



## **Discussions of Turkish Women Parliamentarians on Women's Issues; Twitter Accounts Review\***

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### **Keywords**

Social Media,  
Political  
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### **Abstract**

Female politicians establish relations with other women by using social media and monitor them. Within the frame of this relationship, they reflect their roles, social positions, creativity, discourses and stories to them. As another point is whether the discourses of female politicians sustain the existing sexist structure or administer a transformation in a positive sense. The problems concerning women can be listed as Physical and psychological violence, lack of education, marriage at a young age, adverse health conditions, inadequate employment and such. Women need to develop consciousness about these issues and have a cognitive competence in terms of what rights they have and how to reach them. Thus, women will be able to act on their own political decisions in these matters. The purpose of this study is to show how women parliamentarians, as a political resource, one of the four elements that are effective in political participation of the individuals, encourage women to inform and participate and how they direct them about the issues and problems they will participate. In this context, a discourse analysis of twelve members of the ruling party and the main opposition party's female parliamentarians on the social media will be conducted for the twelve accounts between January 1 and April 1 2018.

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## **1. Introduction**

Mass media are the most effective means by which ideological discourses are created and reproduced. The mass media play an important role in the monitoring, collecting and transmitting of information and power, and in the transformation of social reality and culture. Technology being interwoven with the society is an element that makes cultural changes. Technological innovations and developments change the style of everyday life, value judgments and thought systems. The inherent qualities of a person and the external context in which they are in

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determine their relative position. This makes women's identity dependent on changing economic, cultural, political and ideological conditions.

The women's awareness of her rights as an individual, especially in the awareness of her political rights, is an indication of her self-expression of her power to reveal her own existence. The society's sexist viewpoint of the reason for the woman's existence, which is a fabrication of a certain type of consciousness, does not have the qualities to support the political participation of women in the public sphere. Many studies have been carried out on the positioning of women on television and it has been observed that the purpose of women's positioning in TV is not to provide or exemplify them in realizing themselves in a public life. In the media, especially in TV, the image of the woman is given in a way that is entertainment oriented and reflecting the position of women in the private sphere, rather than informing the masses qualitatively and quantitatively. With this, an argument was born at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century; the idea that new communication systems in the context of postmodern culture will create a better life and a more equal society. This new formation concerns the new individual identity and subject position. New communication systems have increased the exchange of information among people. In this context, technological innovations have caused widespread changes in culture and in the construction of identities.

When we address globalization, which is the topic of information technology, in a positive and necessary context, it appears that the economic, social, cultural and psychological conditions created for women in the world and in our country, are negative. These negative conditions surface in different ways in almost every institution of the society. The source of this appears to be the negative ideological framing. The construction of this negative framing on people's conscious and subconscious minds is accomplished most effectively by the media. Free people have at least the opportunity to put their freedom into practice. Free people are the people who have the freedom of choice. There is no choice to make without the knowledge. One of the most important reasons of women's insufficient participation in politics is their insufficient participation in science.

According to Zygmunt Bauman, the art of politics, if it is the democratic politics in question, is about demolishing the limits of the freedom of citizens, but it is also about self-limitation. It is about freeing people so that they can limit their selves individually and collectively. As if there was no other choice but to let the government or the private sector to establish a dictatorship on the needs of the people, as if the citizens can only be consumers.

The increase in the power of communication has brought about another drawback. This is a further strengthening of the perception and evaluation orientations of the world through the mass media. Today, it is not about who does what anymore, it is about image creation and consciousness shaping by the communication tools conveying who and what to the public. In communities where different sources of information exist, this may not be as bad as it might seem, but it is very important in the society that mass media are almost monopolized in building public opinion. From this point of view, it has become a critical issue to ensure that the information that people need to make their decisions is accurate and reliable, that is, the reliability of the content that communication tools transmit.

The political sphere is a field of power that both endorses and legitimizes the positions of men and women in the public sphere through their discourses. Joining political parties with their individual and social leadership aspects, women perform various activities to voice and meet the requirements of other women. Being role models for other women in society, they achieve relationship management with them. Here, the important question is how those elected women perform communication acts with other women, how sensitive they are to their problems and what their discourses towards them are.

In this sense, female politicians establish relations with other women by using social media and monitor them. Within the frame of this relationship, they reflect their roles, social positions, creativity, discourses and stories to them. As another point is whether the discourses of female politicians sustain the existing sexist structure or administer a transformation in a positive sense. The problems concerning women can be listed as Physical and psychological violence, lack of education, marriage at a young age, adverse health conditions, inadequate employment and such. Women need to develop consciousness about these issues and have a cognitive competence in terms of what rights they have and how to reach them. Thus, women will be able to act on their own political decisions in these matters. The purpose of this study is to show how women parliamentarians, as a political resource, one of the four elements that are effective in political participation of the individuals, encourage women to inform and participate and how they direct them about the issues and problems they will participate. In this context, a discourse analysis of twelve members of the ruling party and the main opposition party's female parliamentarians on the social media will be conducted for the twelve accounts between January 1 and April 1, 2018.

## **2. The effect of social media usage on women's participation in politics**

Digitalization has indeed entered into every aspect of our lives. It has surrounded our living spaces and has created a change in attitudes and behavior based on a new digital culture in these areas. This change in our life culture has also transformed the forms of public communication and obliged the management of sustainable relations with the public. The use of social media by women politicians and the implementation of relations management for women is a matter of question. It is possible to provide more direct, sincere and instant messaging with women. Women representatives convey their ideological rhetoric to their followers via social media. It is clear that the notions of discourse, ideology and culture are interrelated and can be used almost exclusively to complement each other. Discourses are areas of struggle. Power relations and struggles in society are forming or are transformed through the discourse used by the parliamentarians as a political resource. The transformation of discourse facilitates the achievement of socio-cultural goals and thus changes socio-cultural practices. Along with technological progress, the notion of citizenship has also undergone a socio-cultural transformation in the context of fulfilling rights and responsibilities. The concept of digital citizenship emerges as a new cultural policy in this sense. Public relations methods are also transforming into the direction required by this digital environment. Citizens' use of technology is expanding.

In the context of various social, cultural, political and economic structures, public communication policies have different cultural structures depending on their perception and implementation. Citizenship practices also depend on the way in which the function and purpose of digitalization are perceived and implemented as a new cultural policy. It can be said that the digital citizenship has changed public relations methods. Thus, the management of public relations towards citizens is re-interpreted in the context of digitization. The forms of public relations determine and address the politics of culture in the context of established discourses and actions. In this sense, the rhetoric of parliamentarians is part of public communication. Public discourse is regulated through cultural forms. It also has the function of reinterpretation, within the framework of its broader role in organizing or structuring the society. Verstraeten refers to the level of categorization or ideology that is used to perceive social reality rather than the level of connotations and denotations that helps to define and legitimize a certain worldview. These categories encourage the internalization of the structures of the social space and accept the social world as a given. In the words of Bourdieu, the struggle for power to transform or preserve the social world is a struggle to protect or transform the categories that make this world perceptible. These kinds of categories are spread through the media by transferring them into public discourses. Public space is the name of the struggle on this categorization. Thus, the interpretation process is also important. The effective interpretation at the cognitive and ideological level positions viewers or target groups as participant citizens in the public sphere (Verstraeten, 2002: 364-365 as cited in Mengü and Görpe, 2007).

Social media is an important area for perceiving the social practices and sharing of the realities. The way in which the shared social information is used creates significant influences in the economy, social and cultural dimensions. According to Masuda, information produces itself as much as it is used. The collective sharing of processes and information leads to more information production and sharing. Thus, socio-economic development can be detected instantly. As a result, access to information by everyone in society brings about a series of social changes in the economy, cultural and political spheres. These changes can be listed as; the end of centralization, standardization, abuse of labor force and monopoly in industrial production, thus making the pluralistic marketing understanding superior. Since all the people will be able to access more information the referendums can only be realized by the push of a button, thus the decision-making privilege will be taken from the ruling elites and the participatory democracy will come instead. Likewise, information will remove differences between individuals and countries. As a result, international harmony and understanding will develop (Masuda, 1985 as cited in Başaran, 2010: 72). Nevertheless, despite the revolutionary model, information and communication technologies will create a "controlled society" if appropriate interventions are not carried out. In the last decade of the 20th century, new developments and applications in information and communication technologies have been evaluated as transforming the theses of information society and the related developments that constitute the new form of society, economy, culture and politics. In this new form, image and reality are intertwined. Those who try to feel and not to experience them all away from the events and gradually disappear

in virtuous reality and become alienated from both the collective and their selves became very significant in this new social order.

Not all communication on Twitter is taking place in personal publics, and personal publics is not limited to Twitter. Personal publics should be considered as an ideal communicative type of structure that simultaneously completes and changes other elements of public communication (Larsson & Moe, 2016: 54). The use of microblogs such as Twitter, Facebook, etc. is reported with the emergence of a new type of public called "personal public". The convergence of the public with the personal indicates one of the main consequences of the birth of personal publics: personal publics contributes to the transformation of our understanding of mediated privacy and public. With the use of digital communication techniques, the practices of daily relationship management are restructured. Such social exchanges are becoming part of personalized news flows within social networks. Continuous sharing of a particular link, opinion or information with these digital networks is also affecting and transforming individuals' communicational cultures and the habits of obtaining public information. The pervasive digital media that contributed to major changes in contemporary societies have also changed the structure of the social organization. Personal publics made possible by social media are the most visible consequences of the transformations in daily identity management, relationship management and information management. According to this, digital possibilities enable people to express the elements of their identities and protect and expand social connections at different levels. In addition, they are helping individuals to cope with the mass of information in their environment by suggesting filtering mechanisms that are both personal and social (ibid. s. 57). In this sense, social media make a significant contribution to the participation of women in social and political spheres.

Accordingly, new forms of communication increase people's participation potential in terms of expressing themselves, getting constantly informed, sharing and socializing. Papacharissi calls this the "point of connection for the individual and social private space". According to him: "The citizen is on his own, but he is not alone and isolated." Citizen is in a relationship and functions in a mode and by using a determined political language. The citizen by functioning as a citizen enters the public spectrum from a special environment by negotiating the elements of his own privacy depending on the urgency and validity of certain situations (Schmidt, 2016: 58).

It is observed that in political life women are positioned with a male point of view and that their discourses are reproduced again and again. Here an asymmetric equilibrium can be mentioned. Symmetric equilibrium refers to designs that emphasize two identical phenomena and authorities. Asymmetric equilibrium is preferred because it provides a dynamic order between visual elements that are not alike or are not equivalent. While the symmetric equilibrium symbolizes participation, limit, prejudice, oppression and singularity, the asymmetric equilibrium symbolizes diversity, pluralism, arbitrariness, difference and freedom.

According to Bode and Dalrymple, the use of social media in the context of a political campaign is becoming an increasing trend. For example, at the 2010

elections, almost every national candidate had a Twitter account to reach their supporters and gain new followers. This tendency is perceived not only as a way of learning supporters' thoughts but also as a way of reaching undecided voters. Indeed, according to a statement made by the Congressional Management Foundation of USA, 72% of the members think that "social media gives them access to people they have not communicated before" (Bode and Dalrymple, 2016: 312).

People are also aware of the role social media plays in political campaigns and are trying to benefit from the new media they can reach. Twitter has contributed to the expansion of public debate: it creates a new arena for public communications, justifying its use with the sheer number of tweets. (Larsson and Moe 2011). While some studies show that interactivity and content production are inaccessible to many media consumers (Larsson, 2013), the general trend points to the importance of social media platforms such as Twitter in converting the less mobile and more difficult to reach public groups to voters (Bode and Dalrymple, 2016: 312). Social media offers parliamentarians a better opportunity to control their own images and make public statements.

Candidates can influence public awareness through the strategic use of social media. The media can be a particularly useful tool for women candidates to cope with male dominant communication norms in politics (Meeks, 2013 as cited in Sandberg and Öhberg, 2017: 314). The possibility of direct communication and interaction with voters and followers can be a powerful and effective method for women who want to avoid images given to them by traditional media, which are generally less favorable to women candidates (Heith, 2003; Jalalzai, 2006; Kahn, 1996 as cited in Sandberg and Öhberg, 2017: 314).

The simultaneous development of political mediatization and personalized campaigns within social media has made it more advantageous to have more personalized forms of communication (Bimber & Davis, 2003; Strömbäck, 2008; Vergeer & Hermans, 2013 as cited in Sandberg and Öhberg, 2017: 315). The features of the social media offer politicians the ability to organize personal campaigns and provide political communication. These politicians can easily adopt social media as a campaign tool, and it is expected that a more personalized campaign through social media will increase even in party-centered systems (Enli & Skogerbø, 2013; Karlsen, 2011 as cited in Sandberg and Öhberg, 2017, 315). Women politicians can express themselves more easily in the social media than other traditional media; they can make comments on very different topics and can easily reach other women. While the rhetoric about women in the traditional media is given by the male point of view on behalf of women, women produce and share their own discourses in the social media. In this sense, the internet is able to remove obstacles between women politicians and various people and groups.

The importance of the gender roles in social media usage has been revealed in some studies. Jackson and Lilleker (2011), who conducted a study on gender influence, found that British women parliamentarians were more represented in Twitter in a proportion of their numbers in the parliament. In a study conducted in 2012 for the use of Twitter in the campaign process of US Representative Assembly candidates, it has been found that women use more Twitter compared to male candidates (Evans, Cordova, & Sipole, 2014). On the other hand, in a study on

the adoption of social media by the candidates or members of the European Parliament in the European Parliament elections, gender was not found to be a statistically significant factor (Larsson, 2015a; Vergeer et al., 2013 as cited in Sandberg, Ohberg, 2017: 317). Concerning the widespread usage of social media by Turkish women politicians, the question of whether and to what degree the issues of women have expressed gains importance.

### **3. Relationship Management in the Context of Women's Problems of Women Parliamentarians as Political Sources**

Public Communication ensures that individuals acquire social and political power. The purpose of public communication is to raise awareness of what society really needs and to ensure that the means to achieve it are reached. In order to create coherent interaction in the community, it is important which values are loaded into the codes used. Asymmetrical communication or, more importantly, the role of adopting and making people adopt the values required for perfect communication is also given to the parliamentarians. Therefore, lawmakers should aim to manage the value communication and create a vision for it. Because, both the communication service for public and its consumption produce their own values and meanings. Thus, the value that is loaded on the individual produces its meaning as the subject or object. New digital techniques in the field of public communications are helping this symmetrical loop.

Relationships can be defined as the anticipation of the behavior of the other side of the relationship, depending on the interaction patterns of the relationship partners. This state of reciprocity of awareness, influence, utility and behavior is part of successful relationships. The aim of relationship management is to build relationships and to build communities. In this context, relationship management is to help the public to express themselves and defend their roles in the multicultural and global society in changing social, cultural and political conditions. The first thing to do for this is to determine who the public are and what they believe. The most basic purpose of public relations is the provision of the public benefit. In this context, women's parliamentarians should acknowledge the women in society and influence them on specific issues so that women can express themselves in social, political and cultural matters.

Political behavior provides an environment for decisions taken within political culture. One of the behaviors that the individual shows in their life routine are the behaviors they show in political matters. Political participation is one of the most important political behaviors. The aim of the women parliamentarians is to call for participation in a way that will provide political equilibrium for all citizens, especially women. Political participation is under the influence of the norms and rules that the political culture has created in society. These norms determine the influence of people on their obligations and behaviors.

Political behavior should not be understood only in terms of voting. It also includes the way in which politicians addressing the public to call for participation. What is important here is the extent to which politicians encourage people to participate and how they will engage in issues.

There are 4 components that are effective in the political action and participation of the individuals. These are; Political Resources, Political Opportunity Structure, Political Motivation and Knowledge. Political resources are all objective and subjective things that can be used by an individual to direct the attitudes and actions of another individual to the political direction and purpose that they want. Such as, wealth, political experience, respect, having a position in society or oratory. It also plays an important role in determining the influence on political participation, such as how a political system can influence political authority or the level of political decision-making. At the same time, political opportunism also determines this.

For political participation, there should also be a cognitive preparation for political motivation and political participation. That is, female parliamentarians need to create the necessary political interest, motivation and political efficacy towards the participants. (Koçak, 2002: 98)

To what extent can women politicians fulfill these functions in the social media as the forerunners and the supporters, to provide the collectivity necessary for the individual freedoms of women in society? In this context, are women in the society aware of the existence of areas (women's issues, associations, political parties, foundations and non-governmental organizations, etc.) in which they can undertake their collective work and be able to take active and active roles there? Can women politicians guide them on this issue?

The real problem here is how women perceive their identities and bodies. "How do we perceive our bodies as mass public and individual as the cornerstone of our identity? How do we relate to our body; Is it in the direction of our subjective consciousness and will; traditions, habits, sovereign elements, political or apolitical fashion trends? How does our subjective mind develop in our bodies?" Participation in politics is indicative of the development of subjective consciousness. Participation in the decision-making process and self-expression are elements of political participation.

In patriarchal societies, women are adherent to the role they are placed in social, economic and political spheres from the male perspective. This necessary social change requires the second gender to reach their goals and actions. What is important here is how the women in the public and the private world will contribute to change, creativity and shaping. The field in which women can most effectively do this is politics, which the women have the authority to express themselves directly.

Women may be important, powerful, influential, but according to the same age men and social status, they seem to lack these qualities according to cultural authority. Politics is a field in which a woman can see and show herself equally, strongly and effectively. Although women in politics appear to men with the same strength and status, the reflections of patriarchal society life are different in this point as well.

Asymmetric relations between species are explained in the light of universal and necessary reasons. These explanations show that men have taken authority from women in human history. For a quality management, the participation of all

citizens in politics is an important task. Citizen is a governed participant who has duties and responsibilities to the state but also has claims. One of the criticisms against the capitalist order was, Feminism -which is as old as the French Revolution- and later Socialism to inquire about the concept of "woman citizen", and demand the social rights of the women citizens.

#### **4. Gendered Statements on Women (Issues)**

- Men appear everywhere to have more prestige than women because men are defined in authority and dominant social roles. Women who are able to use force are described as heretical, guiding. Women's goals and ideologies are thought to be linked and coordinated with men.
- Ideologies are thought to be linked and coordinated with men. The issue of women's rights is one of the major building blocks of the European Union, aiming at social equality and social harmony. Since the 1970s, the European Union has made a number of comprehensive arrangements in the field of gender equality; has made great strides in combating inequality in both political and social life and working life. The women's rights in Turkey, in terms of both legislation and practice, is not on the same level with the EU. In fact, the inequalities faced by Turkish women arise in the field of the application rather than in the field of legislation. The general value judgments, economic difficulties and regional inequalities that hold women in the second in line are among the most important reasons for this.
- News about violence against women in the media is taking place almost every day. With the expression of Bourdieu (2014: 15) about this, addiction, which is the founding element of womanhood, also plays a part in the building of the manhood. In this context, violence towards women has turned into a sign of power, resource and power. (cited in Baran, Saritaş & Kütük, 2017: 108-109) The United Nations Declaration on the Removal of Violence Against Women, 1993, defines violence against women as "...any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

Betty Friedan's National Organization for Women is represented in parliamentary commission on women in particular. Female politicians still represent women's rights, but these are often the rights of women who are subject to men, such as the ease of divorce and protection from such laws. The use of political activity is indeed a life involving a personal and long-lasting connection. However, the main basis is the personal connection between human soul and political activity, not the status but the personal framework in the general framework defined by the order of birth and society, which makes it possible for the individual to form as a political actor.

It is obvious that gender socialization is very strong and that challenging it can lead to uneasiness. Once gender is 'committed', society expects individuals to act as 'women' and 'men'. The place where these expectations come and are reproduced

is in the practice of everyday life. These practices show themselves in social, economic and political activities of the society. Women constitute the half of the voting mass in Turkey, yet their election of their candidates are heavily influenced by the political party leaders. Because of the influence of the political party leaders in the women's candidate preferences, the women parliamentarians in parliament cannot produce independent women's politics, apart from the continuing male-dominated politics.

As a woman leader of a political party, Nesrin Nas states that trying to do politics by referring to only female identity will bring with it failure. She adds that rather than utilizing a women-oriented structure, creating a structure that grants opportunity to women is preferable. According to her, the main problem of women in Turkey, that they are not social enough to express themselves and their lack of participation in decisions that concern their lives. Women will come out of being a figure of the same extent that they make equal use of opportunities. For this, great tasks are fall to independent women's organizations, political parties and civil initiatives. The way in which the proposals for the solution of women's organizations are taken into consideration in the political arena is the extent to which the parties have adopted these demands.

Moreover, according to women's organizations, the most important reasons that impede women's participation in politics are listed as follows: "The women itself, that is, the women are not supporting each other, they are impeding each other. The absence of economic freedom. Women see politics as male work and therefore fall behind in their attacks. Lack of education and the fact that women are not organized enough. The negative effects of our traditional models. Environmental (father, wife, older brother and close relatives and neighbors) pressure. Women parliamentarians in parliament are not encouraging. (They do not give women confidence in their work because they do not have a female perspective.) The absence of a women's quota in the Political Parties Act." (Mengü & Karadoğan, 2004).

Thanks to Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, who believes that there must be a full equality between men and women, all political rights considered basic citizenship rights of women in Turkey is acknowledged as soon as possible. In Turkey, women obtained the right to vote and to be elected in municipal elections in 1930, and in parliamentary elections in 1934. Before this date, the number of countries in which women have the right to choose and elect a parliamentarian is 28 and the number of countries in which women parliamentarians are actually elected is 17.

Larsson and Moe conducted a study covering 2010 and 2011 for the political uses of Twitter for Sweden, Norway and Denmark. This study is a review using new methods for analysis based on a comprehensive collection of data for several nations. According to this, although Twitter offers an online space for gathering and discussing with voters and politicians, these interactions tend to emulate more traditional models. Twitter is used to strengthen existing social discussion models in the three examined cases, not to change or transform (Larsson & Moe, 2016: 430). Can a transformational use case of Twitter be observed in Turkey?

## 5. Method

This study is aimed at examining tweets of Turkish women parliamentarians. Therefore, the first phase of this study is the selection of female members of parliament to examine the habits of Twitter usage in detail. As a result of the parliamentary elections held in June 2015, more than 90 women parliamentarians entered the parliament. While 72 of these women members have Twitter accounts, they do not actively use these accounts for a variety of reasons.

In order to conduct a measurable study, it was decided that the top five female parliamentarians of the ruling and main opposition party who has the most Twitter followers, should be examined in detail. According to the determined criteria, the members of the parliament survey included: Fatma Betül Sayan Kaya (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi- AKP from now on), Aylin Nazlı Aka (ex-Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi- CHP from now on, newly independent), Öznur Çalık (AKP), Selin Sayek Böke (CHP), Lütfiye Selva Çam (AKP).

## 6. Coding Criteria

The Twitter accounts of the women parliamentarians mentioned above were reviewed between 1 February and 16 April 2018. All messages in the Twitter accounts of selected female parliamentarians were analyzed at two levels in the context of the word "women". Firstly, every tweet is examined according to the classification created by Java vd. (2007) for determining intents of the Twitter users. Java vd. (2007) aimed to understand the intents of the users and the societal structure of the Twitter with these classifications. The elements of the classification are in the form of daily conversations, chats, information sharing and news. "Daily conversations" that involve daily tasks or people doing what they do are the most common form of use for Twitter. "Chats" are another element of this classification system, which has no direct way to answer or comment on the things shared by friends. To reply, users use the @ symbol before the names, start chatting.

It has been determined that 13% of all submissions containing URLs are directed towards "information sharing". In the last category, "news", Twitter users report and comment on current events. A total of 252 tweets, of which the word "woman" was mentioned in them, constituted the samples of the research and were analyzed according to this classification.

The second phase of the research is realized according to the internet edition of Teun a. Van Dijk's (2005) work named "Discourse Analysis as Ideology Analysis". The questions answered for the analysis of 241 tweets within the scope of the research were examined according to Van Dijk's discourse analysis. According to Van Dijk, ideological analysis requires looking at the various forms of narrative analysis text and speech. These items are 1) Surface structures, 2) Syntax, 3) Vocabulary, 4) Semantic structures, 5) Global semantic issues, 6) Schematic constructions, 7) Discourse, 8) Grammar, 9) Dialogic interactivity. Since these constructions are described briefly and explicitly in Van Dijk's work "Analysis of Discourse as Ideology Analysis", it was possible to develop questions in our work to analyze each tweet as a reflection of the ideology. These questions are as follows:

- Is the Tweet positive or negative?
- Does the Tweet in any way imply criticism?
- Are there any syntactic or vocabulary structures that need attention?
- Are there any hard or carefully chosen indirect expressions?
- Are there any prominent words?
- Is there a local or global perspective on tweets in the context of words, subject matter, and appeal?
- Is it reactive or proactive?
- Do you have ways of expressing in the form of exaggeration, hint, imagination or metaphor?
- Could it be said that Tweet is directed towards othering or blaming?
- Could it be said that tweet has created an interaction depending on the question at the end or the way it is addressed?
- Is there any other feature of the Tweet that was not asked in the previous questions but worth mentioning?

To determine the intent of the Twitter user, the following question is asked:

- Where does this Tweet fit into the categories of daily conversations, chats, information sharing and news?

In general, each tweet is analyzed by two coders in the framework of these 12 questions. All tweets are cross-summed by these two encoders, in case of conflict, a third encoder is consulted. To provide coding reliability, 25 randomly selected tweets were cross-coded as preliminary work by two encoders. This preliminary study has shown that no problem is below 85% in terms of negotiation.

## 7. Findings

The analysis of the Tweets shows that there are some common points when it is evaluated from the point of ideological reflection of the women-oriented tweets posted by the Turkish women parliamentarians. When every tweet is evaluated in the context of the questions prepared for this study, it is seen that the women parliamentarians of the ruling party (AKP) are approaching with a positive and proactive point of view towards the issues related to women. For instance, Fatma Betül Sayan Kaya's tweets are 81.25% (n = 80) positive and highly proactive in terms of tone, word selection, syntax and vocabulary. Sayan Kaya prefers to use "we" in the tweets she posts, in this case, it seems to refer to the indirect "me and my followers" notion, creating an interaction between herself and her followers. The words in Sayan Kaya's tweets are gathered in two main clusters: In the first set of words women are seen as "strong" whereas in the second group women are treated as "people who need help and support". In addition, Sayan Kaya's tweets are aimed at sharing information or news at 98.75%.

In this research, the other female parliamentarian from the ruling party is Lütfiye Selva Çam. As in Sayan Kaya, there is generally a positive approach to women's

issues in Çam's tweets. 93.75% (n=96) of Cham's tweets for women are positive. When we look at tone, syntax, and vocabulary, the tweets of Çam show a great similarity to that of the ruling party parliamentarians who have been examined in this work. However, the numerous tweets she has sent to the women AKP members are remarkable. This approach can also be viewed as a form of interaction. The involvement of the people around her in her tweets may be regarded as an effort to create a more effective communication process in reaching the target groups. Depending on the habit and strategy of using Twitter, the words that Çam uses in its tweets are gathered in two groups as "We" and "AK Women". Therefore, her intention to use Twitter is mostly daily conversations, chat and information sharing. Most of the time she does not include her own comments. While there are interactions in 23.95% percent of her tweets, there are none in 65.6% percent. Tweets contain information, gratitude, and congratulatory messages on the employment of women party members serving in various areas of the AKP. In this sense, a more proactive approach can be mentioned.

Öznur Çalık, another female parliamentarian from the AKP, is also using Twitter quite actively. While only 25% of her tweets are women-oriented, it can be said that she interacts with women by tagging the "AK Kadın" pages. It is seen that she tagged AK Party Women's pages more than 100 times. The difference between Çalık's Twitter usage habits and others is that she is tagging people in almost all her tweets. By tagging the other woman AKP parliamentarians or AK Women's accounts, she is ensuring that her tweets are seen by the target groups. As a parliamentarian from Malatya, it is seen that there is more interaction with women from this city. Çalık has a positive style in 96% of her women-oriented tweets. In addition to the commenting intent, she also uses Twitter with the intentions of information sharing or news sharing. Her tweets are 96% percent proactive. It is seen that she approaches women's issues positively and proactively. Even when tweeting about hard topics such as war or women homicides, she avoids harsh language. This behavior can generally be observed in all of the women parliamentarians of AKP. The other three female deputies within the scope of this research are also looking at the problems facing women from the local perspective rather than a global perspective.

According to the findings of Aylin Naz Aka's tweet usage, 29.03% of them were aimed to create interaction and information sharing, 19.35% as news commentary, 35.48% as information sharing, 9.672% daily conversation, 3.22% interactivity and news commentary and 3.22% for daily speech and information sharing. 48.38% were positive and 51.61% were negative. Although there is not much difference between the positive and negative tweets, the negative tweets contain criticisms and the message that reflects the discrimination against the woman, the stance against the terror and the violence. While 51.61% of her tweets contain suggestive criticism, 48.38% do not. In the topic of syntax and word choice, it can be seen that she prefers sentences contain determination, criticism and active sentences that report news. 54.83% carefully selected words were used, 45.16% sharp words were used. Prominent words or phrases are women's solidarity, struggle, women's rights. 48.38% of the tweets are proactive, and 51.61% is reactive. Local issues are addressed. 54.83% of her tweets have word plays.

58.06% of her tweets contain protestations of rape, violence and hostility against arts. 74.19% are interacting in the context of asking questions and addressing.

According to findings of Selin Sayek Böke's intentions, the sum of her tweets contain 52.63% daily conversations and information sharing, 21.05% daily conversation, 10.52% interaction creation and information sharing, 5.26% interaction creation, 10.52% daily conversation and interaction creation. In the context of positive or negative tweets, 89.47% were positive and 10.52% were negative tweets. The negative tweets are a fairly low percentage. 57.89% of the tweets have suggestive criticisms, while 42.10% do not. It has been seen that active structured vocabulary has been used to signal decisiveness. 73.68% of the words were sharply expressed, and 26.31% carefully selected words were used. The most commonly used words are freedom, equality, struggle and women laborers. Almost all of the tweets work on local issues. 57.89% of her tweets are proactive, 42.10% are reactive. 84.21% of the tweets have suggestions and word plays. 68.42% of the tweets contain accusations. Proactive discourses to mobilize women in matters of freedom, equality, justice and the fight against women's rights are included. Tweets generate 89.47% of interaction in the context of asking questions and answering.

## **8. Discussion and Conclusion**

This study shows that Twitter is a new and open space that reflects ideology. Problems for women (From Turkey or with a global perspective) as a very concrete and easily perceivable subject can be used as a way of expressing ideology. The ruling party approaches the issue proactively and quite positively. The three women identified for this study point to the fact that they have received education or usage information on Twitter. These parliamentarians, although they differ in their syntax, have common points in their tweets in terms of tone, vocabulary, hashtags and expression styles. For those that are not familiar with digital media, it may be possible for the AKP to provide support and help in using social media effectively.

The AKP's women parliamentarians elected for this study are very similar in their interactions. Especially on important days, they use the "we" language as a sign of their integration with the target group, as well as their similar or same hashtag usage. Women are generally celebrated for their achievements or are being thanked for their work. Therefore, the sense of belonging is provided.

It is also a remarkable matter that the three women parliamentarians of the AKP approached women's issues globally, rather than locally. Even if a meeting is held with representatives from different countries, the tweets posted reflects a local perspective and the target group is again on the local scale. The reason for this is female members of parliament do not use English and post tweets only in Turkish. One of the points to consider is the preference for posting English tweets, especially for global issues. Such an approach, especially regarding urgent issues about Turkey and Turkish women, probably in order to avoid misunderstanding and chaos that may occur while trying to reflect Turkey's point of view on the subject.

Remarkable phrases in Aylin Nazlı Aka's tweets are; "Women's solidarity" and "struggle to get the rights". There is a specific focus on women's issues, although the number of tweets are low. It is seen in the tweets that women are all over the society and that they should have their rights. Tweets generally have motivational expressions for the followers. While there are general discourses about the fact that women's rights and freedoms shall not be interfered with in the public sphere, they are concentrated in the context of two events. One of these is support messages shared in favor of march against rape and violence from Çanakkale, and the other is criticism messages about women not being allowed to appear on stage. In addition, it is emphasized that a case related to the murder of a woman should be given with the name of the victim and the related interventions should be done. However, no information is given about how to perform those interventions. In the context of the messages of all members of the parliament, tweeter messages are generally given in a form that is lively, literary, angry, and appealing to the senses. There is a superficial discourse about the reasons and how to deal with the topics discussed.

AK Party parliamentarians' tweets are generally about: Women's empowerment strategy and action plan made at the government level, women giving energy to Turkey, HAK is U.A., work done on issues such as women-energy gathering and sharing information as well as information sharing about the negotiations on the protection of women and children by different ministries of different countries. In addition, messages about women and children who died in combat have photographic sharing. There are reproach messages in the context of war targeting children and women. Lütfiye Çam posted three tweets concerning the women's issues. There are retweets of a tweet of Emine Erdoğan and the President of The Republic. Most of the messages related to women are thanks to Ministers, administrators and provincial and district heads for their congratulations and congressional attendance to candidates receiving AK Party Certificates of Elections in various provinces and districts. In other messages, criticism and accusations against CHP and especially Kılıçdaroğlu are being made. There are 22 messages with retweets that directly share messages about specific problems of women directly. The majority of these messages were given on March 8, World Women's Day.

When we look generally, the tweets of the CHP parliamentarians are more reactive than the AKP parliamentarians', more interactive and more precise about the specific women's problems. However, the number of tweets is fewer than the others. The AKP parliamentarians' tweets are more proactive, however, rather than addressing specific women's issues, the service and achievements of the party and women AKP employees are mainly discussed. Women are positioned as party orientated and are not generally addressed. The AKP parliamentarians have posted tweets about the action plan on strengthening women, and also informing that meetings with officials from different countries are being held on the various issues related to women and children. However, specific solutions to the violence, rape and war problems women face are not offered, but only indictments and warnings are made for the places concerned. Likewise, CHP parliamentarians develop criticism, accusation, or a defensive and aggressive discourse in the

context of events on the agenda, rather than presenting specific solutions to women. Therefore, the main approach is that it is an important task for parliamentarians as a political resource to deal with problems and issues with a viewpoint above both parties. It is also necessary that the work on the development of the women and the elimination of problems by the parties be discussed, commented and, if necessary, appreciated. It can be seen that the parliamentarians' tweets are messages that blame and hold the other side liable in local and global issues, but do not come up to the root of the problems and develop a solution to that. Women, whom we define as voters, cannot participate in the work in this sense, but they are content to watch the controversy in daily life as an audience and the problems that are actually related to them.

The aim of the women parliamentarians is to call for participation in a way that will provide political equilibrium for all citizens, especially women. Political participation, on the other hand, is under the influence of the norms and rules that the political culture has created in society. These norms determine the obligations and their influence of people on their behaviors. In that case, the political culture has a considerable effect on the attitudes and discourses of women politicians. Political culture can only be changed by the actions and discourses of women politicians.

Political behavior should not be understood only in terms of voting. It also includes the ways in which politicians address collective attitudes toward political participation. What is important here is the extent to which politicians encourage people to participate and how they are guiding the problems and participation topics. Participation in politics is indicative of the development of subjective consciousness. Participation in the decision-making process is an element of political participation, self-expression.

Twitter, as an online public space, the discourse of women's parliamentarians about women falls within the dimension of representation from among the three dimensions that constitute the public domain. All of the three dimensions are: the structural dimension, representative dimension and interactive dimension. According to Habermas and Dewey, peoples exist as discursive, interactive processes. Representative and interactive categories related to the Internet are intermixed (Dahldgren, 2017:176). Women parliamentarians should support women's point of view and offer an impartial support for the creation of representations of public spaces and interactive categories via twitter.

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