

Some Disabled are More Deserving: The Case of US and Turkish Disability Policies

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Note: I will be re-uploading a more advanced version of this paper on September 7, 2022.

Introduction

What explains convergence in policies addressing disabled veterans and civilians in Turkey and the US in the post-1990s? Despite their dissimilar institutional features such as their welfare regimes, policy legacies, political systems, political regimes, and citizenship regimes, both countries offer surprisingly generous benefits to their disabled veterans compared to disabled civilians. Disabled civilians get lower benefits when buying assistive technology, such as prostheses, that are used to compensate for various disabilities, especially for those with lower or upper limb amputations. Whereas civilians are left to cope with the hardship of acquiring even the low-tech prostheses, such as the body-powered ones, the cost of expensive and advanced prostheses is fully covered for disabled veterans in both countries. Considering such issues, assistive technology policy can highlight the inequality between disabled people, as it is one of, maybe the most, important elements of a disabled person's life as it affects the everyday experience of disability through accessibility. These diametrically opposed standards for deserving and not-deserving disabled people tell us so much about what constitutes citizenship and individual rights in both societies.

In this paper, I explore how these two dissimilar institutional settings would have surprisingly similar disability policies, resulting in inegalitarian outcomes among civilians and veterans. In both cases, I find that the disability policies are positioned towards providing more generous benefits to veterans, seen as the deserving disabled in both countries. For this reason, I employ Most Different Systems Design (MDSD) to explore the variation in levels of benefits for assistive devices such as prostheses in Turkey and the US. This comparative research design provides a solid framework to help examine the explanatory variables in these two cases. Both Turkey and the US have dissimilar institutional features many of which, under the richly diverse comparative welfare state literature, may potentially be prime candidates for explaining similarities in disability policies. In the outcome of interest, however, shows tremendous and surprising similarity. By doing a within and cross-case analysis, I argue that in both countries, it is the informal institution of glorified militarism that has been an overarching informal institution effectively shaping the disability policies, in which both countries attribute military-related issues a higher normative position. Glorified militarism in these cases praises veterans and constructs their military activities as sacrifices made for the nation, thus, positions disabled veterans as more deserving beneficiaries. Therefore, as an informal institution, glorified militarism embeds the policy principles, constrains, and shape key policy actors' decision making in disability policy, and positions disabled veterans as more privileged beneficiaries.

The existing literature view disability largely through an anthropological lens by focusing on how veterans create their identities vis-à-vis the states. The comparative welfare state literature, which infrequently focuses on unequal benefits, conceptualizes the difference as categorical benefits but does not explain underlying factors for benefit level differences. To address this gap in these bodies of literature, I bring disability and politics lenses together to examine within-group inequalities of disabled people, which rarely draws attention in disability-related (sub)fields. In doing so, I engage with disability policy, informal institutions, and disability studies literature to conceptualize and operationalize glorified militarism to

explain the variation in disability policy towards disabled veterans and civilians. For this purpose, the post-1990s provides a rich ground as both countries have had significant number of disabled veterans in this period: Turkey, as a result of the tensions with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and the US as a result of the Gulf, Iraq, and Afghanistan wars. Data sources include policy programming documents, fact sheets, official statistics on coverage and benefit levels, legislative documents, congressional and parliamentary debates, and semi-structured interviews made with policymakers and officials.

The paper is organized as follows. After an introduction, first, I review the literature on disability policies and informal institutions. Second, I construct the cases of Turkey and the US as a Most Different Systems Design, emphasizing their diverse institutional features. Third, I present evidence on how disability policies have developed following a similar trajectory in the US and Turkey. Here, I focus on the glorified militarism as an informal institution and show how it is subsumed in American and Turkish policy principles of disability policy that have developed in the post-1990s. Finally, the paper concludes by drawing comparative conclusions on the disability policies in these two cases and show how the disability policy principles in these countries create inegalitarian outcomes for the target groups.

Assistive Technology Policy as a Case of Disability Policy

Disability is complex set of social, physical, and psychological phenomenon that affects at least 15% of the world population (WHO 2011, p. 7). Disability is conceptually understood from different theoretical perspectives, the most common ones being medical, social, and biopsychosocial model. Medical perspectives understand disability as visible or invisible impairments, which are thought as the mere causes of inabilities of disabled to perform what is considered normal. Contrary to this understanding, social model argues that the very understanding of normal is what constructs disabilities. Argued to address shortcoming of both models by incorporating them, biopsychosocial considers disability to be a result of physical, psychological, and social factors (Petasis 2019).

Like the disability itself, disability policy is not an agreed phenomenon given various conceptual and operational definitions of disability policy. As an umbrella term, disability policy is set of policies that consists of principles, objectives, procedures, and instruments to increase autonomy and participation of disabled people to society by anti-discrimination laws and social welfare policies. Scholars understand disability policy as anti-discrimination policies, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (hereafter ADA), or as quantified legislated social rights, such as the assistive technology policies that set conditions for provision of assistive technology like artificial limbs. What is disability policy is inherently a question about the dependent variable problem, which is related to our understanding of phenomena, their conceptualizations and operationalizations (Green-Pedersen 2004, p.4). By conceptualization, concepts are given theoretical meanings whereas operationalization turns them into measurable forms.

Disability policies can be understood as anti-discrimination policies, focusing on decreasing the discrimination towards disabled people, whereas quantified legislated social rights focus on providing solutions to disability as a medical condition (Waddington and Diller 2002, p. 247). What we see nowadays is the mix of these disability policies, most countries legislate anti-discriminatory and quantified legislated social rights, but fail to address the objectives of anti-discriminatory disability policies given the characteristics of limited

universalities of quantified legislated social rights. These two categories of disability policies create a policy mix, which eventually results in promises of anti-discriminatory civil rights policies being undermined by quantified legislated social rights that are mostly means-tested (Waddington and Diller 2002, p. 280).

Assistive technology (AT), part of disability policy that ranges from employment policies to accessibility policies, is an overarching concept used for products that helps individuals with various disabilities to support their daily and essential activities (WHO 2022, p. 5). Assistive technology policies, such as incentives or coverage given for costs of artificial limbs or legs, are examined in this paper as a case of disability policy. By focusing on a group of disability policy, I aim to highlight one of the many similarities of disability policy in both countries, which are not only limited to the AT policies but extends to in-cash or in-kind benefits' differences for disabled veterans and civilians.

Comparing Turkish and American Assistive Technology Policy

Access to assistive technology is a great issue globally. Of 1 in 10 people who requires AT can access it, and the percentage of access greatly varies based on the AT item. High costs, financing problems, availability, lack of information are among some of the problems for the inequality of global access to AT (WHO 2022, p. 38). Although the increase in the capabilities of the AT, its marketing and demonstration, access to AT is a significant problem for the most disabled Americans in the US, one of the main causes being financial problems as most disabled cannot find resources for the AT (Wallace 2011, p. 295). Similarly in Turkey, given the economic problems such as high-inflation and weak currency, Turkish lira, to US dollar or Euro, that AT are priced with, access to the AT is an ongoing issue. In addition, the AT coverage list, Healthcare Implementation Communiqué (hereafter, SUT), has not been updated since 2013 despite the increasing weakness of Turkish lira and overall economic problems.

The US Case

There are various options for the US civilians to access assistive technology. States, federal governments, or private insurance companies can create eligibility for AT funding, provided with the heavy conditionalities that makes the US AT policy a means-tested system. After determined to be eligible for AT funding, state and federally funded program Medicaid directly provides payment to healthcare vendors of eligible persons with limited income. On the other hand, Medicare, a federally funded program, consists of three sub-programs that has various coverages, part A, part B, and part C. Part B of Medicare requires an annual deductible and a monthly paid premium, then disabled civilians pays 20 percent of the AT that is determined eligible for their use. The coverage of AT items greatly vary for the item type, creating inequalities for different needs of AT (Wallace 2011).

The costs of Durable Medical Equipment, such as artificial limbs, is part of Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System published by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services provides coverage rates of various AT by state and item types. For example, Medicare does not have National Coverage Determination (NCD) for myoelectric prosthetics that can be considered more advanced than the body-powered prosthetics, and Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) or Local Coverage Articles (LCAs) do not exist as well. The body-powered prosthetics are partly covered by Medicare, as patients pay the 20% of the costs upon receiving the prosthetics (Wallace 2011, p. 298).

Unlike disabled civilians, a disabled veteran receives any kind of assistive technology if they found eligible by the Veterans Affairs' (VA) medical centers' clinicians (Veterans Affairs 2021, p. 5). The eligibility is usually determined by the service-connectedness of disability, assigned disability ratings, and other conditions. Upon eligibility checks, VA provides AT to the disabled veterans free-of-charge, with no upper-limit on the types of items. The no upper-limit policy is so evident that the VA Office of Inspector General's (OIG) report shows that the VA has paid AT vendors more than the reasonable Medicare rates. For items such as microprocessor-controlled artificial limbs or legs that can range between 10,000\$ to 100,000\$ in price, non-existing Medicare rates for such AT items provides a ground for VA to spend the price offered by the vendors. Even for the existing Medicare rates, OIG found out that VA could have spent 10 million \$ less by limiting prosthetic rates to Medicare rates and keeping its oversight role of prosthetic spendings (Veterans Affairs 2012, p. i). Therefore, in the US, eligible veterans are provided with the state-of-the-art AT such as artificial limbs, whereas the eligible citizens must pay at least 20% of the conventional, less-advanced AT costs if they have Medicare.

Turkish Case

Similar to the US, Turkish AT policy creates inequalities between disabled citizens and veterans. Disabled citizens who need AT are left with the Social Security Institution's (Hereafter, SGK) provision of AT. The prices and provision of any AT item are determined in the Healthcare Implementation Communiqué (SUT). Turkish citizens who are enrolled to insurance program of the SGK, can receive the AT item for their need upon doctors' approval. Private insurance coverage of the AT is quite rare since many citizens have SGK insurance and private insurance is financially inaccessible for many. However, there are some rare cases in which private sector companies cover the costs their disabled employees' AT.

Of the SUT, Annex-3/C-2 covers AT such as body-powered artificial limbs, whereas the Annex-3/C-5 covers more advanced AT such as myoelectric artificial limbs. Disabled civilians who have SGK insurance can only get less-advanced AT items listed in the Annex-3/C-2, whereas disabled veterans can get items in both Annex-3/C-2 and Annex-3/C-5. Disabled civilians must pay for the price difference of the AT items listed in the Annex-3/C-5 of the SUT. The SUT list did not have a major price coverage update since 2013, despite the shrinking Turkish currency compared to imported AT items with foreign currencies and decreasing purchasing power in the country.

Literature Review

Anthropology Literature

Anthropology literature understands the inegalitarian benefits as a result of disabled veterans' sacrifices made for the state. The difference in benefits is considered to be a result of disabled veterans' nationalist constructions of a sacrificial hero that positions them and their disabilities above civilians' disabilities (Aciksoz 2012, p.5). This "nationalist construction of disabled veteran" has a materially symbolic relation that has a political purpose since the entitlements were given for their sacrifices, which make their disabilities more deserving than others. This makes their disabilities a material commodity to be used by the state (Aciksoz 2012, pp. 9-14).

Citizenship Literature

This inequality is also examined from the citizenship perspective and conceptualized as military citizenship. Disabled veterans use the moral framework of sacrificial hero to create a special citizenship category that deserve more generous benefits and entitlements (Trundle 2012; 2013, Wiegink 2019, p. 74). The sacrificial hero demands different forms of entitlements and benefits, and the state provides them in forms of public reverence and memorialization (Trundle 2012, p. 197).

Welfare States Literature

Welfare states literature perceives this difference in benefit levels as categorical benefits. Such benefits are given to groups such as disabled veterans because their disability is socially constructed as deserving to be compensated in return (Gal and Bar 2000, p. 583).

Informal Institutions Literature

I argue that glorified militarism, an informal institution, gives military-related issues such as disabled veterans' military-related disabilities a higher normative position. This informal institution praises disabled veterans' losses and constructs their military activities as sacrifices made for the nation, consequently positioning them as deserving beneficiaries.

Formal rules, or institutions, are rules of the games that structures the socio-political life by enabling of constraining behavior and actions of various actors. Much like the formal institutions, that are found in form of written or parchment rules, informal institutions that are mostly unwritten but quite effective in shaping who gets what, when, and how. It does so by enabling or constraining the behavior of actors. Informal institutions create obligation and rights that shapes actions in terms of appropriateness, achievability, or rightness; ultimately setting the patterns of behavior to predictable and reliable forms (Bolukbasi and Yildirim 2022).

Similar to the other literatures, what is right to do so is socially constructed from informal institution's point of view. Unlike other literatures, this framework helps us understand not only why disabled veterans gets more benefits, but also how glorified militarism is established within different societies that creates various forms of appropriateness and rightness.

Research Design and Methods

Most Different System Design (MDSD) is used to understand why in two quite dissimilar countries like the US and Türkiye, there is convergence of variation in the levels of AT benefits for disabled veterans and citizens. MDSD helps us to reveal and understand the explanatory variable, glorified militarism, in the existence of other possible variables that are expected to unfold the similarity in the outcome of interest but does not sufficiently to do so. Such variables are welfare state regimes, which Turkey belongs to the conservative model whereas the US is an archetypical case of liberal regime; or development levels and paths that greatly differs between the two cases. Thus, the main logic of MDSD is that the differences across cases cannot explain the similarity in the outcome of interest that is to be explained (Anckar 2007, p. 390).

By focusing on Assistive Technology policies, I employ within-case approach that helps to identify similarities and differences in this subset of disability policies, eventually providing ground for more suitable theoretical generalizations that is otherwise hard to identify in a single-case study (Mills et al. 2010, p.2).

Institutional Features of Turkish and American Polity

Welfare Regimes

Welfare state regimes are institutional settings, rules, and perceptions that structures and steers public policymaking of welfare arrangements (Esping-Anderson 1990, p.80). The welfare regimes of Turkey and the US are quite dissimilar. The US welfare regime is an example of liberal (or Anglo-Saxon) case that has characteristics of high decommodification with minimal benefits, limited social rights, high eligibility criteria such as means-testing, and limited redistribution of welfare resources, and overall an individualistic welfare accumulation. On the contrary, though sharing some similarities, Turkish welfare regimes fits the most to conservative welfare regimes, which characterizes with welfare (re)distribution based on status, such as occupation type, highly relies on family for several welfare-related issues such as provision of care.

Policy Legacies

Policy legacies are set of institutional arrangements that policymakers inherit from the formulation, implementation and impacts of previous policies, ultimately affecting the new policies in a path-dependence understanding (Hall 1993, p. 277). For the policymakers, it is practically learning from the “meaningful reactions to previous policies” (Weir and Skocpol p. 119) that sets their decisions for policies ahead.

For the welfare policies, given its conservative regime type, center of attention vis-à-vis welfare policies have been on family and status-based redistribution, state playing a subsidiary role in welfare provision. The policy legacy for Türkiye, therefore, have followed this trend, with state having the central role in decision-making considering the statist policymaking style of Turkey. On the contrary, the US has been one of the pioneers of liberal welfare state regime, which has been the characteristics of welfare policies in the US. The iron-triangle between bureaucracy, Congress, and interest groups, however, have shown a different path then Türkiye on policy legacies.

Political Regimes

The US is a constitutional federal republic where the president is the head of the federal state and government, shares power with the legislative and judiciary, creating separation of power. The federal government shares power with the state governments, where some policy areas are decided within the federal government whereas some other left to the sovereignty of state governments.

On the contrary, Turkey is a constitutional republic where power is centralized mostly within the president, who is the head of the state and the government. It has a democratic parliamentary, based on the rule of law and participation and accumulation of legislative seats of multiple political parties, contrary to two-party system of the US.

Citizenship Regimes

The US follows jus soli system for determining citizenship, which is the most common system for acquiring citizenship. In this model of citizenship, the principle of becoming a citizen of a country is determined on the place of birth. If a person is born in the US, for example, they

become US citizens. On the contrary, Turkey follows *jus sanguinis* citizenship system in which citizenship is determined by the ethnicity or nationality of one of the parents.

The Structures of Disability Policies in Türkiye and the US

Glorified Militarism: An Overview

As an informal institution, glorified militarism causes those affected by it to give military-related issues a higher normative position. Much like the formal institutions, an informal institution like glorified militarism shapes the actions and thoughts of actors by constructing what is appropriate. Therefore, glorified militarism is an intervening variable that explains the inequality of assistive technology policies in both cases. The inequality is a representation of glorified militarism, the AT policy being a case of “state-sponsored public reverence and memorialization” (Trundle 2012, p. 197). Disabilities of veterans is memorialized as sacrifices made for the nation and the state, used to justify the special benefits such as differences of AT coverage for disabled veterans and civilians. The disabled veterans’ identities are constructed with nationalist discourses (Açıksöz 2012, p.5), whereas the veteran had a duty to protect the nation and the state as the sacrificial hero, in return getting special benefits, which is state’s responsibility. Glorified militarism has further political exhibits of disabled bodies of veterans, in which their disabilities are used as political exhibits by various actors to justify their position vis-à-vis sacrifices of disabled veterans. Glorified militarism constructs the state and nation as worthy of sacrifice, and the sacrifices are rewarded in return. The war as a way of protecting nation and the state, despite causing disabilities or casualties, justified as worth of sacrifices.

Glorified Militarism in the US

Glorified militarism is quite prominent in the US. It is no coincidence that when a politician talks on war, veterans and their sacrifices are explicitly mentioned. Glorified militarism is structurally existent irrespective of political leaning, either a democrat or a republican, politicians almost never question the inegalitarian way of meanings loaded to one form of disability—the service-related disabilities of veterans. Following paragraphs include some of the remarks from politicians, retrieved from several official data sources such as presidents’ speeches. They show how glorified militarism as an informal institution shapes the appropriate ways to act and think, ultimately compelling the actors to give military-related issues, such as disabilities of veterans, a higher normative position. In return, glorified militarism structures the disability policies that become inegalitarian, usually giving more benefits and entitlements to those in relation with military.

US senator Salazar’s speech given to the VA Committee highlights that the disabilities of veterans are results of sacrifices they make (Veterans Affairs 2006). It is not just the VA, the most likely case to find glorified militarism, but extends to speeches of presidents like Obama or Trump to categorize disabilities of veterans as sacrifices. In 2014, Obama’s remarks at a Dedication Ceremony for American Veterans Disabled For Life Memorial, he said that the memorial from the day of its opening will be the place for the nation to pay their tributes—though not enough to match their sacrifices—understand the sacrifices the veterans did for their nation, and that they are in freedom and peace for their sacrifices and burdens they bear (Obama 2014, p. 3).

Similarly, Trump gave a speech for the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017, speaking that the veterans “In their courage, their dignity, and their selfless sacrifice, they represent the very best of us. Our veterans have fulfilled their duty to this Nation, and now we must fulfill our duty to them.” (p.1) Further telling that the veterans are the “warriors and heroes who have won our freedom” (Trump 2017, p. 1), showing the traces of glorified militarism like the other speeches.

The very founding elements of US’s involvement in veterans’ care is evident in Abraham Lincoln’s inaugural address to the Congress, asking for “to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan,” that become the main motto of Veterans Affairs (Tepe and Peterson 2017, p 36). Similar to Turkey, it is understood as a pivotal role of the US to provide for widow and children of veterans with service-connected disabilities or that dies of service-connected disease or injury, as they are in special category that deserves extensive compensation and help because not only the veterans but also the families have made sacrifices (Panangala 2021). This shows that the glorified militarism, and the construction of sacrifices, is not limited to the disabled veterans but their relatives, which warrants research to further trace glorified militarism.

These limited, but quite evident, data shows only part of the glorified militarism that can be found in the US. Veterans’ disabilities are constructed as sacrifices, given a higher normative position that deserves higher compensation because the disabilities are results of US’s freedom and peace. This glorified militarism, an informal institution, shapes the way actors think and act, ultimately becoming the most evident intervening variable for explaining the variance in the benefit levels of AT for disabled veterans and civilians.

Glorified Militarism in Türkiye

Similar to the US, glorified militarism is quite prominent in Türkiye. For a country that has given an independence war for the establishment of its modern, secular Republic, glorified militarism is no surprise; not to mention the on-going conflict with the PKK since 1990s that has caused thousands of military men to get disabled.

The inequality that is examined in this paper has been reported by a Turkish citizen to the Turkish Ombudsman Institution. As a government institution, the institution’s report represents the position of the Turkish state, with the traces of evident glorified militarism. The Turkish Ombudsman Institution’s report based its justification for the inequality of AT on sacrifice and fidelity of disabled veterans, arguing that the communique (SUT) determining the prices of AT did not create inequality between disabled veterans and civilians.

The report has a dominant theme of sacrifice and fidelity that shows the glorified militarism through attributing a higher normative position to the disabilities of veterans, constructing their disabilities as sacrifices made for the state. The report positions the sacrifices as untouchable and unquestionable, that questioning them becomes inappropriate.

The report argues that benefit level differences between the disabled veterans and civilians results from sacrifices of disabled veterans, who earned the entitlements by their disabilities, and fidelity to the Turkish society. The report further argues that protection and benefits provided to the disabled veterans are directive to secure the sacrificial hero—disabled veteran. The inequality is further justified by the Türkiye’s context, its ongoing high-intensity conflict with the PKK, that the disabled veterans sacrifice themselves for the protection of state

and nation's security. Similar to the freedom and peace argument found in the glorified militarism of the US, the report argues that Türkiye is an independent and a safe country owing to the sacrifices and fidelity of veterans (Turkish Ombudsman Institution 2016, pp. 8-13, translation mine).

Glorified Militarism: Explaining the Structure of Turkish and American Disability Policies' POPI

What is POPI?

Policy structure approach is an analytical tool for understanding characteristics of policies by dividing them into dimensions of principles, objectives, procedures, and instruments. It breaks down policies into analytical categories that helps to observe sub-level changes in policies, easing the assessment of level of changes occurring in policies. (Graziano, 2012)

Principles

Policy principles consist of core values such as human-rights oriented policymaking; beliefs such as attributing family a central role in social policy that stems from religious beliefs; or guidelines such as United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, steers policy making in respective policy areas (Pralle 2006, p. 171). Principles exists as formal or informal institutions, structing the way actors act and think, setting limits for what they expect and their interests from the outcomes of policies (Howlett et al 2022, p. 80).

Objectives

Policy objectives are set of goals that are expected to be achieved from the beginning of policy's implementation. Principles, procedures, and instruments together have dual relationships with the objectives, as either of them can be strategically used to achieve objectives or can be altered by objectives themselves. A policymaker can set objectives of decreasing carbon emission by a certain amount, thus can set principles of environmentalism, instruments of tax breaks for environmental companies, and procedures that support environmental outcomes.

Procedures

Procedures are set of rules and guidelines in forms of institutional processes or activities determining how policy is formulated, implemented, and continued (Bali et al 2021, p. 298). It creates guidelines, for example, delivering AT to disabled veterans occurs via Veterans Affairs.

Instruments

Policy instruments are social and technical tools that are used to set specific relations between the state and those affected by it. As an institution, it carries context-dependent meanings and has various representations that brings the politics within the use of the instrument (Bache 2010, pp. 58-59).

POPIs of the American and Turkish Disability Policy

Both Turkey and the US has similarities in the disability policy parchment rules. Americans with Disabilities Act is the overarching disability policy that is created with human rights discourse, focuses on policy areas such as employment, AT, education or discrimination.

Despite its optimistic character, similar to the Turkish disability policy, its reflection on sub-policy areas such as AT, is not optimistic. The following section shows how glorified militarism, an informal institution and an intervening variable, changes formulation of sub-areas of overarching disability policies in both countries.

Principles of the American and Turkish Disability Policy

The main **principles** of Turkish disability policy are **anti-discrimination** as states' policies are steered towards **anti-abuse** and **anti-discrimination towards the disabled** (Article 8); **equality** through rehabilitation services to disabled people that enables them to participate in society and family in areas such as decision making (Article 10); **active citizenship** of disabled people by sheltered workshops that eases them to find jobs (Article 3-f and g; Article 10); **accessibility** via providing suitable conditions for disabled people in workplaces or public buildings (Provisional Article 2 and 3); and egalitarianism such as providing equal access to education with non-disabled (Article 15). Glorified militarism, an informal rule that is acting as an intervening variable, causes the overarching disability policy of Turkey, law no. 5378, to be discriminatory towards disabled civilians. Unlike the parchment rules of law no. 5378, AT policy discriminates between veterans and civilians, limits self-determination by lack of accessibility to AT, and it is inequalitarian and creates discrimination given variance in benefits.

The main principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), the overarching disability policy of the US, has similar **anti-discrimination** principles focusing on critical areas such as employment, education, housing or transportation (ADA 1990, p. 10 §102; p. 1; p. 5). It focuses on promoting **equality** (ADA 1990, p. 6); **accessibility** (§230, §243, §245) of transportation, buildings, **active citizenship** through, for example, reasonable accommodations that increase their participation to workforce and society. Similar to Turkey, glorified militarism in the US also interferes in the dissemination of ADA to subfield of disability policy, causing immense differences in the principles of policies such as the AT.

Objectives of the American and Turkish Disability Policy

Main **objectives** of Turkish disability policy are preventing disability, increasing accessibility (provisional article 2 and 3; Article 1), activating them (Article 3-f and g; Article 10); and preventing discrimination (Article 8). However, with the impact of glorified militarism, these objectives are only achieved for the disabled veterans. Disabled civilians who have almost no access to AT have been left out of these objectives as target groups.

American disability policy's main objectives are preventing disability (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, p. 112), increasing accessibility (ADA 1990, p.5), and activating them through their participation to society and taking decision-making roles (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, p.115).

Procedures of the American and Turkish Disability Policy

Main **procedures** of Turkish disability policy are published by responsible ministries, for example, employment policy is published by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. Procedures are designed with objectives of increasing accessibility and participation of disabled to the society (Article 4). These procedures greatly differ for disabled veterans, as the access to AT, for example, is more centralized and occur more swiftly compared to disabled civilian. A disabled veteran goes into medical examination for both disability status and AT eligibility in

state's facility, much easier set of procedures compared to disabled civilian who gets disability status report, AT eligibility and funding from different institutions.

In the US, most of the procedures vary in federal and state governments, with the main aim of increasing accessibility of disabled people (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, p.68) to access disability-related services, employment, housing, and similar areas.

Instruments of the American and Turkish Disability Policy

Turkish and American disability policy has several **instruments**, such instruments are information campaigns; financial tools like in-cash or in-kind transfers; or organizations such as state sponsored foundations. With glorified militarism, instruments aimed at disabled veterans greatly differs, the most visible change occurs with the in-cash and in-kind transfer.

How Informal Institutions Effect Disability POPI in Turkey and the US?

Disability Policy POPI of Turkey and the US		
Principles	Formal Rules	Glorified Militarism (Informal Rules) Sacrifices made for the Turkish state and the nation deserves more than other kinds of welfare contributions.
	The main principles of disability policy are anti-discrimination, equity, self-determination, active citizenship, accessibility, and egalitarianism.	
	Impacts on Principles Unlike the parchment rules, AT policy discriminates between veterans and civilians, limits self-determination by lack of accessibility to AT, and it is inegalitarian given variance in benefits.	
Objectives	Formal Rules	Glorified Militarism Formulating and implementing disability policies that are more activating and accessible for disabled veterans than the disabled civilians , as a duty of loyalty to make up with their sacrifices for the Turkish state and the nation.
	Formulating and implementing disability policies that are accessible, activating, preventing disability and discrimination.	
	Impacts on Objectives Disability policies are formulated and implemented on the main objectives of activating disabled veterans to participate in the social and economic life , preventing disability and discrimination more for the disabled veterans than the civilians.	
Procedures	Formal Rules	Informal Rules

		<p>Procedures regarding disability policy takes accessibility and participation to social life as main principles.</p> <p>Procedures of disability policies are determined by the regulations published by responsible ministries or institutions (i.e., employment related procedures are determined by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security; the US has procedures determined by related institutions, such as the Veterans Affairs).</p> <p>The procedures considering the services provided to persons with disabilities are determined according to certain standards that increases accessibility and participation of persons with disabilities to society (i.e., assistive devices).</p> <p>Impacts on Procedures</p> <p>Procedures regarding disability policy takes accessibility and participation to social life as main principles. However, procedures of disability policy are focused on better accommodating disabled veterans' needs.</p>	<p>Procedures that greatly differ for disabled civilians are designed to accommodate the needs of disabled veterans as they deserve the prioritization in many instances of social and economic life, given their sacrifices for the state and the nation.</p>		
Instrument		Instrument Definition	Instrument's Operationalization	Instrument Examples	Glorified Militarism of Instrument
	Information	Indirectly stimulating behavior to change it	Information campaigns	Memorial days for veterans	Disabled veterans are considered as sacrificial heroes, their disabilities are frequently memorialized as sacrifices made for the state. Information campaigns support glorified militarism, indirectly stimulating behavior to justify the inegalitarian disability policy.
	Authority (Law)	Direct Prescription of Behavioral Rules	Specific laws designated to improving wellbeing of	AT policies in Türkiye and the US are examples	Disabled veterans' sacrificial roles are supported by formal

			disabled veterans (and martyrs, their relatives, and other veterans) Specified laws justifying the rationale for providing more extensive benefits to disabled veterans	of the written rules/law	institutions, shaping, and changing the behavior of governmental officials' behavior towards them
	Treasure (Money)	Financial incentives focused on changing behavior indirectly	In-cash and in-kind services targeted to disabled veterans (and martyrs, their relatives, and other veterans)	Monthly in-cash transfers to disabled war veterans Extensive coverage for assistive devices policy for disabled veterans	Disabled veterans' sacrifices are rewarded with in-cash and in-kind services. Their compensation rate is higher than disabled civilians because they are constructed as a deserving category given their sacrifices for the state.
	Organization (Structures and Capacity)	State providing public goods or services (through, for example, public companies)	State sponsored foundations	<i>Türkiye Gaziler Ve Şehit Aileleri Vakfı (Turkey)</i> <i>Veterans Affairs (the US)</i>	State sponsored foundations or federal institutions are established

Conclusion

I have tried to explain one of the main causes of similarities found in the Assistive Technology (AT) policy in both Türkiye and the US, despite their dissimilar institutional settings. Both countries offer generous AT coverage for disabled veterans—covering usually the full cost of expensive AT—whereas disabled civilians do not have such entitlements. This difference, I argue that, is caused by an informal institution—glorified militarism. It structures disability policies of both countries, where the overarching disability laws are quite generous and civil rights oriented on paper, their reflections on policies such as AT are quite discriminatory. Glorified militarism, such as considering disabilities of disabled veterans as sacrifices made for the state and nation, compels actors to act and think in a way that they have to perceive disabilities of veterans as worthy of more compared to the disabilities of civilians. By breaking down overarching disability policies and AT policies into their principles, objectives, procedures, and instruments, by examining official data sources such as presidents'

speeches, I have tried to show the ways in which glorified militarism structures these elements of disability policy.

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