust among them will enhance cooperation and solidarity. Trust emerges in a community with a shared culture of regularity, honesty, and collaborative work based on norms collectively accepted by its members. Trust is defined as the feeling of belief and commitment without fear, hesitation, or doubt. It is the assurance that both parties are confident the other will not exploit their vulnerability (İnam, 2003, p. 17).

The pluralistic structure of civil society is a prerequisite for democracy, but the existence of civil society does not automatically imply the existence of democracy. In other words, while the presence of civil society is necessary for democracy, it is not a sufficient condition. The development of a democratic system is contingent upon the development of civil society and is intertwined with the democratization of the state and politics. In this sense, civil society serves as the sole barrier against the dictatorship of the majority in democracies (Keyman, 2004, p. 3).

Civil society's absolute positive contribution to countries' democratization processes is a matter of debate. The fundamental contribution of civil society to democratization is preventing the assimilation of differences into a singular identity and enabling the preservation of diversity. If civil society is uncompromising, non-negotiable, maximalist, composed of interest groups, or includes anti-democratic aims and methods, it is unlikely to contribute to democratization positively.

It depends on the political and cultural dimensions of democracy for civil society to contribute positively to the democratic process, namely the existence of a democratic state. There is a mutual need and interdependence between the state and civil society. The presence of a democratic civil society is essential for a democratic state to sustain its existence on a legitimate basis. The mutual acknowledgment of these needs and the fulfillment of what they require are inevitable for the success of the democratization process (Tosun, 1998, p. 284).

The dynamism and mobility within civil society, along with the extent of unity, organization, diversity, and pluralism, make it more difficult for the despotic potential of the modern state to be realized. The contribution of civil society to democracy depends not only on the number of organizations but also on the diversity among them, the democratic relationships they establish, and how well they internalize a culture of democracy (Köker, 2004, pp. 93-104).

The democratic potential of civil society is directly related to the political institutionalization, strength or weakness of democratic values, cultural climate, and human resources in the country in which it operates. For civil society to harness its democratic potential, democracy must exist in both political and cultural realms. Additionally, for a democratic state to sustain its existence, it requires the presence of a democratic civil society. Mutual acknowledgment of these needs by civil society and the state enhances the success of the democratic process (Tosun, 2005, p. 140).

In contemporary times, the presence of civil society has become a prerequisite for democracy, and conversely, democracy necessitates the existence of civil society. Recognizing and safeguarding fundamental rights and freedoms are indispensable conditions for democracy. A democratic political structure for both the state and civil society is only achievable in a cultural climate where democratic political culture is internalized by both individuals and institutions (Türküne, 2003, p. 364).

Democracy signifies an order where human rights are realized within a political system. In a democratic system, individuals can advocate not only for their rights but also for the rights of

others. The coexistence of an individual's rights and freedoms with those of different segments is only possible in democratic regimes. An active civil society is one of the fundamental indicators of democracy in society (Yıldırım, 2004, pp. 96-97).

In pluralistic democracies, the essential element is the participation of the people, and achieving this participation is facilitated through civil society organizations such as associations, foundations, and unions. Civil society organizations play a crucial role in fostering pluralism and participation, and these structures bear significant responsibilities in this regard (Yıldırım, 2004, p. 113).

Civil society is a prerequisite for democracy, and the quality of organizations determines their development. Not all intermediary institutions and organizations pose obstacles to civil society and democracy. "Democratization" and "civil society" overlap and mutually influence each other positively. Characteristics such as voluntarism, autonomy, political contribution, ownership of resources, facilitating the emergence of political leaders, playing a limiting role in political authority, and contributing to legitimizing political power are overlapping aspects of democracy and civil society (Karadağ, 2005, p. 70).

For civil society to assume a democratic function, it needs to be morally and politically more substantial and more influential than the state. In political science, regimes are classified as 'democratic,' 'totalitarian,' or 'authoritarian' based on whether they allow, prohibit entirely, or permit a robust formation of civil society. The fundamental requirement for a regime to be democratic is to provide the opportunity for a strong civil society structure (Çaha, 2007, p. 125).

It is incorrect to consider civil society only in the context of the democratization of the political system and the implementation and assurance of individual rights and freedoms. Along with all of these, civil society also plays a vital role in structuring state-society-individual relations based on participatory democracy. Civil society is a fundamental structure in establishing and adopting a participatory democratic culture. It is not just an organizational structure consisting of NGOs (Keyman, 2005, p. 8).

The concept and process of civil society emerged in Europe and underwent changes in meaning and content over time. Civil society was revitalized in Europe in parallel with the demands for democratization. It indicates a space for life independent of the despotic state, even against the state. In other words, civil society can be considered as the struggle to

acquire individual rights and freedoms and as the key to the transition from a totalitarian, despotic state to democracy (Keyman, 2005, p. 6).

For an effective civil society, it is important for intellectuals, teachers, engineers, workers, and other professional identities to break away from the control of the state and political parties. One factor that hinders democratization is the excessive politicization of civil society. The lack of autonomy of pressure groups, professional organizations, media, and unions is a common feature of underdeveloped countries. In Türkiye, there are many civil society organizations, such as student associations, unions, various interest groups, and professional chambers. In the 1970s, the groups polarised into right or left became overly politicized, and this process resulted in ideological divergence and polarization. As a result, the identities of the groups that make up civil society were completely engulfed by totalitarian policies that sought to seize political power at the state level.

However, following the period after 1983, with the weakening of revolutionary politics towards the future and the development of policies focused on certain issues, new political actors such as women, businessmen, engineers, and Greens emerged and began to express their specific demands. Democratization can only be achieved through the liberation of civil society from totalitarian projects, which can only be achieved if social movements limit themselves. When social actors claim that they have a monopoly on the truth, counter-movements also produce totalitarian political projects. Balancing the totalitarian tendencies present in civil society can only be achieved by transitioning from identity politics to interaction politics (Göle, 2000, pp. 80-81).

Civil society organizations play a crucial role in the democratization process, contributing to the dissemination of democratic values, increased social participation, and the strengthening of democratic institutions. Therefore, supporting and empowering civil society organizations are an important step for the successful democratization process.

3.1.4. The Impact of Civil Society on the Development of Democracy

One of the prerequisites for a strong democracy is civil society, which influences the shaping of democracy in many ways. To examine these effects (Karadağ, 2005, pp. 69-70):

- Civil society limits state power. It is the source of political, economic, cultural, and moral foundations.
- Civil society helps citizens to access better opportunities and increases social welfare.

- Opportunities are provided for the emergence of new political leaders.
- Civil society takes on the task of providing moral education to citizens. It aims to make interactions between individuals beneficial to the public. The civil society sphere is where necessary responsibilities and civic virtues are acquired.
- The presence of diversity and pluralism within civil society acts as a formidable obstacle for any minority group attempting to seize control of the state, as it fosters a balance of power and perspectives.
- Tolerance, moderation, and willingness to compromise, which are the foundation of democratic culture, are acquired within the civil society sphere. These values, such as respect for opposing views and differences, are important in spreading and adopting them in society (Orhan & Oğuzlar, 2005, p. 466).

A healthy civil society with the ability to monitor the state's control and create different political alternatives helps to consolidate and develop democracy. Therefore, the importance of a vibrant, independent, and strong civil society structure is significant at every stage of the democratic process (Özbudun, 1999, p. 113).

Democracy and civil society organizations complement each other. The development of democracy in a country indicates the development of freedom of organization. In such societies, civil society organizations are widespread (Yıldırım, 2004, p. 113).

3.1.5. Civil Society and Democratic Values

Democracy means a system where human rights are realized politically. In a democratic system, people can defend not only their own rights but also the rights of others. The existence of a person's own rights and freedoms with different segments is only possible in democratic regimes. One of the most fundamental indicators of democracy in a society is the existence of an active civil society in that country.

During the dissolution of feudalism and the development of the bourgeoisie, starting from the 12th century in Western Europe, the Roman Law, which regulated urban life, began to be used again. In this sense, the term 'civil society' encompasses urban customs. The term 'civilian' in civil society refers to the rights and responsibilities brought about by urban life.

The concept of civil society being recognized as a separate area outside the state domain only occurred after the eighteenth century. From Aristotle to the tradition continuing with natural law in modern society, the concept of civil society was used interchangeably with the state.

Civil society was considered as an area where individuals were equipped with a range of rights and obligations in the public sphere (Bayhan, 2005, p. 154).

In the political science terminology of the 1990s, three important ways of democratizing societies are highlighted: market in the economic field, democracy in the political field, and the existence and functionality of democratic civil society in the social field. Accordingly, civil society is the sociological complement of the market in the economic field and democracy in the political field. The complementary and balancing effect of civil society in the process of democratization is particularly evident in the changes that have occurred in Eastern Europe, as well as in examples from South America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Taiwan, where the political balance between oppressed societies and authoritarian states is being achieved more clearly. The spread of movements originating from civil society in this country has increased social demand and pressure towards democratization. The third sector, also known as the intermediary sector, which is the civil society sector, is expected to help maintain the balance between anarchic individualism and dogmatic statism in the relationship between the state and the economy. Civil society, which emerges as a social force in discussing the limits and legitimacy of state power, plays a prominent role. The foundation of democracy is built on the trust that citizens have in the state and political institutions (Kabasakal, 2008, p. 74).

Civil society refers to a wide-ranging structure that operates independently from the official state institutions and encompasses nearly all sectors of society. Civil Society Organizations are legitimate entities focused on particular areas, striving to improve living conditions and raise awareness about their respective domains. Civil society plays a critical role in upholding democracy, and in countries where it has flourished, positive outcomes related to social diversity and harmony have been observed. Civil society expands its own scope and rights through lawful means, and it is worth noting that civil society organizations have the capacity to oversee, influence, and provide guidance to the state in safeguarding freedoms (Bayhan, 2002, p. 8).

In brief, a strong civil society can contribute to the healthier preservation of democratic values. Therefore, civil society plays a crucial role as an integral part of democracies. Preserving diversity and obtaining rights heavily rely on civil society's pressure on the state and the public opinion it creates. Civil society organizations strengthen the state's legitimacy as institutions that generate and spread trust on social and political levels. When citizens

select their leaders from among members of the groups, they themselves belong to, the level of trust will increase.

A strong, developed civil society encompassing democratic structures and traditions can lead to the empowerment of the second party in the state-society relationship. This highlights the sovereignty of the society over the state. However, the power balance between them can vary depending on the characteristics of the society and the totalitarian, inclusive, or repressive nature of the state. Despite the authoritarian structure of the state, the existence of an organized civil society that can maintain its internal solidarity represents hope for the future. In addition to contributing to the establishment and preservation of democratic governance in civil society, it also contributes to the development of administrative quality within the state (Kabasakal, 2008, p. 78). Civil society has a dominant and guiding structure in determining public policies in developed societies. The presence of an effective and strong civil society is crucial for the progress of societies, especially in the context of democracy.

3.1.6. Civil Society and Democracy Culture

Democracy culture holds critical importance for the functioning of civil society and participation in democratic processes. Civil society is responsible for monitoring the government and promoting social participation by supporting democratic values and institutions. Civil society organizations play an active role in spreading democratic values, protecting human rights, and ensuring justice. In addition, civil society enables various social groups to voice their opinions and respond to different societal needs. Therefore, the development of a democratic culture and the strengthening of civil society are complementary elements. This process contributes to a more participatory, transparent, and accountable society.

The entirety formed by the attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values related to politics among the members of a society is referred to as political culture” (Turan, 1986, p. 461). The values of political culture in society also influence the adoption of democratic values within civil society and its commitment to them (Duman, 2008, p. 363).

The institutionalization of democracy and its transformation into a way of life and culture depend on the ethical foundation of the relationship between civil society and the state. When civil society and the state violate or undermine this ethical foundation, their contributions to establishing and strengthening democracy become more difficult (Karadağ, 2003, pp. 45-58).

One key element that makes civil society democratic is its ability to ensure the acceptance and preservation of differences, rather than reducing them to a unified identity such as the people, society, class, community, or citizenship. Civil society should avoid ideological impositions that eliminate differences, both within itself and about the political sphere. Similarly, the state should avoid imposing such ideological impositions on civil society. The continuation of the democratic structure of civil society and its democratization function is only possible through the full implementation of internal democracy (Duman, 2008, p. 363).

The political culture and values of a country have a direct impact on the internal and external functioning of the political, economic, and civil society. In a political culture where the state is perceived as a father figure and the nation is defined as a military nation, it is not surprising that civil society organizations have a militaristic attitude towards military coups. The democratization of democracy is only possible through the establishment and strengthening of a solid and accurate culture of citizenship. It is not solely the responsibility of the state and the economic society to create and nurture a healthy culture of citizenship. Non-profit organizations, such as family and civil society institutions, also have duties and responsibilities (Giddens, 2000a, p. 92).

In Europe, demands for democratization within civil society have been revitalized. The concept of civil society is a symbol of a space for society to live independently of despotic states, even a space that is independent of and against the state. In other words, civil society can be considered as the fundamental dynamic of the struggle to acquire individual rights and freedoms, and the transition from a totalitarian, despotic state structure to democracy (Keyman, 2005, p. 6).

Democracy is the organization of individuals that make up a society. In democracies, organizational processes, organs, and individuals are formed by their free will. Individuals that make up society determine their own future with makeup society determine their own future of their free will. Democracy is a form of governance created by individuals who are conscious of their rights, freedoms, and responsibilities. The existence of civil society can be considered a necessary precondition for a strong and healthy functioning democracy (Erol, 1995, p. 1; Sarıbay, 1998, p. 25). In other words, civil society is a self-organizing, voluntary, self-supporting, intermediary social structure between the private sphere and the state, which is autonomous from the state but does not necessitate alienation from it (Sarıbay, 1998, p. 29).

Democracy means that citizens who make up society govern themselves through representatives. Additionally, separation of powers, guarantee of individual rights, and

protection of private life are possible with democracy. Diversity of ideas and interests is a great richness and necessity for democracy. Respect for diversity is of great importance in preventing the oppression and dictatorship of the majority over minorities (Bayhan, 2005, pp. 146-147).

Civil rights, which are the soul of civil society, are as important as political rights that embody democracy. When they complement each other, democracy and civil society will be harmonious and aligned (Sarıbay, 1998, p. 32).

“Democratization” and “civil society” overlap regarding their goals and objectives. Both aim to assist in acquiring qualities and characteristics such as volunteerism, autonomy, providing inputs to the political system, taking ownership of their support, enabling the emergence of political leaders, playing a role in limiting political power, and contributing to the legitimization of political power when necessary (Karadağ, 2005, p. 70).

Civil society is an important factor in establishing state-society-individual relations based on participatory democracy, as well as in realizing and securing individual rights and freedoms or in implementing processes to democratize the political system. Civil society is not just an organizational living space consisting solely of civil society organizations, but it is also one of the most important elements in forming civil society and democracy (Keyman, 2005, p. 8).

3.1.7. The Role of the State in the Process of Democratization

In the process of democratization, the role of the state is crucial. The state should play an effective role in bringing together different segments of society, promoting participation, ensuring fundamental rights and freedoms, and providing justice. Additionally, it is important for the state to strengthen democratic values by reinforcing laws and institutions during the democratization process and responding to the diverse needs of society. It is important for the government to collaborate with various actors, such as media and civil society organizations, to enable the expression of diverse voices in society and promote public participation. Additionally, it is important for the government to increase transparency and accountability, combat corruption, and protect human rights.

Civil society and the market operate within the boundaries set by the state. Therefore, the state's position within the unifying model forms the framework for the established social dialogue. If the state cannot rid itself of its centralizing tendencies in the environment where it communicates with civil society and the market, and if these tendencies increase, unwanted

state elite may emerge (Tosun, 2005, p. 41). This situation is not easily acceptable for democracy.

In political theory, the state has the power to regulate and supervise the economy, private sphere, and civil society through its political authority. The use of political power is the fundamental determinant of the contraction and expansion of the political sphere. Capitalism and nationalism, which are the founding principles of all states claiming to be democratic or on the path to democracy, are also ways for the modern state to legitimize itself and increase its political power.

In countries like Türkiye, where the social ground is suitable, the state structure has consciously used two channels and developed an identity that both differentiates itself from society and has tools to reproduce it. This situation involves the state's relative autonomy within its own jurisdiction in using capitalist accumulation and distribution tools for social control. The creation of a political sphere both above and outside society and the expansion of its power to the limits of its own logic, as Maḥṣupyan puts it, raise the question in people's minds of whether the state exists for society or for itself. On the other hand, the determination of state-society relations based on a nationalist understanding of citizenship ultimately leads to the production of an abstract and prototype image of citizenship (Tosun, 2005, p. 168). As the owner of both production and distribution vehicles and the creator of the abstract citizen image, the state determines its influence on public and private spheres, as well as the direction and form of democratization (Kabasakal, 2008, p. 72).

For true democracy to exist, the state should not go beyond the theoretical boundaries drawn for it. It should avoid interfering with institutions that exist in many areas of life. The state should not interfere with people's lives and thoughts, especially in private areas. Looking at the most established societies in terms of democratic values, both in the past and present; we can see that this requires the state to narrow its own jurisdiction as much as possible. In fact, one of the most significant reasons why societies like these leave valuable traces throughout history is the relaxed environment they create (Usta, 2006, p. 128).

To ensure the full realization of democracy, the state should safeguard freedoms and diversity as much as possible. The state must be a pioneer of change and transparency in various fields so that individuals can trust the society they are part of. In all areas, the state should aim for the harmony and happiness of all languages, religions, races, and cultures it encompasses through its developed policies. It should ensure equal participation for everyone in its representation mechanism. When freedoms are preserved under the protection of the state,

democratic values have the chance to thrive. If the state endeavors to fairly sustain all elements within its structure, it prioritizes its own continuity and development. Happy and content individuals tend to be more productive and beneficial (Tosun, 1998, p. 8).

In Türkiye, the concept of civil society is understood as an area outside the state where the state's activities, control, and pressure are not decisive on society members, and individuals do not feel the state's coercion. This represents a society that is distant from a militaristic mentality and has always been used in the same sense without undergoing any changes in meaning. From this perspective, the state is a mechanism of oppression, while civil society has a liberating nature and potential. The area outside the state represents a pressure-free, free space (Ercan, 2002, p. 72).

Despite having a strong government, Türkiye has a weak civil society structure. The nature of the relationship between the state and civil society is primarily determined by the state. Therefore, the central role of the state in meeting the demands for democratization and in making necessary regulations is crucial. Unfortunately; civil society is weak in terms of organizational structure and institutional capacity, which results in a weak control over the system and the state. Throughout the history of the Republic, the military has filled this gap in the political society (Tosun, 1998, p. 1).

It is a fact that democracy is stronger and more robust in societies where civil society is present and strong (Abay, 2004, p. 275). In contrast, in societies where civil society is weak, democracy is susceptible to state intervention. In such structures, the likelihood of democratic movements turning into authoritarian structures over time is extremely high. Therefore, it can be said that a strong civil society is necessary for democracies, but civil society alone may not be sufficient. It signifies a civilized society as opposed to the state of nature in Western political thought, where civil society emerged and developed. Since the state is built upon this social structure, civil society is not opposed to the state (Erözden, 2004, pp. 61-68).

The state is a supra-institutional body. Among political organizations, it is the widest, most developed, most organized, and most inclusive structure due to the fact that it encompasses many small and large institutions and organizations. The state is a powerful and constantly expanding structure that includes all legal and administrative structures. Its strength and tendency towards constant growth threaten the freedom of individuals and society. The relationship between civil society and the state is one of the most important topics of discussion in the political arena, in terms of ensuring the freedoms of individuals and society (Yılmaz, 1997, p. 87).

The duty of the state is to prevent confusion and disorder in civil society by making and implementing political and legal regulations (Tura, 2004, p. 53). There is a balanced relationship between civil society and the state, representing the political society. The most fundamental duty of civil society is to prevent the state from becoming arbitrary and to prevent the disruption of democratic balance.

The level of democratization in societies today is directly proportional to the strength of their civil society and the solidity of its relationship with the state. The health and strength of civil society in a country is directly related to the nature of its political structure. This is because, in a country where individuals are not allowed to come together and organize, the formation and development of civil society cannot be expected. Similarly, freedom of expression is one of the fundamental requirements of civil society. For these reasons, civil society has truly flourished and strengthened in democratic Western states that uphold liberal values. In totalitarian societies where there is political power that intervenes in all aspects of society, there is no opportunity for civil society to develop. However, even in countries with oppressive regimes, such as those in Central and Eastern Europe, social events leading up to the fall of regimes and the emergence of civil society could not be prevented (Dursun, 1999, p. 94).

In conclusion, it is crucial for the state to play an effective and fair role in the process of democratization. Therefore, it is of critical importance that the state fulfils its responsibilities in the process of democratization for the strengthening of democracy and the increase of social welfare. This will contribute to the strengthening of democratic institutions, increased participation of society, and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

3.1.8. The Separation of State and Civil Society

‘The Separation of State and Civil Society’ is a concept that refers to the separation of the state and civil society, and their respective areas of activity. This concept includes the idea that the state deals with official and political affairs, while civil society responds to various societal needs through voluntary organizations such as foundations and associations. While the state plays a decisive role in society through legal regulations and policies, civil society generally operates in areas such as social assistance, education, and environmental protection. This distinction aims to prevent the state’s excessive empowerment and encourage diversity and participation in a democratic society. The healthy functioning of this distinction is one of the fundamental characteristics of a democratic society.

In the early days, civil society and political society were considered together. Individuals who transitioned from the natural order to the civil-political order were ‘civil’ and voluntarily accepted allegiance to a political will, demonstrating a willingness to live together. These individuals were the governed. In addition, some were governed. However, since the state was assumed to have emerged due to a social contract, there was no such thing as a civil-political opposition. The idea of a distinction between civil and political society developed towards the end of the 18th century. This period saw the theoretical foundations of the concept of ‘civil society’ being laid. These periods are characterized by increased political authority’s pressure on citizens. As a result, civilians have taken some actions against governments, and the history of civil society is also associated with revolutions or uprisings. A short period of stagnation and silence was experienced at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Later, parallel to social developments and urbanization, civil society developed and became a popular concept. Civil society generally refers to the economic and social sphere outside of the state and state authority, which operates according to its own principles and rules and is self-regulating (Yılmaz, 1997, p. 86).

One essential requirement of pluralistic parliamentary democracies is the separation of state and civil society. As private property became more prominent in Western European history, the similarity between civil society and the state gave way to differences. Throughout political history, a central structure, the state, has emerged, which is limited to a certain territory and a certain number of people living there, and has a certain form of governance (government). As a result, the relationship and distinction between the state and society have come to the fore with the emergence of differentiation between the rulers and the ruled (Tosun, 1998, p. 109).

Promoting civil society as an alternative to the state is to prevent arbitrary practices resulting from the state’s complete domination of the public sphere. Past experiences have shown that an unchallenged political authority creates anger and distrust among citizens toward the state and political institutions (Yeşiltaş, 2005, p. 97).

3.1.9. The Nature of the State-Civil Society Relationship

The relationship between the state and civil society is essential for establishing social order and governance. This relationship refers to the structure in which the state and civil society interact with each other and shape social life. While the state generally governs society through legal regulations and policies, civil society responds to various societal needs through voluntary organizations, associations, and foundations. While the government deals with political and official affairs in a decisive role, civil society generally operates in areas such as

social assistance, education, and environmental protection. This relationship aims to prevent the excessive empowerment of the state and encourage diversity and participation in a democratic society. Additionally, it enables society to respond to its own needs by limiting the state's intervention in civil society activities.

This relationship is important for the welfare, justice, and preservation of democratic values in society. The interaction between the state and civil society is critical in maintaining social balance. The relationship between the state and civil society should be mutually supportive and helpful, with a partnership that also serves as a check and balance on each other. It is important to maintain a partnership where each entity has some control over the other. The autonomy of civil society from the state does not mean alienation from the state (Yıldırım, 2004, p. 28).

The aim of civil society cannot be to replace the state. However, it can have the purpose of informing, monitoring, supervising, and exerting pressure on it (Özbudun, 1999, p. 113). In democracies, the state is limited by law and has a transparent structure (Çaha, 2003, pp. 79-88). The state and society are not two completely separate areas with deep boundaries that are closed off from each other. They are closely related and have the power and initiative to activate each other.

Civil society limits the authoritarian excesses of the state with the principle of the rule of law. The state's role is to maintain social order by balancing the groups that make up civil society. Turan (2018, p.1320) underlines that civil society can be a significant contributor to democratization of the society in which we live. Civil society associations could promote public education, enable platforms, enhance accountability and transparency, and enlarge democratic legitimacy of state regulations. It is possible to see both structures as two forces that support and complement each other. For a healthy democratic relationship between the state and civil society, it is necessary that no social group holds dominant power and no dominant ideology exists. Such a healthy structure ensures civil society's pluralism while aiding the establishment and strengthening of democracy (Yıldız, 2007, p. 228).

There is a possibility that civil society can become an extension of authoritarian or totalitarian policies (Tosun, 2005, p. 129). The oppressive attitude of the state towards civil society can also lead to the insufficient production of democratic values. In this case, democracy can lose its substance by becoming formalistic.

For civil society elements to be an effective force in creating a democratic society and conveying social demands to the state, they must have an autonomous structure. It is almost impossible for groups that are not socially autonomous and are tied to the state to produce alternative discourses outside of the state's official discourse (Çaha, 2003, pp. 56-57).

In a developed democratic structure, it is necessary to establish a balance between the state and civil society. For civil society to develop, the state must have the power to determine and implement the fundamental principles of the regime. Otherwise, civil society cannot develop. Similarly, if civil society is weak, the state cannot deepen democracy (Abay, 2004, p. 272).

There are certain areas where state-civil society relations are problematic. Over-idealizing civil society and over-moralizing it can bring about certain problems. When we evaluate it only regarding its contribution to democratization, important problems arise in the civil society-state relationship. While some civil society organizations are under state control and pressure, others can identify their existence and purposes with the state or the existing political power. They may undertake the task of legitimizing or justifying government policies.

3.1.10. The Role of the State in the Development of Civil Society

The impact of the state on the development of civil society is generally shaped by the policies and practices of the state. By creating policies and regulations that support the development of civil society, the state can increase the formation, growth, and effectiveness of civil society organizations. However, the state's control, financial support, and policies on civil society impact its development. By providing financial support to civil society organizations; the government can assist them in maintaining their activities. Additionally, the government's attitude, regulations, and policies towards civil society can affect their participation in democratic processes. Policies towards civil society can determine their role in social transformation and change. In this context, the impact of the state on the development of civil society is generally shaped through policy-making, financial support, regulations, and policies. The state's control and policies on civil society can affect its effectiveness, social participation, and participation in democratic processes. Therefore, the impact of the state on the development of civil society is often considered an important research topic.

A harmonious collaboration between the state and civil society is necessary for democratic values to become ingrained in a nation. While civil society ought to help the state establish democracy, the state itself must fortify its democratic foundation in order to guarantee civil

society's survival. The countries of Eastern Europe offer the clearest proof that a democracy cannot survive without civil society. Their allusion to liberalism is a major factor in how civil society elements in Eastern Europe evolved into a democratic opposition. This indicates that the transformation of civil society into democracy is contingent upon its liberalization (Çaha, 2007, p. 123).

For civil society to develop in a country the state must not define itself with an ideology; it must be a state of law, and its activities and jurisdiction must be limited. In fact, in a healthy functioning system, the state and civil society are in a mutually supportive democratic structure. Civil society is a structure that strives to find effective and long-term solutions to social problems. To achieve this, efforts are made to direct political actors towards producing policies that can implement these solutions. The most fundamental characteristic of civil society is the partnership of various voluntary organizations established outside of state control (Keyman, 2004, p. 3).

The state and civil society have a crucial relationship in contemporary democracies. A democratic civil society can only be established by a democratic state, and a democratic state cannot exist or continue without a democratic civil society (Gönenç, 2001, p. 311).

Civil society contributes to democracy by controlling state power, preventing the takeover of the state by a minority group, ensuring participation, establishing democratic attitudes, shaping social needs and demands, reducing polarization, nurturing new political leaders, and increasing social responsibility. In addition, civil society helps to restructure ethical values related to polluted politics, thus assisting in overcoming the representation and legitimacy crises experienced by the system (Tosun, 2005, pp. 140-141).

For a healthy civil society to develop, the state must have a legal rather than an ideological character. Therefore, the state should maintain an equal distance from all elements of civil society (Çaha, 2005, pp. 689-707).

The state's ideological structure is an obstacle to developing ideological an ideal civil society. The absence or weakness of civil society creates significant difficulties in expanding freedom areas against state authority and in the functioning and establishment of democracy. In addition, state intervention may be inevitable in cases of conflict and disagreement in the civil society field. In a place where a healthy civil society exists, state intervention may not be needed. However, the need for the state to maintain and sustain a free environment for civil

society persists. On the other hand, preventing the abuse of state power depends on the existence of an autonomous and transparent civil society (Müller, 2006, pp. 310-313).

3.2. Types of Democracy

In the past half-century, the concept of democracy has taken on various meanings, resulting in multiple definitions and making it difficult to establish a common one (Beetham, 2014, p. 19). The lack of consensus has led to different classifications and types of democracy. In their study, David Collier and Steven Levitsky identified more than 550 types of democracy (Diamond, 1996, p. 21). Below, the types of direct democracy, representative democracy, and semi-direct democracy will be presented in terms of the use of sovereignty (Tunç, 2008).

3.2.1. Direct Democracy

Direct democracy is considered the best system that meets the understanding of democracy, where the people themselves govern rather than through a representative (Gözler, 2018, p.107). Direct democracy is a form of government based on the sovereignty of the people, where they vote directly without the need for an intermediary in political decisions. Direct democracy, first seen in ancient Greek cities, involved citizens gathering in public squares known as ‘agoras’ or ‘forums’ to discuss and decide on city matters (Aktaş, 2015, p. 187; Tunç, 2008, p. 1116).

The increase in population has led to increased costs, slowdowns, and inefficiencies. This has directly rendered direct democracy inapplicable in contemporary politics (Yun, 2008, p. 189).

3.2.2. Representative Democracy

Representative democracy refers to using sovereignty through representatives elected by the people (Tunç, 2008, p. 1117). Compared to direct democracy, representative democracy includes the following characteristics (Mezey, 2008, p. 2):

- Policies being made by representatives of the people,
- Representatives being elected by citizens referred to as voters,
- All adult citizens have the right to vote and, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, use that vote to choose their representatives,
- Representatives being accountable to their voters, and voters having the right to choose a different representative in the next election if desired.

3.2.3. Semi-Direct Democracy

Semi-direct democracy is a system that falls between representative democracy and direct democracy. In this system, citizens can make decisions directly on certain issues while also having elected representatives to determine governance.

In semi-direct democracy, citizens can make decisions directly by voting on specific issues, often through referendums or popular votes. For instance, direct voting on whether to approve a particular bill, constitutional amendments, tax policies, etc., is an example of semi-direct democracy. However, semi-direct democracy also includes the feature of determining governance through elected representatives. In this case, citizens typically elect their representatives through elections and have a say in governance through them.

Semi-direct democracy aims to strike a balance between direct democracy and representative democracy. In this system, citizens have the ability to make decisions directly on some issues while also having the power to determine governance through their representatives. This way, semi-direct democracy can be seen as a participatory and effective governance model.

It is a type of democracy in which the exercise of sovereignty is shared between the people and representatives. Semi-direct democracy is similar to direct democracy in that it uses the tools of “referendum, popular veto, popular initiative and impeachment of representatives” (Gözler, 2018, p. 111).

3.3. The Concept of Organizational Democracy and Its Importance

Organizational democracy refers to the participatory and transparent decision-making processes within an organization. The significance of this concept can be highlighted as follows:

a. Participation: Organizational democracy encourages the active involvement of employees in decision-making processes, providing them with opportunities to share their ideas and opinions.

b. Motivation and Commitment: The right to participate in decisions increases employee motivation and fosters greater commitment to the organization.

c. Diversity and Creativity: Evaluating different perspectives promotes diversity and creativity within the organization, contributing positively to innovation and problem-solving processes.

d. Justice and Trust: A democratic environment builds trust among employees in decision-making processes and contributes to maintaining a fair atmosphere.

e. Flexibility and Adaptation: In rapidly changing work environments, organizational democracy enhances adaptability. Employees' viewpoints and experiences can help the organization adapt more quickly and effectively to changing conditions. Therefore, organizational democracy contributes to creating a fair, efficient, and sustainable work environment.

The widespread use of technology and the internet in the late 20th century has impacted management science. It has led to the introduction of democratic practices in organizations and the emergence of the concept of 'organizational democracy' (Çankaya, 2018, p. 11).

Organizational democracy is a management style in which not only managers and shareholders but also all employees who contribute to the organization's performance are involved (Carr & Mezillo, 2015, p. 424; Van Witteloostuijn & Jong, 2008, p. 1039). Organizational democracy, which is also used synonymously with industrial democracy, encompasses various concepts such as employee participation, participatory management, self-management, and employee empowerment (Han & Garg, 2018, p. 1092).

Butcher & Clarke (2002, p. 37) list the reasons that led to the democratization of the organizations as follows:

- Organizations' continual need for innovation and development has led to the recognition that individuals are a source of ideas to fulfill this requirement. The democratization of organizations will ensure the optimal utilization of knowledge possessed by employees.
- Acknowledging customer satisfaction as crucial for organizational success has resulted in considering information and authority as significant factors in creating customer value. This has led to the empowerment of employees and the idea of reducing hierarchical levels.
- Encouraging employees to see themselves as "voluntary members of clubs" is possible. This will help increase employee involvement in organizational decisions.
- Organizations specializing in and addressing the needs of specific customer groups have led to changes in organizational structure and a shift of power away from the center.
- Inter-organizational commitment, influenced by factors such as suppliers, competitors, and external stakeholders, emphasizes the necessity of democratization, affecting organizational boundaries by making them more permeable or even eliminating them.

- Efforts are made to increase employee commitment through utilizing democratic practices in organizations, including rights such as rewards and ownership.
- Democratization in organizations is globally supported through initiatives focused on employee protection, participation, and communication.

Research on organizational democracy has identified that encouraging employee participation in decision-making, providing a fair working environment, and making employees feel valued are common themes (Lansbury, 2009, p. 600). It is also considered important for job satisfaction, employee performance, productivity, and effectiveness (Tutar & Sadykova, 2014, p. 13).

Promoting democratic principles within organizations has been associated with heightened employee commitment and creativity. As a result, democratic organizations are perceived as being better positioned to identify and capitalize on new opportunities. Their enhanced efficiency is attributed to establishing a trust-based work environment, which reduces the need for costly command and control systems. Employees in such organizations benefit from the opportunity to develop their skills, fostering a greater sense of engagement through the freedom of behavior and shared purpose (Van Witteloostuijn & Jong, 2008, p. 1041).

The implementation of organizational democracy and the formation of self-organizing small units are anticipated to enable the delegation of authority and responsibility to lower-level employees in organizational decision-making processes. It is expected that individual participation, knowledge, and leadership will contribute to high psychological ownership in organizational activities (Butcher & Clarke, 2002, p. 36). Furthermore, democratic organizations tend to cultivate a democratic culture, leading to increased employee engagement and interaction if disparities between decision-makers and employees are addressed (Perry, 2014, p. 207).

3.4. Dimensions of Organizational Democracy

Organizational democracy is a concept that emphasizes the importance of democratic principles and practices within the context of workplaces and organizations. It involves creating a work environment where employees have a say in decision-making processes, and their voices are heard and valued. This approach aims to foster a sense of empowerment, engagement, and ownership among employees, ultimately contributing to a more productive and fulfilling work environment. The dimensions of organizational democracy are discussed

in terms of participation, transparency, criticism, justice, equality, and accountability, as presented in the study by Geçkil & Koçyiğit (2017).

3.4.1. Participation

Encouraging active involvement of employees in decision-making processes, problem-solving, and goal-setting is very important. This can be achieved through mechanisms such as regular team meetings, brainstorming sessions, and open forums.

Participation is expressed as ‘employee participation’ and ‘participatory management’ and is sometimes used instead of organizational democracy (Kesen, 2015b, p. 538). Participation, which is a dimension of organizational democracy, refers to the direct or representative active involvement of employees in decision-making processes. In decision-making processes, it is preferable to involve employees who are affected by the decision, rather than leaving the decision to be made by an individual or a group. This approach enables employees to express their thoughts more efficiently and allows decisions to be made through voting. It also facilitates accepting joint decisions (Geçkil, 2013, p. 30).

Employee participation is crucial in organizational democracy (Van Witteloostuijn & Jong, 2008, p. 1039). A broad inclusion of the workforce in the decision-making and activities of the organization is seen as a step towards achieving democracy. Conversely, giving power to an individual or a small group is interpreted as a move away from democracy (Harrison & Freeman, 2004, p. 49). Employee participation in the management system will enhance creative thinking, generate new ideas, and increase organizational commitment (Şen & Bolat, 2015, p. 150).

Roughton & Mercurio (2002, p. 117) state that participation will develop an effective safety culture within organizations. They express the reasons for ensuring employee participation as follows:

- Employees want to know that there is an effective management system in place due to their frequent interaction with potential security threats.
- Increased experience sharing in the decision-making process will influence the strength of the decisions made.
- Employees involved in developing security programs are more likely to use the program effectively.

- Motivation and productivity will increase when employees believe that their ideas are valued.

3.4.2. Transparency

Providing access to information and ensuring that employees are well-informed about organizational goals, strategies, and performance. Open communication channels and sharing relevant data can create a transparent work culture.

Transparency refers to the ability of everyone involved in the decision-making process and affected by the decision to learn and use all relevant information, including financial and non-financial information that is not publicly shared and is of a commercial nature (Forcadell, 2005, p. 271; Geçkil & Koçyiğit, 2017, p. 337; Pamukçu, 2011, p. 136). In order to adhere to the principle of transparency, organizations must make decisions and execute them in alignment with their internally established rules and regulations (Kesen, 2015a, pp. 65-66). Furthermore, it is essential for individuals affected by these decisions to have convenient access to clear and understandable information (Göker & Gündüz, 2017, p. 87).

3.4.3. Criticism

Criticism, which is a dimension of organizational democracy, is the process of expressing the views of employees on practices, policies, or decisions within the organization. Criticism is considered a part of organizational change and development. It enables employees to express their ideas freely and provides important feedback for the improvement of the organization. Therefore, criticism is considered a part of organizational democracy and encourages organizational participation. Additionally, criticism can improve communication and decision-making processes within the organization.

The dimension of criticism refers to the ability of employees at all levels of the organization to evaluate the policies, procedures, and activities of the organization as correct, incorrect, positive, or negative, and to express their opinions easily because of this evaluation (Geçkil, 2013, p. 32). To identify and solve problems, it is necessary to bring together criticisms and ideas related to the organization. Therefore, organizations should provide an environment suitable for criticism, where employees and external individuals can express their criticisms openly (Forcadell, 2005, p. 271). Training employees in critical thinking and discussion areas can contribute to their ability to understand the impact of decisions, evaluate them, and defend their positions (Hoffman, 2002, p. 206).

3.4.4. Justice

Justice, which is a dimension of organizational democracy, refers to the fairness and equality of decision-making processes and practices within the organization. Justice ensures that employees feel they are treated equally and that opportunities within the organization are distributed fairly. This sense of justice can increase employee motivation, improve job satisfaction, and promote organizational cooperation. Ensuring justice plays a crucial role in creating a democratic environment within the organization and can increase employees' trust in the organization. Therefore, ensuring justice within the scope of organizational democracy is a critical factor in developing organizational culture and performance.

In the organizational context, it refers to the perceptions of justice among employees within the organization. Organizational justice is crucial in determining employees' perceptions of justice as it pertains to the interactions and outcomes of organizational activities (İşcan & Sayin, 2010, p. 195). To evaluate organizational justice, employees must perceive fair treatment in resource distribution (distributive justice), have a say in decision-making and implementation processes (procedural justice), and experience consistency in interactions between decision-makers and those affected by decisions (interactional justice) (Özdevecioğlu, 2003, p. 78; Thibaut & Walker, 1975, p. 32; cited in Arslantaş & Pekdemir, 2007, p. 267; Bağcı, 2013, p. 166). Employees evaluate the presence of justice in the organization to form their opinions (Crawshaw et al., 2013, p. 890).

3.4.5. Equality

Equality, which is a dimension of organizational democracy, means that everyone within the organization is treated fairly and equally. This includes the fair distribution of opportunities and resources within the organization, equal treatment of everyone according to the same standards, and equal consideration of everyone's opinions and contributions.

Organizational equality aims to prevent discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability status, and other differences, and to ensure that every employee has equal opportunities. This can help strengthen the sense of justice in the organization and increase employee motivation.

Equality also plays a vital role in decision-making processes and management. Organizations should create decision-making processes and policies based on the principle of equality, encourage equal participation of employees, and create an environment where everyone can be heard.

Equality, which is a dimension of organizational democracy, means that employees in organizations have the same rights regardless of their differences, such as language, religion, race, and gender, and fairness is ensured unless there is an exceptional situation (Bakan et al. 2017, p. 119; Kiliç, 2011, p. 212). The dimension of equality means that employees in a working environment receive the same treatment as another under the same conditions, rather than 'absolute equality' (Geçkil, 2013, p. 35). Therefore, organizational equality is critical for the organization's sustainability, employee satisfaction and performance.

3.4.6. Accountability

Accountability is another important aspect of organizational democracy. This concept promotes transparency and participation in the organization's decision-making processes. This means that the organization should be transparent in its decision-making processes and practices, explain the reasons for its decisions, and be held responsible for those decisions.

Accountability ensures that the organization fulfills its responsibilities to the community, stakeholders, and employees. Employees and other stakeholders should have the right to access information to understand the organization's decisions and be able to influence them. It is also important to establish appropriate mechanisms to evaluate the outcomes of the organization's decisions and practices and essential share these results.

Accountability strengthens the organization's internal control mechanisms and promotes compliance with ethical standards. In addition, it regulates the organization's relationships with external auditing mechanisms and ensures that the organization fulfills its social responsibilities.

Accountability increases the transparency and reliability of the organization and is a fundamental element for sustainable performance. Furthermore, it helps to maintain the organization's reputation by increasing the trust of employees and stakeholders. Accountability is defined as the obligation to explain and take responsibility for one's actions. In other words, it is the ability of any individual or group to explain what they have done and answer questions about it (McNeil & Malena, 2010, p. 4, cited in Eryılmaz & Biricikoğlu, 2011, p. 21). The evaluation encompasses the overall results obtained by an individual with the necessary authority and resources to meet predetermined expectations (Gül, 2008, p. 74). Accountability is a concept that involves the possibility of being held responsible. Even though individuals and institutions may not explain every decision or action they take, there is always a possibility of being held accountable at every step (Mulgan, 2003, p. 10).

3.5. The Relationship between Trust and Democracy

Trust facilitates participation in social life and activities, making them easier, safer, and more attractive. It also supports forming organizations that prioritize order, permanence, and functionality (Zmerli & Newton, 2008, p. 706). Trust is a crucial element for the continuity and effective functioning of democratic systems (Mishler & Rose, 2005, p. 1050). One of the topics evaluated by the trust is democracy. Research aimed at measuring trust attracts the attention of not only politicians and those representing the state but also various segments of society. Comprehensive studies are expected to draw on issues such as democratization efforts, welfare, and social order (Can, 2018, p. 490).

In democracies where representatives are involved, individuals expect representatives to exhibit trustworthy behavior and gain their trust. However, people also want to know that they can trust each other and that representatives will stay away from rules and practices that would harm the interests of society (Abramson, 2017, pp. 17-18). During this process, individuals observe and seek information about people they can trust. Thus, trust gains meaning through individuals' evaluations (Müftüoğlu, 2005, p. 145).

In democracies, trust is the belief that the government will act in the interest of not only its supporters but also the entire society (Kim, 2002, p. 334). However, evaluating trust in government solely from a political perspective is not realistic or sufficient. Trust, when considered from a societal perspective, requires solidarity among individuals who make up the society and institutions that must act in good faith towards all individuals (Dunn, 1988, p. 77 cited in White, 1991, p. 13; Can, 2015, p. 263). Democracy not only refers to the participation of large communities but also to the interaction in smaller spaces where individuals can express their opinions and participate in decision-making processes (Meikle-Yaw, 2008, p. 39). People in society are expected to trust each other, contribute to the development of society and the formation of social values, and prevent a problematic social structure (Müftüoğlu, 2005, p. 158). In societies where trust is lacking among individuals, democracy is likely to be inadequate, and the formation of a strong democratic culture is seen as difficult (Doğan, 2015, p. 60).

The level of trust impacts the establishment of the perception of democracy in organizations and the stability of democracy. Democracy is considered more advantageous in terms of inspiring trust compared to other systems. In democratic societies where certain standards are established, individuals have certain rights. Protection mechanisms against situations that may

cause discrimination, disrespect, and neglect support individuals' trust in other organizations and individuals (Sztompka, 1997; cited in Rainer & Siedler, 2009, p. 253).

The assertion highlights the relationship between trust and democratic efforts, particularly emphasizing that a high level of trust between organizations and individuals can significantly enhance the effectiveness and acceptance of democratic initiatives. According to Mishler & Rose (2005), in societies where trust is prevalent, citizens are more likely to participate in democratic processes and support democratic institutions. This trust fosters a sense of civic engagement and accountability, making individuals more willing to support and advocate for democratic practices. When citizens trust both their organizations and each other, they are more likely to believe in the legitimacy of democratic processes, participate in elections, and engage in civic activities. Trust acts as a foundational element that can mobilize communities towards collective goals, including the strengthening of democratic practices. In places where trust between organizations and individuals is high, efforts toward democracy are of great importance very importance (Mishler & Rose, 2005, p. 1051).

Democracy and trust are not mutually exclusive concepts. A high level of trust can help establish a successful, long-term democratic system, while the opposite can create an inadequate, dysfunctional democratic system (Ekmekçi, 2010, p. 237). The assessment underscores the importance of trust in fostering effective interactions and continuity between individuals and organizations. According to Covey (2005), a high level of trust can significantly enhance various aspects of organizational behavior, including teamwork, collaboration, employee commitment, and the effective allocation of tasks. When trust is established in the workplace, employees are more likely to engage positively with their colleagues, share ideas, and contribute to a collaborative environment. In the context of Çankaya (2010), the citation reflects that organizations with a strong foundation of trust benefit from improved communication and cooperation, ultimately leading to enhanced performance and productivity. The trust serves as a catalyst for creating a more cohesive and motivated workforce, which is critical for achieving organizational goals.

The level of trust is crucial in determining the continuity and interaction of individuals and organizations. A high level of trust has a positive impact on employees' willingness to engage in teamwork, collaboration, commitment, and task allocation (Covey, 2005; cited in Çankaya, 2010, p. 946).

4. THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM ON DEMOCRACY CULTURE

Organizational cynicism can be defined as negative attitudes and beliefs of employees towards organizational goals and values. These attitudes and beliefs stem from a perception that the organization lacks a fair, transparent, and participatory structure. Organizational cynicism can reduce employees' trust, commitment, and motivation towards the organization. This situation can also have a negative impact on the culture of organizational democracy.

Organizational democracy culture is a culture where employees are actively involved in organizational processes. In this culture, employees have a say in every stage, from determining organizational goals to decision-making processes. Organizational cynicism can reduce this participation. Employees who are angry and suspicious may avoid participating in organizational processes. This situation can hinder the functioning of organizational democracy.

Organizational cynicism can significantly impact the culture of democracy within an organization. The following effects illustrate this relationship, supported by relevant literature:

- a. **Erosion of Trust:** Organizational cynicism can lead to a pronounced lack of trust in leaders and the organization as a whole. This erosion of trust undermines the foundational principles of democratic practice, as trust is essential for open communication and participation (Dean et al., 1998).
- b. **Reduced Participation in Decision-Making:** Cynical employees often feel disconnected and may refrain from engaging in democratic processes. Their skepticism can lead to reluctance to participate in discussions or initiatives that require collaborative decision-making (Kelloway et al., 2005).
- c. **Diminished Employee Voice:** When employees perceive a lack of sincerity from management or doubt the effectiveness of their contributions, they may withdraw their voice. This withdrawal limits diverse perspectives and opinions that are crucial for a healthy democratic culture (Arnett & Baugh, 2012).
- d. **Increased Conflict and Divisiveness:** Cynicism can foster an environment of suspicion and conflict among employees, making collaboration and consensus-building more difficult. Such divisiveness further detracts from democratic ideals of cooperation and collective problem-solving (Vandenberghe et al., 2014).
- e. **Lowered Commitment to Democratic Values:** Cynical attitudes can lead to apathy regarding organizational goals and values, including those related to democracy. Employees may become disengaged and less committed to fostering a participatory and inclusive culture (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003).

To preserve the culture of organizational democracy and combat organizational cynicism, organizations can adopt several strategic measures. These initiatives can help build trust,

enhance participation, and foster a more positive organizational climate. Here are some effective measures:

- a. **Enhance Communication Transparency:** Organizations should prioritize open, honest communication regarding decisions, changes, and organizational goals. Transparent communication can reduce misunderstandings and build employee trust (Bourne & Matzler, 2010).
- b. **Encourage Employee Participation:** Actively involving employees in decision-making processes reinforces their sense of ownership and commitment. Providing platforms for feedback and suggestions can mitigate feelings of disconnection and skepticism (Vandenberghe et al., 2014).
- c. **Build a Supportive Leadership Culture:** Training leaders to be supportive, approachable, and empathetic can foster a positive organizational culture. Leaders who engage with their teams and demonstrate integrity can counteract cynicism (Kelloway et al., 2005).
- d. **Promote Organizational Justice:** Ensuring fairness in procedures, outcomes, and interpersonal treatment can help create an environment where employees feel valued and respected. Perceived organizational justice has been linked to lower levels of cynicism (Skarlicki & Latham, 1997).
- e. **Recognize and Reward Contributions:** Acknowledging employee efforts and achievements can enhance morale and diminish feelings of cynicism. Recognition programs and rewards can reinforce positive behaviors and motivation (Locke & Latham, 2002).
- f. **Provide Opportunities for Development:** Offering training and development programs can help employees feel empowered and engaged in their roles. Investing in employee growth reduces cynicism and fosters a culture of learning and collaboration (Cascio, 2003).

Organizations are a product of the cultural existence of the society they belong to and are only meaningful with the existence of people. Just as there are personal behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, habits, and goals that differentiate people from each other, organizations can also develop a personality with certain characteristics over time. This situation is expressed as organizational culture (Kıral, 2008). Organizational cynicism is an attitude that affects organizations and is a disease of our time, mostly seen in employees. Cynicism can be described as not trusting the intentions of others and believing that the interlocutors do not reflect their true characters. Although there are many definitions of cynicism, there is consensus that it is a negative behavior with cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components (Andersson, 1996; Dean et al., 1998).

4. Culture and Organizational Culture

Culture refers to the patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior that constitute a society. All the spiritual and material products, which people create to adapt to their material and social environment, fall within the scope of culture. If civilization is the name of a degree/stage

where humans will have superiority over nature, culture is the accumulation and collection of rational means that make this superiority possible (Demirkanoğlu, 2021, p. 27). Organizational culture refers to the system of norms, behaviors, actions, values, customs, habits, and beliefs that guide the behavior of employees within an organization (Güçlü, 2003, p. 148).

Organizational culture refers to all the assumptions that are learned, accepted, and therefore taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel when adapting to and integrating into the organizational tradition and functioning (Işcan & Timuroğlu, 2007, p. 120).

In this context, while everyone has their own unique identity, each organization has its unique identity that distinguishes it from other organizations. When examining successful organizations, it can be defined as an organizational culture in which employees embrace and integrate values like organizational goals (Köse et al., 2001, p. 227).

If individuals are the cornerstone of the formation of societies, then culture is the mortar that holds them together. The same applies to organizations. Just as individuals who make up society accept the culture of that society, including its values, beliefs, and norms, and live around it, individuals working in an organization also take the culture of the organization and live accordingly (Kıral, 2008).

Culture is a dynamic concept encompassing all material and spiritual life practices in human life and a collection of beliefs and values that covers everything related to life (Nişancı, 2012). It serves as a guide and strengthens interpersonal relationships by increasing shared values and connecting employees to the organization and the organization to society. Culture is a significant factor that significantly influences how employees perform their tasks, approach problems, make decisions, and interact with colleagues. As noted by Çelik (2011), norms, values, and beliefs play a crucial role in shaping these aspects of work life. According to Schein (1984), organizational culture refers to all the values and norms taught as a way of perceiving, thinking, and feeling to achieve organizational goals during organizational and environmental adaptation. Schein emphasizes that these cultural elements develop over time as organizations seek to solve problems related to external adaptation and internal integration. According to Çelik (2012), organizational culture is defined as the sum of an organization's core values and beliefs, along with the symbols, rituals, and myths that communicate these values and beliefs to employees. This definition highlights the importance of both tangible

and intangible elements within an organization's culture that influence employee behavior and organizational identity.

Organizations have a culture that regulates and influences human behavior and ensures that employees work towards a common goal. This culture, referred to as organizational culture, must be directed correctly to achieve the organization's objectives. Failure to do so can put the organization's existence at risk (İra & Şahin, 2011). Organizational culture is one of the organizational characteristics that determine employee performance and, therefore, their effectiveness. Just as the culture of a society has a vital importance in the continuation of that society's life, the organizational culture also plays a vital role in the organization's functioning (Denison & Mishra, 1995; cited in İpek, 2012). Organizational culture is a set of shared values that enables members to acquire ordinary consciousness or professional consciousness (Aytaç, 2004). William & Ouchi defined organizational culture as symbols, ceremonies, legends, values, and beliefs of employees (Hoy & Miskel, 1991; cited in Çelik, 2012).

Organizational democracy, which expresses the form of democracy in the organizational context, can be defined as a management approach where employees can express their critical thoughts and participate in both managerial and operational processes transparently, fairly, and equally. Organizational democracy, as a requirement of human rights and the rule of law, necessitates adopting a participatory management approach. Organizational democracy is a concept used to describe an advanced organizational structure where employees have a say in decision-making processes, allowing them to have a voice and influence in management. This is achieved through effective communication, knowledge transfer, and training programs that enable employees to develop and showcase their skills (Ataç & Köse, 2017, p. 118).

The increasing importance given to the human factor in the workplace has led to an emphasis on concepts such as justice, transparency, and equality. This emphasis indicates the necessity of a democratic work environment to properly achieve work objectives (Maruf & Altıntaş, 2021, p. 130).

As observed in every sector, changes in socio-cultural structures have also altered people's expectations in their work lives. Therefore, the democracy of the management style exhibited in organizations becomes important. Especially skilled individuals do not only consider the income they will earn before starting a job; they also consider the social opportunities, organizational diversity, the reputation of the organization, and whether they will be satisfied with their work (Çankaya, 2018, p. 406). In organizations where a democratic management

style is not implemented and in organizations where there is a lack of democratic practice and management, conflicts and power struggles between managers and employees or among employees themselves arise, leading to their inability to use their psychological capacities (Geçkil & Koçyiğit, 2017, p. 332). In addition, employees will likely exhibit silent behavior and thus become silent.

One of the areas that is influenced and shaped by the cultural phenomenon is business life. In this context, organizational culture, which regulates business life with formal and informal rules and norms, emerges. Organizational culture is defined as a phenomenon that is influenced by the structure and processes of an organization and creates behavioral patterns by systematizing common beliefs and values. Organizational culture comprises elements such as stories, rituals, symbols, heroes, and myths that distinguish an organization (Işık & Toptancı, 2018). These elements not only give an identity to the organization but also provide information about its typology. Although the literature on organizational culture shows that there are many different typologies of organizations, the most well-known classification among these is the one made by Cameron & Quinn (2006), which shows the classification as a clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy culture. Each of the organizational culture typologies in this classification is decisive in the direction and management of those employed in the workforce in different ways. Organizational culture, which has a broad scope, emerges in various structures in each organization due to its composition of spiritual goals and values rather than material elements and objectives (Köse et al., 2001, p. 219).

Organizational culture produces and supports organizational behavioral patterns. It socializes the members of the organization by teaching them how to behave and enables the establishment of a common language, perception, thought, and empathy among the members of the organization (Durgun, 2006, p. 118). Empirical studies and observations on organizational culture now demonstrate its strong impact on the performance and long-term effectiveness of the organization (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 5). The factors that constitute and explain organizational culture are myths, stories, values, and beliefs that explain the organization's history, expected behaviors, traditions, and customs (Aydoğan, 2004, p. 209). Upon reviewing the literature, Cameron and Quinn's (2006) competitive values approach, which is considered one of the significant models in business research, reveals the organization's current or desired cultural image. In their study, Cameron and Quinn (2006) classified organizational culture as adhocracy (creative) culture, clan (collaborative) culture, hierarchical (control) culture, and market (competitive) culture.

4.1.1. Adhocracy (Creative) Culture

This culture expresses tendencies towards entrepreneurship, creativity, and adaptability. It prioritizes the development of innovations and aims to utilize resources for the organization. In this context, finding new markets, expanding to new regions, and growing is critical for success and effectiveness. Flexibility and inclusivity are also necessary qualities (Öztop, 2008, pp. 33-34). In adhocratic cultures, there is a weak tendency towards centralization, and there is an organic structure where organizational status and positions are ignored or temporarily accepted. This structure encourages employees to take initiative and risks, invent new things, and gain freedom (Erdem, 2007, p. 66).

4.1.2. Clan (Cooperation) Culture:

In this cultural typology, individuals contribute to the warm atmosphere. The reason for being defined as a clan is attributed to the employees being tightly and firmly connected to each other (Erdem et al., 2010, p. 79). In clan-type organizations, leaders are guiding. The loyalty and commitment among employees are quite high, and rewards are given to teams rather than individuals (Sayılır, 2020, p. 15). In this culture, consensus and agreement are prioritized in decision-making. The bond that holds together is based on traditions, and trust is valued (Cameron & Quinn, 1992, p. 36). In a clan culture with a strong sense of community spirit directed towards a common goal and individual contributions are evaluated by the system in the long term, it is natural for individuals to serve the purpose (Erdem, 2007, p. 66).

4.1.3. Hierarchy (Control) Culture

Instructions, rules, and regulations define hierarchy culture. Operations are carried out under close supervision, instructions, and orders. Therefore, organizational effectiveness is defined as the realization of strict, consistent organizational effectiveness is defined as the realization of strict, consistent, and well-defined goals (Öz, 2013, p. 27). In organizations dominated by a hierarchical culture, there is a high level of authority, standard rules, and an advanced level of workmanship and procedures that shape the behavior of the workforce (Tutar, 2017, p. 271). In this typology, leaders are organizers rather than guides. Since the workforce is evaluated according to their job descriptions and positions, employees are expected to be obedient rather than questioning their work and taking initiative. In this respect, a hierarchy culture is unsuitable for productive employees (Taner, 2020, p. 35).

4.1.4. Market (Competition) Culture

In this typology, the leader is productive, competitive, and has a demanding mission in carrying out tasks. The bond that connects employees and the organization is the sense of winning. The organization generally has a competitive style due to considering external factors (Cameron & Quinn, 1992, p. 37).

The fundamental values of productivity and efficiency are prioritized in this culture, where success-oriented centralized decision-making, more formalized collaboration, and control methods are essential. Success is often measured by market share and market effectiveness (Gün, 2015, p. 53). Elements such as profitability, results-oriented focus, market expansion, market dominance, and customer confidence demonstrate the importance of this culture to the market system (Şahin, 2018, p. 36).

4.2. Organizational Democracy

Democracy is based on equality and the participatory majority (Demirkanoğlu, 2020, p. 165). Everyone has adopted this concept as the concept of democratic organization and has been present in the political activities of organizations since 1970 (Geçkil & Koçyiğit, 2017, p. 333). The concept of organizational democracy refers to the idea that everyone in the decision-making systems of firms and organizations has equal rights. It is a concept that impacts society, institutions, and organizations (Barutçu, 2019, p. 5).

According to Sadykova and Tutar (2014, p. 13), organizational democracy is defined as managers informing their employees about the implementation and outcomes of decisions. Organizational democracy is crucial for the efficiency of organizational outcomes, along with employee performance and job satisfaction. To fully implement democracy in organizations, certain conditions must be met. The fulfillment of these conditions is crucial for the applicability of democracy. Therefore, after the necessary prerequisites for implementing democracy in organizations are met, suitability for the organization's participation in the democratic process should be sought (Barutçu, 2019, p. 13). Indeed, implementing democracy in organizations enables a decrease in destructive oppositional thoughts and an increase in constructive oppositional thoughts (Çankaya, 2018, p. 407).

For democracy to exist within organizations, society must reach a certain level of democracy. The level of development of the concept of democracy in a country is understood by the extent to which democratic understanding and behavior are reflected in the organizations of that country (Geçkil, 2013, p. 14).

In order for an organization to be considered democratic, the rights and freedoms of employees must first be guaranteed. Examples of these rights and freedoms include the prevention of marginalization of minorities, the free expression of political opinions, and the establishment of fair reward and punishment systems and impartial election mechanisms (Bowles & Gintis, 1993; Oral Ataç & Köse, 2017, p. 119; Erat, 2021).

In democratic organizations, the existence of organizational conditions that embrace temporary practices, are open to criticism, and exhibit a constructive attitude in all circumstances is valued over the obstacle of permanent bureaucracy (Sadykova & Tutar, 2014, p. 5).

In organizations where the concept of democracy is institutionalized, democratic principles are established. All members' opinions are considered regarding decisions that may affect the organization, and an equal approach is shown to everyone involved in this process (Erkal et al., 2014, p. 233).

The most reliable and humane way to establish organizational effectiveness is through organizational democracy. In democratic organizations, the relationships between employees develop, leading to job satisfaction, productivity, and consequently, the effectiveness and continuity of the organization (Çopur, 2018, p. 26).

There are also disadvantages despite the advantages of democracy applied at the organizational level. According to Erat'a (2018), giving decision-making power to individuals who are not experts on a subject but have a vested interest in it and lack sufficient knowledge can reduce the success rate and lead to errors. Additionally, despite the presence of an organizational culture that provides equal opportunities to employees and allows everyone to express their thoughts freely in a transparent environment, when faced with a situation that requires employees to take responsibility, they may exhibit a tendency to avoid it (Üst Can, 2020, p. 27).

According to Coşan & Gülova (2014, p. 234), organizational democracy is a system of values based on the belief in employee participation, collective logic, individual rights, freedom, respect, and equality, while creating the structure, function, policies, and procedures of organizations to generate economic value. On the other hand, organizational democracy can be expressed as the form of structural support for employee participation in strategic, tactical, or operational decision-making processes (Weber et al., 2008, p. 175).

Organizational democracy refers to the distribution of organizational control. It is related to the management processes that significantly influence the structural forms of organizational governance and the individual integrity of organizational members (Vredenburg and Brender, 1993, p. 102).

According to Sadykova and Tutar (2014, p. 3), organizational democracy is an approach that extends the organization's social responsibility, permeates the organization, and expands the organization's mission. Harrison and Freeman (2004, p. 50) state that any action, structure, or process in the workplace that enables more individuals to influence organizational decisions can be considered a significant step toward organizational democracy. According to Butcher and Clarke (2002, p. 36), organizations with a democratic structure can be defined as follows:

- *Organizational activities based on individual contributions, knowledge, and leadership are psychologically highly owned by employees.*
- *It is considered that power-based relationships rely on successful connections rather than the organizational structure, which involves various internal and external interests.*
- *For broader organizational decisions, there is a significant delegation of power and responsibility to lower-level employees and the creation of more self-organizing units.*

4.3. The Concept and Definition of Organization

“Organization” is defined as a structure formed by two or more individuals who come together consciously and deliberately to achieve a specific purpose. Organizations play a significant role in society, fulfilling essential economic, social, cultural, and political functions.

Organizations have fundamental characteristics, including a purpose, constituting their reason for existence.

- **Purpose:** Organizations work towards achieving this purpose. They are created and managed by people.
- **People:** The success of organizations depends on the efforts of individuals.
- **Collaboration:** Collaboration is key; organizations work through the cooperation of individuals. Members of organizations work together for a common purpose.
- **Hierarchical Structure:** Organizations have a hierarchical structure. This structure ensures the distribution of authority and responsibility within the organization.

- **Rules and Regulations:** Rules and regulations govern organizations to maintain order and efficiency. These regulations ensure a structured and efficient operation within the organization.

Organizations are present in both business and all other activities involving people. The fact that organizations also affect personal life. The only notable feature of organizations is not their presence in every aspect of life. For most people, formal organizations constitute a significant part of their environment. Most of the adult population works in organizations, while the younger population spends a considerable amount of their time in schools, which are a social organization (Özenli, 2006, p. 10).

Defining an organization is challenging because people live and interact with various organizations such as schools, associations, clubs, companies, public institutions, political parties, hospitals, etc. Each organization has its own structure and purpose. The term 'organization' can be used in two different senses. The term "organization" can indeed be interpreted in various ways. According to Tunçer (2007), the first sense of "organization" refers to an "arrangement, a framework, a pre-planned set of relationships" among its members. The second sense pertains to the process of creating this structure, encompassing a series of activities related to organizing. A third meaning can also be attributed to "organization" as it is often viewed as a "social system among other entities in society." This nuanced understanding emphasizes the complexity of organizations as both structured entities and dynamic processes.

The concept of organization has been defined in various ways, all essentially emphasizing that organizations are social entities formed by individuals and groups whose relationships mature and engage in various efforts to achieve their unique goals (Uysal, 2007, p. 4). Organizations of various sizes are formed by multiple individuals to achieve a common purpose. In daily life, people belong to one or more organizations and live intertwined with them. Organizations are formed by individuals or groups, each having its own structure and operation.

In the Public Administration Dictionary, an organization is defined as "a social structure that emerges through the coming together of individuals, within the framework of predetermined behavioral patterns, duties, and responsibilities, for the realization of interconnected actions aimed at a specific purpose or set of goals, demonstrating complementarity and continuity" (Gülsoy, 2007, p. 3).

According to Aşkun (2016), an organization is fundamentally defined as a group of people collaborating toward a common goal. This definition emphasizes that organizations utilize physical resources as needed and structure their work relationships based on specific management principles within a social system. This perspective highlights organizations' collective nature and management's importance in facilitating organized efforts towards shared objectives.

Based on the given definitions, organizations can generally be defined as social structures and systems consisting of individuals gathered around a specific purpose and with a particular management system. The most crucial factor for organizations is people.

4.3.1. The Purpose of Organizations

There are two types of organizational structures: formal and informal. Formal structures are conscious relationship communities created in a predetermined manner for a specific purpose. The individuals within the organization... The tasks have been predetermined. There is no planned activity or predetermined goal in informal organizations. They are structures arising from interpersonal relationships (Takmaz, 2009, p. 8).

It cannot be said that all organizations have a single purpose. Organizations have both specific and general purposes. While the general purpose of private enterprises is to make a profit, organizations that carry out activities such as education and healthcare on behalf of the public pursue social and community service goals. Each Special purpose of the organization may also be mentioned in addition to the general purpose. These special purposes include organizations' objectives to achieve their general goals (Tunçer, 2007).

Every organization has a general purpose. For instance, hospitals are organizations that operate in the field of human health and have a social purpose. Similarly, schools are organizations that deal with human beings and are socially responsible and purposeful, just like hospitals. Banks are organizations established to conduct commercial activities and provide services to their customers in addition to making a profit.

4.4. The Negative Characteristics of Cynical Employees in Organizations

Cynical employees tend to belittle the organization they work for and harbor excessively negative thoughts about it. According to Öncer, it is observed that cynical employees in organizations exhibit various negative behaviors that affect processes, procedures, and even other employees in the organization. Cynical employees tend to belittle the organization they work for and harbor excessively negative thoughts about the organization. They do not refrain

from using belittling expressions about the organization. They constantly criticize the organization and its managers and speak ill of them everywhere. Cynical employees are individuals who have not been able to achieve their goals or attain the positions they desire within the organization. These individuals consistently express that they have no expectations from the organization they work for (Öncer, 2009).

Organizational cynicism is defined as a combination of negative attitudes and beliefs toward the organization and its processes. These attitudes and beliefs can manifest in various ways, such as distrust towards organizational goals and management, the belief that organizational processes are unfair and unequal, and decreased desire and motivation to participate in organizational goals and objectives. Cynical employees in organizations are a significant factor that negatively affects organizational performance and productivity. They reduce their commitment and involvement in the organization, decrease job satisfaction, experience more conflicts with other employees, and cause a loss of productivity.

4.4.1. Insecurity and Suspicion

Cynical employees exhibit a distrustful and suspicious attitude toward the organization and its management. This can lead to a decrease in organizational commitment and participation. Cynical employees may not be willing to exert effort to achieve organizational goals and objectives because they do not trust the organization or its management. Additionally, they may be reluctant to comply with organizational rules and regulations because they believe that organizational processes are not fair or equitable.

4.4.2. Negative Attitudes and Behaviors

Cynical employees exhibit a negative attitude toward the organization and its processes. This can negatively impact employee job satisfaction and performance. Cynical employees are critical of organizational processes and practices. They may also make negative comments about organizational goals and management. These negative attitudes and behaviors can decrease employee job satisfaction and negatively impact performance.

4.4.3. Personal Conflicts

Cynical employees are more likely to experience personal conflict with other employees. This can negatively impact organizational climate. Cynical employees may accuse other employees of exhibiting a negative attitude toward the organization. They may also accuse other employees of trying to increase their distrust of organizational goals and management. These

personal conflicts can negatively impact organizational climate and decrease employee job satisfaction.

4.4.4. Productivity Loss

Cynical employees are less productive. This can negatively impact organizational productivity. Cynical employees may exert less effort at work because they have lost trust in the organization and its management. Additionally, they may be less productive at work because they are critical of organizational processes and practices.

4.5. Reducing the Negative Impacts of Cynical Employees in Organizations

Ince & Turan (2011, p. 107) underlined that cynicism is an attitude that occurs as a result of criticism of an organization's values, actions, and instincts. Of course, a negative attitude against the organization becomes behavior within the organization after a period of time, and the negative attitude against the organization becomes behavior within the organization after some time, which some time may create unintended consequences.

Reducing the negative impacts of cynical employees in organizations is essential for fostering a positive work environment and maintaining overall organizational effectiveness. Here are several strategies that can be implemented to mitigate cynicism among employees:

- **Promote Open Communication:** Encouraging transparent and honest communication helps reduce misunderstandings and builds trust. When employees feel informed and heard, their cynicism can diminish (Bourne & Matzler, 2010).
- **Foster Inclusion and Participation:** Involving employees in decision-making processes creates a sense of ownership and belonging. Providing opportunities for input can lead to higher engagement and lower levels of cynicism (Vandenberghe et al., 2014).
- **Strengthen Leadership Practices:** Leaders should exhibit supportive and empathetic behavior. Training leaders to recognize and address employee concerns can help build a positive climate and reduce cynicism (Kelloway et al., 2005).
- **Address Psychological Contract Breach:** Organizations must be mindful of the expectations set with employees. When breaches occur, addressing these promptly can help restore trust and reduce cynical attitudes (Morrison & Robinson, 1997).
- **Create a Culture of Recognition:** Acknowledging employees' contributions and celebrating successes can boost morale. Recognition can counteract feelings of disillusionment and cynicism (Locke & Latham, 2002).
- **Provide Professional Development Opportunities:** Investing in employee growth demonstrates organizational commitment and can enhance job satisfaction. Training and development initiatives can help combat cynicism by empowering employees (Cascio, 2003).

The negative characteristics of cynical employees in organizations can significantly impact organizational performance and productivity. By implementing these strategies, organizations

can effectively reduce the negative impacts of cynicism, promoting a healthier workplace culture and improving organizational performance.



6. CONCLUSION

The impact of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy addresses a pressing issue in contemporary organizational settings. Understanding the interaction between cynicism and democratic culture is crucial for leaders, HR-human resource practitioners and policy makers who aim to foster an engaging and transparent workplace environment. By addressing a critical concern in contemporary workplaces, this thesis explores the multifaceted relationship between organizational cynicism and the culture of democracy in organizations. This thesis aims to map the existing literature to gain a comprehensive understanding of the nature and extent of this relationship, identify recurring trends and themes, and identify areas for further research: 'What is the nature and extent of the relationship between organizational cynicism and the culture of democracy in organizations as reflected in the academic literature?'

This thesis has revealed several important findings regarding the impact of organizational cynicism on various aspects of the culture of democracy. The findings highlight several implications for practitioners and researchers in the field of organizational behaviour. The negative impact of organizational cynicism on democratic participation underlines the need for leaders to address employees' concerns and actively promote an open environment. Utilising transformational leadership can improve trust and reduce cynicism. Human resource practitioners' strategies should increase communication, transparency and employee participation in decision-making processes. By doing so, organizations can create a more democratic culture and reduce cynicism levels. A significant body of literature suggests that there is a negative relationship between organizational cynicism and key elements of a democratic workplace such as employee participation in decision-making, open communication and trust in leadership. This thesis also aimed to determine the impact of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy in line with the specific research questions and objectives stated in the introduction. The study found a significant negative correlation between employees' levels of cynicism and their participation in democratic processes within the organization. Employees with high levels of cynicism are less likely to participate in decision-making processes.

The findings of this thesis are broadly consistent with prevailing trends in the literature suggesting a consistently negative relationship between organizational cynicism and key

aspects of democratic culture. For instance, the reviewed studies generally highlighted the erosion of trust, reduced employee involvement and breakdown of communication as consequences of organizational cynicism, which mirrors the patterns observed in my own research, which found a significant correlation between increased cynicism and a marked reduction in employee voice and participation within the team. However, the primary focus of this thesis is to synthesise the wider evidence and identify overarching patterns in the existing literature.

It was clearly revealed that there is a direct and negative relationship between organizational cynicism and the culture of democracy in organizations as a result of the comprehensive literature review and analyses of the scoping review we used in the research method. In terms of the effect of organizational cynicism on democratic elements, the studies examined have shown that with the increase in organizational cynicism, there is a significant decrease in the participation of employees in decision-making processes, undermining trust in leaders and weakening of open communication. This situation damages transparency and participation, which are the cornerstones of democratic workplace practices. When the roles of leadership and communication strategies are investigated, the findings revealed that transformational leadership practices are an important tool in mitigating the effects of organizational cynicism. Leaders' approaches to listen to employees' concerns and find solutions played a decisive role in restoring trust and increasing democratic participation. It has been observed that open communication and transparency policies directly contribute to the reduction of organizational cynicism. It has been observed that human resources specialists developing strategies that encourage employees to participate in decision-making processes and prioritise transparency and communication are critical in limiting the negative effects of organizational cynicism. These approaches not only increased employee engagement, but also paved the way for a more democratic workplace culture.

The research gaps have been observed in some areas although the effects of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy have been extensively examined in the literature. Studies on the effects of shared governance practices and diversity and inclusion initiatives in democratic workplaces on organizational cynicism are limited. Strategies such as promoting transparent communication, supporting participatory decision-making and building trust through ethical leadership practices have been identified in the literature as potentially effective interventions. For example, while the impact of cynicism on employee engagement

has been extensively studied, less is known about its impact on other aspects of democratic culture, such as shared governance or employee voice mechanisms. More research is needed to explore the moderating role of organizational context (e.g. industry, size, culture) in the cynicism-democracy culture relationship. Longitudinal studies are also needed to understand how these dynamics evolve over time and assess the long-term impact of interventions to reduce cynicism and promote a more democratic workplace. Furthermore, there is a lack of research examining the intersection of cynicism with diversity and inclusion initiatives, particularly how these factors influence employee engagement and organizational commitment.

Consequently, by understanding the effects of organizational cynicism on the culture of democracy, this research provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge regarding the complex interplay between organizational cynicism and the culture of democracy. By synthesizing the existing literature and identifying key areas for future research, this review contributes to a deeper understanding of this important phenomenon. It provides a foundation for developing effective strategies to promote healthier and more democratic workplaces. Future research addressing the identified gaps will be essential to advance our understanding and develop more targeted interventions.

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