

Full Length Research Paper

Incivility and the Turkish youths: The case of Sakarya, Ankara

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There is an increasing concern about dangerous and disordered image of city that is identified with the term incivility. This study focuses on incivilities caused by daily encounters with strangers and experiences of incivility in daily life in Ankara, the capital of Turkey. Young people around and their attitudes in urban public spaces are discussed to be the main uncivil events in the social realm. In this respect, the aim of the study is to inquire the ways incivility is perceived and experienced within the context of urban public spaces by the Turkish urban youths. A field survey was conducted within a street context. Information was obtained through semi-structured interviews and observation. The results indicated that young people had different meanings and experiences of incivility in the street context and described and explained them dominantly in relation to the social environment. Likewise, gender differences among the youths appear to be influential on perception and experience of incivility.

Key words: Incivility, Turkey urban youth, urban public spaces, urban environments.

INTRODUCTION

Incivility has contradictory associations with city and city life. On the one hand, city and city life are assumed to be having celebrations with civility (Boyd, 2006; Fyfe et al., 2006). On the other hand, there is an increasing concern about dangerous and disordered image of city that is identified with the term incivility and incivil way of living (Bannister and Fyfe, 2001; Boyd, 2006). Pearson et al. (2000) state that we are living in an era of 'whatever' where rudeness, insensitivity and thoughtlessness towards others are proliferated; incivilities penetrate our social lives. In various researches, the terms disregard, disrespect, rudeness, lack of helping behavior,

impoliteness, disorder, violence, crime, social deprivation, deterioration, urban nuisances, environmental annoyances and physical decay are mainly used and studied interchangeably by referring to the term incivility (Brannan et al., 2006; Franzini et al., 2008; Moser and Robin, 2006; Robin et al., 2007). Reisig and Cancino (2004, p. 15) designate incivility as "visible signs of social disorder and physical decay". Whereas, according to Félonneau (2004), incivility is related to the failure to respect social codes and rituals; it is an act of non-respect or aggression both towards others and towards environment. Boyd (2006) also explains incivility as the

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failure to respect the rules of formal conditions of civility through rudeness, harshness and condescension. Urban environments and stress created by them have been the focus of research since 1970s. Accordingly, big cities are exposed to lots of environmental stressors and environments of bad quality that threaten the quality of life of their citizens (Moser and Robin, 2006). In this respect, urban public spaces, – including parks, streets, squares and neighborhood areas – which are accessible by various collectivities and various life styles, are mostly mentioned together with incivility, disorder and fear of crime (Banerjee, 2001; Malone, 2002). In contemporary studies, incivility is analyzed only with criminal aspects (Brown et al., 2004; Reisig and Cancino, 2004). According to Brown et al. (2004), incivilities symbolize that neighborhoods are not well protected against crime. This symbolism may possibly be interpreted by criminals as loss of control and lack of interference with criminal activity. Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) also point out that physical and social disorder and incivilities are much more prevalent in disadvantaged and deprived neighborhoods of cities due to economic resource deprivation. Disadvantaged and deprived neighborhoods, especially slums and squatter housing comprise different types of physical incivilities such as pollution, noise, deteriorated and run-down living environments, litter, graffiti, crowding, etc. and all those physical incivilities result in more serious forms of social incivilities including various forms of crime. Hence, a vicious circle is formed out in which focalized crime and incivilities within the neighborhood transform it into a space where more serious forms of incivilities, crime and criminals are reproduced. This idea can be explained through the understanding of reciprocal relationship between urban poverty and incivility in reproducing each other. This leads to the justification of some neo-liberal policies such as surveillance mechanisms which also assist intensification of social insecurity in cities (Wacquant, 2002).

Fear of crime is a threat for non-Western as well as Western societies (Erkip, 2005). The number of researches that study crime and violence in the urban context seems to be increasing in Turkey as well, due to the rising concerns on crime which is triggered by events like terrorist attacks, kidnappings and murders. The topics of these studies are the perception and representation of crime within the urban context, fear of crime in cities, fight against crime, different types of crime in different urban settings (Aksoy, 2007). In Turkey, as a Western-oriented society, which is influenced by the global trends extensively, the need for security and safety in the everyday lives of urban citizens seems to be increasing by fostering advanced technological interventions of population-oriented total surveillance as well (Graham 2010). In 2004, the 'Private Security Services' Law (# 5188) was established, and due to the increasing urban crime, 'city information and security

service system' was established throughout the big cities of Turkey (Yardimci, 2009). Moreover, the gated communities, whose numbers are increasing remarkably, and suburban way of living are good indicators of how defensible space theory is reflected to the neighborhood design through environmental planning that aims to isolate and reduce all forms of incivil and anti-social behaviors and criminal acts in order to promote a sense of security and privacy by the normalization of the idea of insecurity (Düzgün, 2007; Wacquant, 2002). Nonetheless, those design interventions to promote civility and to exclude incivility may cause further incivilities by individuals who are stigmatized with 'otherness' (Amin, 2006; Lee, 2006). According to Wacquant (2002), this kind of territorial stigmatization and advanced marginality helps to justify the building of the neo-liberal policy which sometimes demonstrates itself in the form of resources from public officials to achieve the goal of lower levels of crime, delinquency and incivilities or in the form of penalties while scrutinizing the urban spaces.

There is a lack of research that investigates the variety of meanings, perceptions and experiences of incivility within the Turkish urban context. The reasons of this might be complex variations and blurred definitions of the term incivility in different contexts, as well as the prejudices against certain groups such as young people. Nevertheless, it is possible to claim that incivility in Turkey is also described in a stereotyped way by referring to rudeness, rusticity and unmannerliness as well as different forms of criminal acts (Güneş, 2007; Yılmaz, 2006). Besides, it also covers the threatening and unwanted behaviors of undesirable and stereotyped individual groups such as young people. Accordingly, incivilities resulting from daily encounters with strangers and experiences of incivility in daily life within the city context are the foci of this study. Incivilities and their reasons are perceived and experienced differently by different groups of citizens depending on their socio-demographic characteristics, place of residence in the city and how they identify themselves with the city life. Many adults and elderly perceive young people as potential threats and bearers of incivil and disorderly acts (Collins and Kearns, 2001; Philips and Smith, 2006). Nevertheless, there is a shift from focusing on how older people perceive incivilities and experience fear of crime to the assumption that young people are in fact at more risk of victimization (Pain, 2001). In this framework, this paper aims to underline the significance of investigating how young individuals perceive and experience incivilities as a labeled and stigmatized group; how they see adults/elderly and their peers within the discussion of incivility.

Turkish society is quite young compared to many European countries. According to the 2013 population census results indicated by Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS), 16.6 % of the total population is between 15-24 years of age and more than

half of the total population is below 35 years of age (TURKSTAT [Turkish Statistics Institute] 2014). With these statistics, the precise information about this 'silent majority' is very few (Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 1999). If the significant role of the youth population in determination of the future of a country is taken into consideration, a country like Turkey should pay more attention to this 'silent majority'.

Moreover, it is crucial to explore how young people as the users of urban public spaces construct the meaning of incivility and experience it by focusing on the 'locatedness' of incivilities in different urban contexts (Dixon et al., 2006). Hence, it is possible to investigate the incivilities that may be a result of disregarding what is 'acceptable' and 'appropriate way of behaving' that foremost 'spaces of citizenship' (Weller, 2003) including parks, streets, neighborhoods, transportation nodes demand from their users (Dixon et al., 2006; Goffman, 1966).

Concerning the consistency in preferences of certain places by young people and their feelings in those places (Matthews and Limb, 1999), the meaning that young people attribute to street as a public space and as an outdoor environment to hang out and their patterns of use are significant for analysis and for the discussion of incivility in the urban realm (Loader et al., 1998; Valentine, 1996). Within this framework, a field survey in a pedestrianized street of Ankara was conducted to explore the context dependent embodiment of incivility with a reference to 'street context' where everyday incivilities are mostly encountered and fear of crime is experienced (Collins and Kearns, 2001; Erkip, 2003; Malone, 2002). By framing the analysis of incivility with the context of street, it is also planned to examine the nature of young people's relationships with their physical as well as social environments. Moreover, it is also aimed to investigate the influence of the diversity of the urban youth in terms of their some socio-demographic characteristics. To this end, before reporting on the details of the field survey, first, the theoretical framework and assumptions are reviewed in the following section.

Street as an urban public space within which (in) civility is experienced

Streets are the stereotypic image of public places together with parks, plazas and playgrounds (Rivlin, 1994). Philips and Smith (2003) claim that human movements around the city and sites of these movements such as city streets are remarkably implicated in incivility arguments concerning variety of incivilities that can be encountered during daily movements. Streets as objects of fear, pain, danger, crime, perceived incivility and disorder are highlighted while giving reference to the increase in preferences of more controlled and privatized environments such as shopping malls and gated communities as

well as incivility experienced in public spaces of cities. For instance, Banerjee (2001) and Jackson (1998) indicate the 'perceived incivility' of streets as one of the major reasons of privatization of public spaces and increased demand for the use of shopping malls. According to Erkip (2003), this is also valid for the case of Turkey concerning the conditions of the streets in metropolitan cities of Turkey (Erkip, 2010).

Sennett (1996) argues that through the increasing number of homogeneous neighborhoods within cities, where people prefer to live closer to people like themselves, they try to reduce the chance of encountering with urban strangers. According to Bauman (2003), as the people living in cities have forgotten to live together with difference and neglected, strangers tend to appear ever more frightening since they become increasingly alien, un-familiar and incomprehensible which lead to preferences of living in more homogeneous and territorially isolated environment. Davis (1992) in *City of Quartz* elaborates that kind of fortress and militarized way of living in Los Angeles by giving examples of some strict regulations and controls such as intentionally contracted street benches that prevent people from sleeping on them, continuously patrolled and surveyed shopping malls, security cameras and CCTV located in different parts of the city to scan the streets etc. However, use of surveillance technologies and instruments in publicly accessible spaces has led to debate among researchers regarding whether such surveillance actually makes those spaces safer since it has been mostly discussed that exclusion is considered as a probable and unavoidable outcome of neoliberal urban policies such as surveillance technologies (Mugan, 2015). At this point, it is significant to remember what Bauman (2003, p. 38) emphasized that: "the city is the dumping side for anxieties and apprehensions generated by globally induced uncertainty and insecurity; but the city is as well the training ground where the means to placate and disperse that uncertainty and insecurity can be experimented with, tried out and eventually learned and adopted".

Punch (2000) and Matthews et al. (2000), by referring to the street use of children and young people, highlight the environmental dangers, unruly gangs, pollution and assaults on streets. In addition, drug-dealers, drug use, the homeless, graffiti, trash, vandalism, noise, crowding, prostitutes, open gambling, abandoned or ill-kept buildings, broken street lights, street drinking are mentioned together with the disorder of city streets (Collins and Kearns, 2001; Dixon et al., 2006; Robin et al., 2007). Moreover, Valentine (2001) underlines that the use of streets at night increases the fear of crime due to the reduced visibility with darkness and reduced number of people on the streets and increased number of 'unknown men' (Erkip, 2003 for danger of streets and urban parks at nights for women and elderly in Turkey).

One of the serious sources of incivilities and

environmental problems on the street is indicated as being related to the traffic problems, especially to the problems resulting from vehicular traffic (Robin et al., 2007). Erkip (2005), by referring to Turkish metropolises, indicates that the traffic congestion in the crowded urban core and lack of pedestrian areas are important safety concerns for Turkish citizens and important sources of incivility. Therefore, the analysis of incivility on a pedestrian street is different than studying incivility on streets where vehicular traffic is existing. Besides, as Levent (1999) argued, pedestrian activities increase the chance of face-to-face communication through which individuals can collect lots of information about others and physical environment which helps them to evaluate their social positions in the society. Hence, the analysis of incivility on a pedestrian street provides the opportunity to investigate different incivilities and environmental problems on the street as well as the relationships of individuals with the physical and social contexts of city streets.

Street use of young people and their perception and experience of incivility on streets

Lieberg (1994) claims that one of the significant roles of public spaces for young people is providing the opportunity to control and shape their existence without the control of adults. In this respect, street is an important place for the everyday lives of young people concerning the recognition of their presence in public places (Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Matthews et al., 2000). In the Turkish context, according to ranking of major 'hang out' places where young people can gather, meet friends and engage in various leisure activities, street follows home environments and cafés (Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 1999). In another study, the ranking of street among mostly preferred leisure spaces is way below some other public spaces including shopping malls, café/restaurants, friends' houses and some game-areas respectively (Mugan and Erkip, 2009).

Regarding the importance of street use for young people and incivility discussion, there are two important arguments that should be highlighted. One of these arguments is related to the image of streets as dangerous and unsafe public spaces for young people due to social and physical dangers of the space including assault, dangers during evenings and nights, traffic, pollution, etc. (Breitbart, 1998; Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Punch, 2000). Several scholars emphasize parents' fears of danger on street and the role of parental restrictions in limiting the use of streets by young people (Collins and Kearns, 2001; Valentine, 1996; Vanderbeck and Johnson, 2000). Also, in the study of Malone and Hasluck (1998), young people identified streets and street spaces as the site where they felt most in danger. In this respect, young people are declared as potential victims of incivility on

streets (Pain, 2001).

The second argument concerning 'street' and 'young people' is about how young people's use of street as space for expressing themselves is misinterpreted by adults due to young people's positioning as intruders (Malone, 2002). In many researches, groups of youths around, their gathering and attitudes in public spaces such as street corners, front walls, are discussed to be the main incivil events in the social realm that prompt anxiety and unease among adult users of those spaces (Franzini et al., 2008; Loader et al., 1998; Robin et al., 2007). Accordingly, prevalent discourses have emerged around the general view of "keeping young people, and particularly adolescents, 'off the street'" (Vanderbeck and Johnson, 2000) due to the moral panic among adults about their use of public spaces (Malone and Hasluck, 1998). In other words, young people are indicated as the main actors of incivility and disorder on streets. When these two negative discourses are brought together, the main theme that can be extracted is the efforts to remove young people from streets as either victims or victimizers of incivility (Breitbart, 1998; Valentine, 1996), which needs further analysis to understand their position as either actors or targets of incivil conducts on streets.

Furthermore, Silbereisen and Todt (1994) point out that the differences among young people influence the way they interact with different contexts. Matthews et al. (2000) claim that multiple childhoods, which are layered according to different socio-personal characteristics including age, sex, class, ethnicity, income, educational background, disability are influential on the meaning construction of 'street' by children. Accordingly, socio-demographic differences among young people seem to be influential on the way they perceive and experience incivility and needs further and more detailed explanations within the street context as well.

THE FIELD SURVEY¹

The objectives and the research questions

Concerning the fact that context within which incivility appears is influential, it was aimed to figure out the incivility perceptions and experiences that are bounded up with an urban context, a particular street in Ankara. The findings of a preliminary survey confirmed that open public spaces including parks, streets and neighborhoods were perceived by many young respondents as the settings within which incivil conducts mostly appeared in Ankara (Mugan, 2009 for the details of this survey). Furthermore, it was found that the urban youth commonly perceived and experienced incivilities such as sexual and verbal harassment, fighting and arguing, beggars, drunks and homeless individuals, spitting and invasion of personal space in relation to street context. In this respect, the main emphasis of this study was exploring

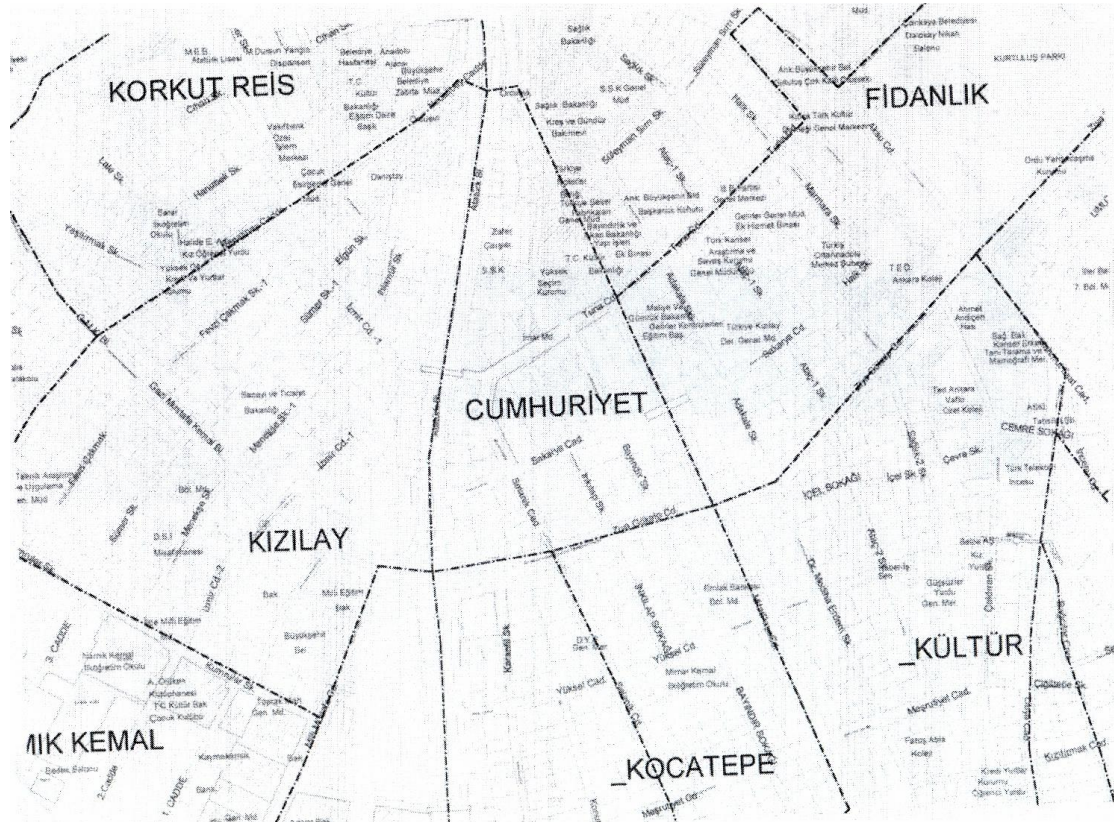


Figure 1. Location of Sakarya Street within the context of Ankara

the influence of 'context' on perception and experience of incivility by focusing on one of the pedestrianized streets of Ankara. Hence, this study was shaped around the question of 'how does an urban context i.e., street, be influential on the perception and the experience of incivilities and environmental problems?'

In addition, it was observed that most of the respondents ascribed their peers as the actors of incivil conducts in different urban contexts and they highlighted gender influence on the perception of being the target of incivility (Mugan, 2009). Therefore, it was important to give further attention to youth perspectives to grasp various attributions of youth about themselves and about the rest of the society. While investigating the relationship between young people's patterns of street use and their perception and experience of incivility, multiple realities of them and their heterogeneity were aimed to be considered.

The site

Sakarya², which has been a pedestrian area for 30 years, was selected as the case of this research due to its vivid character with entertainment and leisure spaces such as bars, cafés, restaurants and food selling kiosks. Sakarya

is an important meeting place of Ankara which is full of diverse meanings for different individuals. In addition, it is significant in the urban public life, with its location and diversity and density of users (Figures 1 and 2).

Since it is at the center of the city, it is also at hubs of mass transport such as public buses, mini-buses and the subway. In this respect, Sakarya can be considered as an important node in Ankara that serves for the legibility of the city concerning its harmonious relations with the transportation system of Ankara. This quality increases the use of the street with its accessibility particularly for pedestrians. Besides, educational facilities³ and some entertainment places which are spread along the business and commercial areas and upper floors of shopping arcades are favorite places, especially of the urban youths.

The image of Sakarya for the citizens of Ankara is an entertainment place for the lower-middle income groups (Yetkin, 2004) (Figures 3 and 4). Moreover, it is also notorious due to its characteristics as a place 'for easy alcohol consumption' and which is 'full of criminals' where 'ordinary citizens' and families avoid entering after a certain hour. Shop owners have fears and worries regarding those dangerous individuals who are causing problems due to excess alcohol and drug use. Accordingly, this makes Sakarya an important site for the

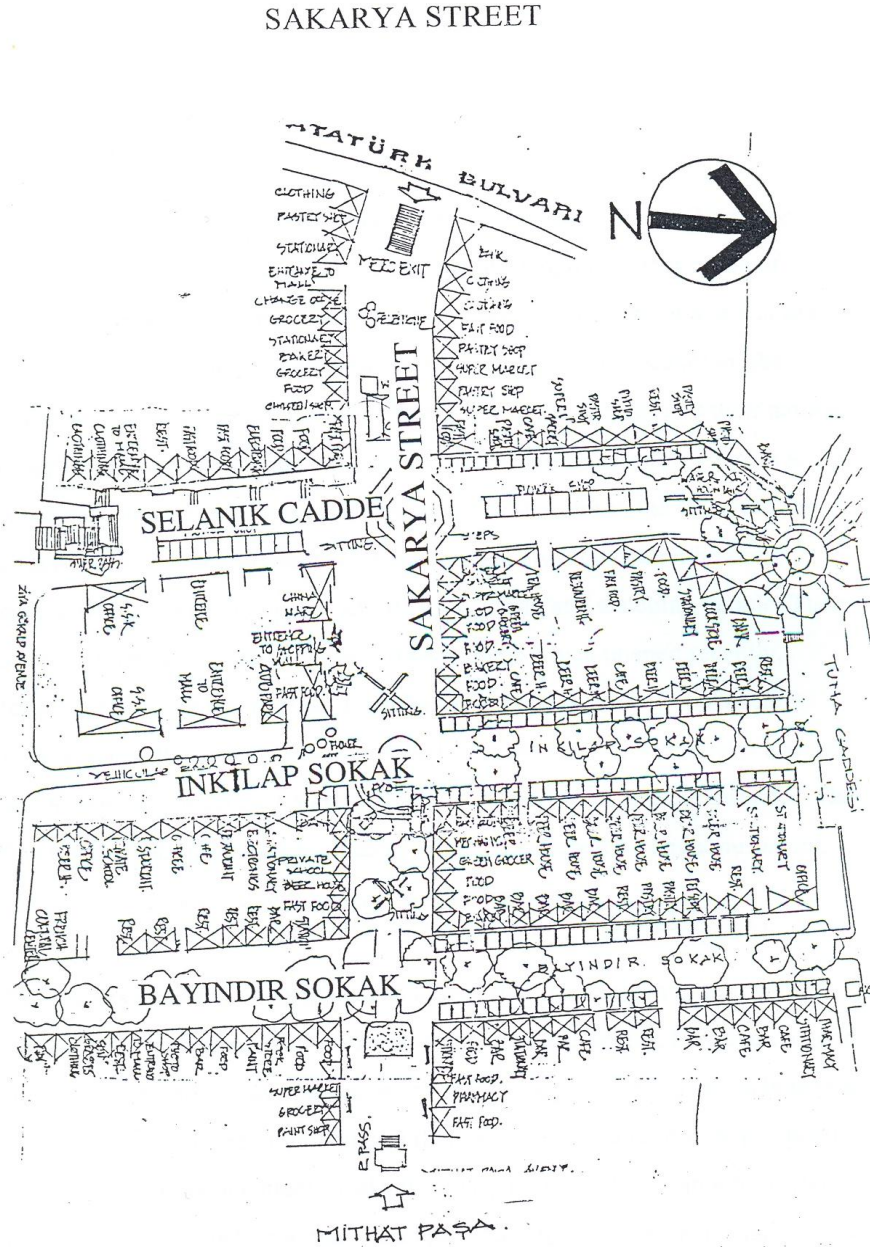


Figure 2. Sakarya Street as the main arterial area and its street furniture and their functional distribution on the street. Source: Mahmud (1996), p. 105.

investigation of perceived and experienced incivilities.

METHODS

Within the scope of the field survey, the combination of multiple methods was preferred concerning the benefits of using qualitative and quantitative methods together. However, the main aim was to collect qualitative data, so that quota and convenience sampling methods were used to select 82 young people with an age range between 15 and 24. For choosing this age range UN (2008) definition of youth and the age range used by TURKSTAT was referred to. Sampling quotas were identified on the basis of gender,

then convenience and judgment samplings were used to select equal number of respondents for each quota (41 females and 41 males). Besides, time sampling method was used to grasp the differences in patterns of street use and to investigate the impact of time variations on encountering different types of incivilities and environmental stressors. The research was conducted between January and June, both in week days and weekends between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. to cover seasonal and daily patterns of use of this particular age group.

In this field survey, the perceptions and experiences of incivility on the street were investigated through semi-structured interviews. Following the questions that aimed to collect socio-demographic characteristics, interview questions included the perceived and



Figure 3. General view of a bar in Sakarya



Figure 4. Variety of places and facilities in Sakarya.

experienced incivil behaviors/events and environmental problems that young people mostly encounter in Sakarya. This part included questions on youths' views about Sakarya with respect to 'problems/incivilities' in Sakarya without referring to a specific definition. To deal with the problem of cultural variations in the definition of incivility, without orientating the respondents through direct questions, they were expected to reveal perceived and

experienced incivilities and environmental problems with the examples of problems, insufficiencies, dangers, deficiencies and dislikes. This involved interrogating the things that young people disliked most, problematic behaviors/events and individual groups that they do not want to encounter in Sakarya, evaluations of conditions and precautions for safety and individual group(s) that they attribute as actors/targets of problems/incivilities. In addition to

the interviews, actual and visible signs of disorder and incivilities were examined in the site.

The interviews were conducted by a research team of three. All the team members were females. Since the age range of the research team was close to the age range of the respondents, it was easy to communicate with the youth, made them relax and had a friendly conversation during the interviews.

The duration of the interview was approximately 25 minutes. The interviews were conducted at different parts of Sakarya in order to reach a variety of respondents who were using the area for different purposes. Moreover, some interviews were conducted at front doors of educational facilities and in front of *Fantasyland*, a game arcade in the area, in order not to skip young people who were at the two extremes in terms of their relationship with Sakarya: using the street for the purpose of education and spending leisure time. All respondents were informed about the aim of the study. In addition, to avoid influences of respondents on each other, each of them was questioned separately. Besides, face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted with local government officials, security staff and owners of spaces and properties on the street as key informants to trace the problems/incivilities in Sakarya and to analyze the arguments that were brought out by young respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

The age range of the young people, varied between 15 and 24, was categorized into three groups (15-17, 18-21 and 22-24) concerning their education level (high school students, university students and graduates of a university with respect to the age groups). The mode was in the 15-17 group that covers the young people who were primary school graduates, high school students and high school graduates including the group that utilized education facilities on the street for preparation of various exams. Concerning the fact that the age range covered some respondents who were financially independent from their families, the income level of respondents was questioned along two axes: if they were working and financially independent, their income level, if they were not working, the income level of their families was asked. Majority of the respondents belonged to the middle income group. In addition, they were also asked about the settlement type that they inhabited. Majority of the respondents inhabited traditional apartment houses; see Table 1 for socio-demographic characteristics of the sample group.

The analysis of perceived and experienced incivilities and environmental problems within the context of Sakarya

Matthews and Limb (1999) state that children and young people value a wide variety of places and there is a consistency in their preferences of various places, where they can engage in different activities and experience different feelings. The street is one of those places where

they may develop their own identities. Lieberg (1994) highlights that the street, with a mixture of people and diversity of activities, is one of the ideal settings for young people where they can feel independent in an adult setting. According to the findings of the field survey, the majority of the respondents (68 %) indicated that they were pleased to be using Sakarya. Nevertheless, when they were asked whether there were any problems/incivilities that they did not want to encounter in Sakarya, 77 % of them responded positively. Only 8 respondents stated that there was nothing that they did not like in Sakarya; the rest mentioned several dislikes related to social and physical environments. On the contrary to what was expected, when the responses were analyzed in relation to their age and gender, it was not observed any significant relationship between them. However, some differences were observed concerning value systems, family backgrounds and peer relations. For instance, a veiled female respondent, who was living in a low-income district of Ankara stated that:

I do not want to encounter with couples in intimate relations on the street. Seeing close relationship and physical contact with the opposite sex on the street make me feel embarrassed and annoyed.
(17-year-old, female)

Another respondent who was grown up in a village and then migrated to Ankara pointed out that:

Since, I was grown up in a village, I got used to disrespectful, annoying and disturbing behavior. So, no one can make me feel disturbed in Sakarya. I do not get angry easily and I can put up with all kinds of inappropriateness.
(18-year-old, female)

The findings of the field survey indicated that most of the young respondents perceived and experienced social incivilities more and had complaints and dislikes mostly related to the social environment of Sakarya. When the problems/incivilities that young people did not want to encounter in Sakarya were grouped, social incivilities⁴ dominated with a percentage of 45.1. Moreover, when the dislikes of the youth in Sakarya were analyzed along the same line, 42.7 % of the dislikes of the respondents were social incivilities which were related to the social context and only 24.4 % of them were related to physical incivilities and environmental problems; see Table 2 for the categorization of problems/incivilities and dislikes in Sakarya. When the problems/incivilities were tested along age and gender, it was not observed any significant relationships between them. Still, sexual and verbal harassment and abuses were mostly indicated as dislikes about Sakarya by female respondents. Besides, among the problems/incivilities that they did not want to encounter in Sakarya, out of 41 female respondents 21 stated sexual and verbal harassment and abuses by

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Sex	No of cases	%
Female	41	50.0
Male	41	50.0
Total	82	100.0
Age	# of cases	%
15-17	38	46.3
18-21	22	26.8
22-24	22	26.8
Total	82	100.0
Education Level	# of cases	%
Primary school graduate	1	1.2
High school student	45	54.9
High school graduate	5	6.1
University student	16	19.5
University graduate	15	18.3
Total	82	100.0
Income Level	# of cases	%
Low	4	4.9
Middle	65	79.3
High	13	15.9
Total	82	100.0
Settlement Type	# of cases	%
Gated community	15	18.3
Traditional apt.	60	73.2
Dormitories/other	7	8.5
Total	82	100.0

Table 2. The categorization of problems/incivilities and dislikes in Sakarya.

Categorization of problems/incivilities	No of cases	%
Problems/incivilities related to physical environment	11	13.4
Problems/incivilities related to social environment	37	45.1
Both	15	18.3
None	19	23.2
Total	82	100.0
Categorization of dislikes	# of Cases	%
Dislikes related to physical environment	20	24.4
Dislikes related to social environment	35	42.7
Both	19	23.2
None	8	9.8
Total	82	100.0

referring to some unwanted male groups who were described as 'vagabonds', 'jerks', etc. Only two of the male respondents perceived harassment and abuse in Sakarya as a problem. The difference between male and

female respondents concerning the attribution of sexual and verbal harassment and abuses as major incivilities was also explicit in their responses for the behaviors, events and conditions that necessitated police intervention

in Sakarya. Accordingly, 20 female respondents indicated sexual and verbal harassment and abuses among those events that necessitated the intervention of police where only one male had a similar opinion.

Here in Sakarya Street you can encounter with sexual harassment very often. Military men [males under military service] are also among those disgusting men. I think the only way to cope with this problem is the permanent presence of police forces (17-year-old, female).

In Sakarya Street, you are continuously under the threat of verbal and sexual harassment. Sometimes, even the looks of some guys involve sexual abuse. This is very irritating (24-year-old, female).

Different types of incivilities in social and physical environments of Sakarya

When the problems/incivilities that young people did not want to encounter in Sakarya and dislikes related to the social and physical environments of the street were examined in detail, it is possible to delve into the reasons of young people's disturbances and complaints about perceived and experienced incivilities and problems in both social and physical contexts. In this respect, items and behaviors by referring to social nuisances and deviances from the norms of living together (Covington and Taylor, 1991; Moser and Corroyer, 2001) were analyzed as problems/incivilities related to the social context of Sakarya. According to the findings, these items and behaviors that were declared as problematic for young people included terrifying/dangerous/inappropriate user profile, sexual and verbal harassment and abuses (especially against females), insufficiency of security, fighting and arguing on the streets, inappropriate behaviors of shop and bar owners and swearing.

In previous research, encounters of difference on the street context through unknown, unconforming and dangerous others were mentioned as a predominant indicator of social incivility (Malone, 2002; Valentine, 2001).

In this study, male groups who were assumed to live at outskirts, with low cultural background, and low-income, were indicated as closely related to the incivility of the social context of the street. Besides, some young respondents specifically highlighted the problematic outlook and incivil appearance of a group of young people who were globally called as *emo*⁶. The young respondents who had complaints about 'emos' were observed to be identifying themselves with more traditional and local norms and values of the society; against the marginal and globally accepted life styles and values of 'emos'. In this respect, 'emos' and 'anti-emos' seems to be a good indicator of how competing and conflicting meanings and identities are shared over

Sakarya in the form of a power struggle for the place (Yetkin, 2004). One of the young respondents, who live in a low-middle income district in Ankara, showed his anti-*emo* attitude as follows:

I think the major problem here in Sakarya is hawkers and emos - those guys who are hanging out in street corners. They are disturbing and very crude. They are potential threats for the rest of the society (18-year-old, male).

In addition to these groups, a male group which is specific to the context of Sakarya was particularly underlined, i.e., 'Ankaragücü fans'. The fans of *Ankaragücü* - a favorable football team of Ankara origin - were also defined with the same negative adjectives by some young respondents. Fans of *Ankaragücü* were also observed in groups like a gang in certain parts of Sakarya, cheering, applauding, swearing and terrifying individuals using the district. One of the respondents was an 'ex-fan of *Ankaragücü*' who had been a member of the 'gang' for three years and then decided to give up hanging out with those guys. He described them and hanging out with them in the following;

'Ankaragücü fans' is a gang activity in fact. It is not directly related to the football team. Most of the fans have left the school after primary education. They are at their 20s. They use drugs. They do not have money and know that they will never have. And they want to damage everything. They think that they will attract attention by this way. I was hanging out with them when I was 15. With those guys, I felt myself as if I had power and authority. I was continuously drunk and they were forcing me to use drugs. So, I quit hanging out with them (18-year-old, male).

In addition to these groups of individuals, beggars, drug addicts, drunks and hawkers were also emphasized as the problems/incivilities in the region. The respondents associated these groups of individuals with the social environment by underlining negative social consequences.

There are little children around who force you to buy pencils, handkerchief, etc. It is a kind of begging. They stick to your cuffs to make you feel pity for them. I think they are dangerous (24-year-old, male).

Those drugged individuals are terrifying. They are dirty and look totally faint. I directly change my way when I see one of them but unfortunately you might come across one of those guys very often (15-year-old, female).

A local government official also underlined the danger of streets for young people due to dangerous groups of 'others' and unruly gangs.

Hawkers and beggars are, maybe, the biggest problem of the municipal police. They are big threats for the user

group of the street. This is one of the faces of these guys that users see. Some of them are in fact drug dealers who are in disguise. Especially young people are their victims.

During the observations, it was noticed that although the number of drug addicts were not very considerable during the day time, when it gets dark their number increased immensely. They used the corners of the streets and dark areas and the exit of subway. They light a fire to get warmed and use the entrances of buildings to spend the night. One of the young respondents expressed his experiences with those people at night as follows:

Once I had to spend a night here in Sakarya. The area becomes totally a different place at nights. Homeless individuals and drug users start to appear. That night I understood that Sakarya was their home and I felt as if I broke into someone else's house. I spent that night in one of the buildings entrances with one of those guys. Fortunately, he was faint and did not even notice me. It was a terrifying experience (21-year-old male).

During the field visits, the patrolling of security staff and civilian police officers was witnessed. However, more than half of the respondents stated that the conditions and precautions for safety were not sufficient in Sakarya. The main reason of this judgment was that security forces were not visible on the street. Hence, it seems that a new style of military urbanism (see Graham 2010) and neo-liberal Leviathan were achieved to be justified by the youths through the idea of scrutinization (Wacquant, 2014).

We encounter lots of vagabonds here. They are abusing us. There are lots of verbal and sexual harassment around. Begging children are increasing in number everyday. But where are the security men? Can you see any police officer around? I cannot (17-year-old female).

Moreover, except 6 respondents who stated that police forces were not necessary, the rest of the respondents pointed out some events, conditions and individual groups that required the intervention of police and security staff. Most commonly stated incivil conducts were fighting on street, events like riots, demonstrations and meetings, burglary and hit-and-run attacks, presence of uninforming and dangerous individual groups.

Besides, some exceptions were brought out concerning the presence of police forces such as illegal entrance to bars. Police presence was observed to be a big threat for young people who are under the age of 18 and legally prohibited to enter the bars. During the observations, a group of young people under the age of 18, who were noticed to be drunk, seemed to be strictly opposing to the idea of police control in Sakarya. According to them, Sakarya and activities they engaged in the district were related to their freedom. As Valentine (1998) and Lieberg

(1994) asserted, street is the only place that they can express their feelings without the control of adults and parents. Therefore, the presence or intervention of police is a threat to their freedom of expression and also what Graham (2010) mentioned as death of the values of urban modernism including free movement and democracy. On the other hand, they argued that police intervention and control was necessary to protect them from the dangers of the street. In sum, it is possible to grasp two negative discourses regarding the street use of young people: street as a space of expression (Lieberg, 1994; Malone, 2002) and street as a dangerous place (Breitbart, 1998; Matthews et al., 2000), which were also pointed out by young people themselves.

We do not want to see police around. Otherwise, we cannot enter the bars. This is the only place where we can enjoy without the control of our parents. If police forces come here, then all our freedom will be lost. But, police is necessary to protect us from those dangerous guys. As you see, the situation is very complicated (15-year-old female).

Local government officials indicated that bar owners who let young people who are under the age of 18 enter bars were a serious problem of the municipality. Dixon et al. (2006) emphasize the importance of 'locatedness' of drinking activity which may be perceived as incivil according to where it happens. According to an official:

It is not appropriate to serve cheap alcohol in a place where lots of students and young people are present. After their course hours, those children go to bars. They drink two beers and get drunk. The only concern of bar owners is to earn money without considering young people. I think the whole problem is about the location of activities. To deal with this problem, you should either carry the bars or educational facilities to somewhere else, both of them together seem inappropriate.

During the field survey, it was noted that young people were not very concerned with the physical environment and incivilities resulting in negative environmental consequences. As it was indicated in the preliminary research (Mugan, 2009) and in other researches (Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 1999; Mugan and Erkip, 2009; Pain, 2001), the number of respondents who underscored problems/incivilities and dislikes concerning the environmental consequences was very low. Out of 82 respondents, only 26 mentioned some physical incivilities and environmental problems that they did not want to encounter in Sakarya and 39 individuals touched upon similar issues as their dislikes. Nevertheless, the number of respondents who directly referred to physical environment was even lower (only 31 individuals in sum) (Table 2). Perceived and experienced environmental problems and stressors were declared as environmental

pollution (including litter or trash on the sidewalk), bad smells, failures of environmental planning, disorder and decline (including run-down buildings and living environments, difficulty in moving around on the pavements, inappropriate layout of shops and bars), noise and crowding.

The noise coming from bars is disturbing. You cannot sit on a bench and feel in peace. I think there should be some bans to control the volume of that sound (15-year-old, female).

Run-down look of some buildings is scary. It seems that it would collapse soon. Besides, litters on the sidewalks and in front of the bars are very messy (20-year-old, male).

The drainage smell is intolerable. When you walk through the streets, you feel that the smell of drain surrounds you. It is really disgusting (17-year-old, male).

The composition of sidewalks and pavements are really decayed. Someone can fall down and get injured (17-year-old, female).

Some of the young respondents underlined cleaning problems of Sakarya with a reference to the inadequacy of the municipality services. Out of 52 respondents, who stated that municipality services were insufficient in Sakarya, 32 indicated physical incivilities and environmental problems by highlighting the environmental pollution and cleaning problem that were not paid enough attention by the municipality.

The interviews with municipality officers and observation that were done in the site reveal that cleaning of the street is fulfilled with 55 personnel between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m. In addition, it was observed that the garbage trucks strolling around to collect the garbage which should be taken out within large litter bags. Regarding physical incivilities and environmental problems, one of the cleaning personnel of the municipality asserted that:

There are individuals who vandalize the benches and statues. We cannot warn these guys because there are no legal sanctions. We work here in two teams. We collect the litter on the sidewalks, empty the trash-cans and change the litter bags. We clean up everywhere, but then individuals are especially littering the cleanest areas. They throw out their litters and cigarette butts instead of using the trash cans.

Actual physical incivilities in Sakarya can be listed as the trash, litter and cigarette butts on the sidewalks, the smell of drainage, the lack of green spaces, badly lit areas, run-down living environments and buildings, the hindering location of flower shops and kiosks that are located on walking paths, distorted sidewalks and pavements,

disordered and lack of street furniture, loud music, electric shortages and graffiti on statues. Disorderly, rude, impolite behaviors and manners with negative environmental consequences were also noticed by some respondents.

There are men around who are spitting on the street and blowing their nose. I do not understand how individuals can be so insensitive to the environment. We are walking through that dirt and then go to our houses. It is a miracle that we do not get sick more often (19-year-old, female).

Moreover, some environmental problems and physical incivilities were associated with the 'locatedness' of those activities (e.g., noise due to demonstrations/meetings, loud music coming out of bars, etc.).

A few of the young people highlighted how the noise undermined the 'very publicness' of the street as a "site not only of but also for the expression of civil liberties" (Dixon et al., 2006, 200). The noise was indicated to be problematic by some because of educational facilities that necessitate silence. Especially, students pointed out this factor.

The noise in Sakarya is not endurable. The music coming from the bars do not let you concentrate during the classes or exams. My parents pay for this facility. I do not have to tolerate that noise (16-year-old male).

The analysis of the actors and targets of uncivil conducts in Sakarya

Previously, it was underscored that it is crucial to figure out how young people consider themselves and their peers and the rest of the society within the discussion of actors/targets of incivil conducts. Therefore, the aim of making young people's voices heard as critics and engaged citizens (Ayerbe and Baez, 2007; Daiute and Fine, 2003) was followed to examine their point of views about actors and targets of incivility in Sakarya.

According to the respondents, the actors of incivil behaviors and events were mostly belonging to the group of unconforming others (including 'jerks', 'vagabonds', drug addicts, drunks, beggars and fans of *Ankaragücü*) with a percentage of 26. Young individuals followed with a very close percentage (24.1 %). Concerning the fact that unconforming others were described as young, male, uneducated and inhabitants of low-income neighborhoods it seems that their peers as being the dominant user group of Sakarya are the main troublemakers of the district. In other words, most of the young respondents attributed 'being youth' as the main characteristic of the actors of incivility. Moreover, apart from the age, gender, level of education and place of residence were also pointed out as other determinants. Hence, young males, uneducated young people and young people who live in

low-income neighborhoods were highlighted in different contexts as the actors of incivil acts in Sakarya.

Furthermore, respondents were asked about whether they themselves were engaging or had ever engaged with any kind of incivil conducts in Sakarya. According to the results, although they indicated 'being youth' as the main characteristic of troublemakers, almost all of the respondents excluded themselves from the group of actors of problems/incivility in Sakarya claiming that they did not engage any kind of incivil conduct. However, during the observations, it was noticed that some young respondents who had complaints about littering, throwing cigarette butts on the sidewalks and spitting were themselves engaging with the very same behaviors. Moreover, some groups of young respondents were observed to be disturbing other users of Sakarya by hanging out as drunk and by shouting. It seems that they do not admit that they were engaging with incivil conducts in Sakarya, although, they themselves were observed to be one of the main actor groups of certain incivilities. Examples of the statements of the respondents who admitted that they were engaging with incivil conducts in Sakarya can be given as follows:

While walking through Sakarya we also shout, throw out litter on sidewalks, smoke and throw our cigarette butts on sidewalks. We also drink on the street and probably disturb adults (15-year-old, female who was drunk, hanging out with friends as a noisy group).

We abuse girls, cheer and swear. It is an unavoidable part of Sakarya (18-year-old, male who was spitting and throwing the cigarette butts on the sidewalk).

Even if 'being young' seems to be the characteristic of the main actors, gender seemed to be more influential concerning the target group of incivility. In other words, 'being female' was ascribed as the characteristic of the group who would be mostly affected by incivil conducts in Sakarya. The reason of this attribution is likely to be related to unconforming others who are mostly composed of young and uneducated males from low-income neighborhoods and who mostly abuse and harass the females on the street. When the statements of the young people about the target group of incivilities were analyzed along their socio-demographic characteristics, it was not observed any significant relationships. However, females were more frequently observed as attributing 'being female' as the characteristic of the target group of incivil conducts in Sakarya. Following females, they also declared that 'everyone can be potential targets of incivility in Sakarya'. On the contrary to what is stated in the literature about the potential of young people indicating their peers as the group who are mostly affected by incivil conducts on the street (see Malone and Hasluck 1998; Pain 2001), a very limited number of young respondents ascribed 'being young' as the main

characteristic of being the target of incivil conducts.

Concluding remarks

Lieberg (1994) highlights the importance of location and safety of places while describing ideal settings for young people. Different groups of urban youth having different sense of place were observed to attribute different meanings to Sakarya. For some of them, Sakarya is a leisure place where they feel secure and independent, for some others, it is a dangerous place that they should be avoided as much as possible.

To a great extent, the analysis of the findings of the field survey consisted of all-embracing information about the perceived and experienced incivilities that were based on personal experiences and official records. In the light of the young people's views about events, behaviors and individuals that they disliked, complained about and attributed as problematic and incivil, it is possible to argue that Turkish urban youth have different meanings and experiences of incivility in the street context, mostly in relation to its social environment. They mostly highlighted intolerance and fear due to face-to-face encounters with 'unconforming' and dangerous groups in relation to the social context of Sakarya. This might indicate that Turkish youth with little environmental concern and interest about environmental problems and their physical environments makes socio-economic and cultural problems more predominant in their lives as it was indicated in previous researches (Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 1999). This aspect needs further analyses to understand the reasons of lack of environmental concern and lack of interest about physical environment and overemphasis and predominance given to the societal issues and social environment. Further research is also needed to compare the lack of interest and concern in the Turkish society with the interests and perceptions of the physical environment in other societies.

As being consistent with previous researches (Mugan and Erkip, 2009; Pain, 2001), most of the young people were observed as not being very concerned with the physical environment and incivilities having some negative environmental consequences. The perceived and experienced environmental problems and stressors in Sakarya as being the observed actual physical incivilities of the area were mostly related to environmental pollution, bad smells, failures of environmental planning, disorder and decline, noise and crowding. According to these, it is possible to point out Sakarya as a disorderly street as several scholars indicated regarding the incivility of streets (Banerjee, 2001; Collins and Kearns, 2001; Robin et al., 2007). Even if the number of respondents who stated incivilities and dislikes concerning the physical environment was very limited, the statements about environmental problems and physical incivilities that some young people pointed out

gave important clues about the nature of the relationship that they engaged with the social and physical contexts of Sakarya as well as the 'locatedness' of its activities. In other words, as it was discussed in the literature, some environmental problems and physical incivilities were declared 'incivilities' since they were perceived to be either inhibiting the development of ongoing human relations within the social context of the street (Macnaghten, 2003; Moser and Robin, 2006) or denying and violating the appropriate way of behaving what is owed to the street (Dixon et al., 2006; Goffman, 1966), i.e., Sakarya. Hence, in this study, the role of space with a reference to a specific 'location' including its physical and social environments was emphasized for a more thorough analysis of perceived incivilities and environmental problems and their sources. Concerning the image of Sakarya, which is at hubs of mass transportation, together with its low-priced activities and shops makes the district as an attraction center for low-income groups in Ankara. Nevertheless, it is not possible to talk about a single identity and meaning for Sakarya since it is composed of diverse meanings, different temporality and spatiality for different groups of individuals with its diversity of activities and places (Gürçel, 2003; Mahmud, 1996; Yetkin, 2004). This approach invites further field studies on the perceived and experienced incivilities in different street contexts as well as in different urban settings in general. By this way, it would be possible to make a comparison of different relationships that young people as well as other citizens engaged with different spaces and their different patterns of space use.

Concerning the context of Sakarya, 'openness' of the social environment that celebrates difference and diversity and that supports multiple values (Malone, 2002) through diversity of activities and places as well as the boundary-free, easy-access and pedestrianized physical structure were featured as attracting diverse groups that may involve the 'unconforming' individuals. Those individuals were mentioned as the potential troublemakers for the street. Besides, low-priced and poor-quality places and activities were also underscored by referring to potential of attracting those stigmatized group of 'unconforming individuals'. However, while some young people were bringing out explanations related to social deprivation and inequalities, they highlighted the 'otherness' of these 'unconforming' individuals concerning their disadvantageous position in benefiting equal rights of education and public services (Boratav, 2005) that led to behaviors of antagonism and tendency of disrespect and ignorance of the appropriate norms of the society (Bauman, 2003; Boyd, 2006; Watson, 2006). Accordingly, one important social implication of the study was about the tendency of young people in stigmatizing certain groups of individuals as potential troublemakers and actors of incivility on the street. In this respect, it seems that they marginalized certain groups of individuals as

'unwanted' and 'unconforming' and tried to put forward definitions for 'appropriate ways of behaving' on streets. Moreover, they also suggest zero-tolerance policies, exclusionary practices and legitimize the application of neo-liberal policies as a way to sanitize the street and clean it off from the incivility of unwanted individuals.

The policies and practices that young people suggested to sanitize the street involve the actualization of continuous surveillance and monitoring as it was realized in more controlled and fortress environments of shopping malls and gated communities. This can also be explained through what Wacquant (2014) forged as territorial stigmatization in the age of diffusing social insecurity and the building of the neo-liberal Leviathan. Thus, it is possible to argue that Turkish youth has a tendency to differentiate some people through discrimination patterns with a concern for a more secure and civilized urban space. This aspect necessitates further analysis concerning the unintended consequences of discrimination and intolerance of difference that might lead to more serious forms of incivility and disorder in the urban context. Therefore, attention should be given to analyze the short-term success of exclusionary practices together with their long-term impact on social and policy implications which would be enhanced through legal and state interventions.

Interestingly, even though some young people appeared to be favoring a fortress and militarized street life within which difference and diversity were tried to be cleaned off, there are some others who oppose continuous surveillance and police forces that seem to be threat for their freedom of behavior. Some of them also highlighted demonstrations, meetings and riots to which police intervention is not necessary concerning freedom and rights of expression on the streets which were mentioned together with democracy, equality and tolerance of difference (Amin, 2006; Boyd, 2006; Graham, 2010). Thus, two contradictory arguments can be developed concerning the meaning attribution to street by the youth and their conceptualization and preferences regarding street life. On the one hand, they seemed to prefer a more controlled, sanitized and tamed street life by cleaning off difference and diversity. On the other hand, concerning their freedom and identity construction as well as expression of civil rights of other citizens, what they preferred seemed to be a more democratic and equalitarian street life that allows diversity and tolerance of difference. In this respect, further attention should be given to understand the way that young people attribute meaning to different urban contexts, create new urban spaces and challenge their representations (Neyzi, 2001) as well as the representations of other individuals in those spaces. Thus, it opens the path towards the investigation for the ways of 'politics of living together' and 'civilized contemporary city', i.e., 'good city' as Amin (2006) defined.

A further social implication of this study was to

demonstrate the significance of differences among urban youth in understanding how each of them encounters with the everyday incivility of the streets. Even if they have common characteristics of their generation, their perception and experience of the social and physical environments vary according to their multiple realities (Matthews et al., 2000).

According to the findings, gender differences seemed to be influential on their perceptions and experiences of incivility. Besides, some differences were also observed in relation to their value systems, family backgrounds and peer relations which indicated their diverse social grouping and the richness of their perception of the social and physical world around them (Matthews and Limb, 1999; Silbereisen and Todt, 1994). Yet, research with larger sample groups is needed to investigate further differences among them including ethnicity, religious beliefs, etc. that have the great potential of influencing the description of incivility.

Another implication of this study is to make young people's voices heard as competent and participating citizens by engaging them in the field of incivility research as a neglected group and involving them in community and environmental affairs. However, as Ayerbe and Baez (2007, 195) stated that "[...] while children's participation in policy making does require listening to children in order to take them into consideration in making decisions that affect them, it also means creating appropriate conditions to enable children to express themselves through actions". In this respect, further studies are needed to explore the tools of a more active involvement of young people in the design and the planning of urban environments in order to create more child-friendly and sustainable cities (Francis and Lorenzo, 2002; Malone, 2001). Thus, it becomes possible to trace the role of 'active citizenship' (Brannan et al., 2006) in the creation of more civilized and democratic cities.

Notes

1. The field survey was designed as a part of a more comprehensive research on urban incivility (see Mugan 2009 for the details).
2. Sakarya' is used to refer to the pedestrian region in Ankara that constitutes a group of adjacent streets.
3. Private establishments preparing students for various exams - *dershane* in Turkish.
4. In the literature, perceived incivilities are mostly grouped under two main headings: physical incivilities and social incivilities (see for example Covington and Taylor 1991; Franzini et al. 2008; Robin et al. 2007). Accordingly, physical incivilities are related to the perceived problems and inconveniences about environmental stressors, design and planning failures and functional aspects of living in a physical environment. Whereas, social incivilities, which are related to social environment and interpersonal relations, particularly

include all forms of disorderly manners, behaviors and deteriorated social exchanges resulting from involving with strangers.

5. Multiple counting refers to the multiple responses for a number of questions that necessitate a distinction between the number of responses and the number of people responding.

6. *Emo* is an abbreviation for 'emotional hardcore'. It is a style of rock music that has originated from hardcore punk movement in US. Today, it signifies a lifestyle, a kind of fashion, subculture and attitude (see Wikipedia 2009, June 09 for the details of *Emo*).

Conflict of Interests

The author have not declared any conflict of interests

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