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**VOTERS' LOYALTY TO A POLITICAL PARTY IN TERMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT
FACTOR: A RESEARCH ON VOTERS LIVING IN BIG CITIES IN TURKEY**

ABSTRACT

The level of voters' loyalty to a political party gives important clues in terms of analysis of voters and prediction of their behaviors. The possible changing in voting behavior of voters who have high party loyalty is generally low. On the other hand, the voters who have low party loyalty get involved in undecided part and generally have floating voter behavior. In this respect, voters' loyalty to a political party composes an important data resource for people conducting a political campaign. In this study, voters' loyalty to a political party was handled which is stated as declining after 1990s. The research was done in 16 cities composing 58% of total voter number to present Turkish voters' loyalty to a political party. While determining research group, the ratio of the number of voters in metropolitans to the total number of voters is taken into account and 1389 questionnaire conducted. As a result of this study, it is concluded that Turkish voters have a high loyalty to a political party in terms of general loyalty, but there is a medium level loyalty in terms of affective, continuance and normative commitment. Moreover, it is obtained that the most important factor influencing voters' general loyalty is normative commitment.

Keywords: Political Party Loyalty, Political Communication,
Political Campaign, Political Parties,
Organizational Commitment

**KURUMSAL BAĞLILIK FAKTÖRÜ BAKIMINDAN SEÇMENLERİN PARTİ BAĞLILIKLARI:
TÜRKİYE/DEKİ BÜYÜKŞEHİRLERDE YAŞAYAN SEÇMENLER ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA**

ÖZET

Seçmenlerin parti bağlılık düzeyleri seçim kampanyalarında seçmenlerin analizi ve seçmen davranışlarının tahmini açısından önemli ipuçları vermektedir. Genel olarak Parti bağlılığı yüksek seçmenlerin oy verme davranışında değişim ihtimali düşüktür. Buna karşın parti bağlılığı düşük olan seçmenlerin genellikle kararsız seçmenler grubunda oldukları ve yüzergezer oy verme davranışına sahip oldukları söylenebilir. Bu bakımdan siyasal kampanya yürütücülerinin önemli veri kaynaklarından birini seçmenlerin parti bağlılıkları oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, özellikler 1990'lı yıllardan sonra giderek azaldığı belirtilen seçmenlerin parti bağlılığı ele alınmıştır. Türkiye seçmeninin parti bağlılığının ortaya konması amacıyla Türkiye'deki toplam seçmen sayısının yaklaşık %58'ini oluşturan 16 Büyükşehirde araştırma yapılmıştır. Araştırma denek grubunun belirlenmesinde büyükşehirlerin sahip olduğu seçmen sayılarının toplam seçmen sayısına oranı dikkate alınmış ve toplam 1389 seçmenle anket gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yapılan araştırma sonucunda, Türkiye seçmeninin genel bağlılık açısından yüksek düzeyde parti bağlılığına sahip olduğu; ancak duygusal bağlılık, devam bağlılığı ve normatif bağlılık faktörleri bakımından orta düzeyde bir bağlılığın söz konusu olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca seçmenlerin genel bağlılığını etkileyen en önemli bağlılık faktörünün normatif bağlılık olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Parti Bağlılığı, Siyasal İletişim,
Seçim Kampanyası, Siyasal Partiler,
Kurumsal Bağlılık

1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

It can be said that voters' ideology-based behaviors became quite weak compared to past. In the past, people getting information from limited resources presented a scene that they were more inclined to be persuaded in the frame of a dominant opinion. However, nowadays voters can reach information from various resources easily. They can obtain multi-dimensional information of a subject or of an object. This process came out as an efficient factor in terms of personal preferences depending on improvements in mass communication.

The change occurring in communication habits cause culture, thought, life style and habit interact with each other more. No matter how many differences insist on continuing their presence, mutual communication process gives rise to common points. Therefore, masses in centers are more intense in social structure. In this regard, voters more intensely in centers converted political parties which were perceived as more radical and these political parties went into the effort of uniting voters having different values in common point. Thus, a new era in political communication campaigns occurs from staff configuration to usage of political communication.

Communication and mass communication technologies bring about radical changes and make political campaigns become professional (Devran, 2004:32). Political communication's becoming professional causes political party's being regressed (Tokgöz, 2008:415). Therefore, new developments weaken voters' loyalty to a political party. Organizational structure of political parties, propaganda and public relation affairs became important factors in convincing the voters. For instance, as a result of a process began in 1970s election campaigns in American way took more places. Thus, the role of consultants and public relations increased (Tokgöz, 2008:419).

In the new process, subjects separating a political party from the others became important facts in convincing voters (Özsoy, 2002:111). Political parties analyzing voters well and revealing the subjects defining voters' agenda were more successful in terms of convincing the voters. However, researches indicated that the behavior of voting depended on long term factors such as party identity and ideology, in addition to candidate and election factors (quoted by: Hacker et al. 2000:227-228). Long term factors can be stated as the loyalty of voters to a party or a candidate, their attitude and values (Devran, 2004:2). In this regard, it can be said that voters' loyalty and sympathy to a party or a candidate can influence the decisions of voters (Güllüpunar, 2010:69).

In the short term decision, the current issues of voters are effective but in the long term decision, the commitment towards the party or candidate is more effective. Therefore, people's level of commitment is so important in determining their voting behavior.

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

Political election campaigns have activation, reinforcement and conversion effects (Lazersfeld vd. 1968:103). Therefore, determining people's level of commitment is so important in success of the election campaigns. Because it can help to determine which political campaign strategy will be used. The effect of political campaigns is quiet high on voters who are undecided and also have reinforcement and conversion effects on voters who have decided. The possibility of making decision of voters who have high party or candidate commitment is quiet high. This means that political campaign focuses on reinforcement and conversion functions. In case of low party or candidate commitment generally means density of undecided people.

Therefore the campaign strategy for undecided voters focuses on the activation effect of political election campaigns.

This study handles the issue of Turkish voters' loyalty to a political party. Defining voters' loyalty level makes important contributions in terms of analyzing voters well and predicting behaviors of them beforehand. For this reason, it is thought that this research will make important contributions to studies of political communicators and political communication students. Voters' loyalty level, loyalty factors and effect of socio-demographic and political variables in voters' loyalty level are analyzed in the study.

3. POLITICAL PARTIES (SİYASAL PARTİLER)

Political party is a political institution that aims to capture or share government; controls the government when it is not in charge of it; owns membership of national or local organizations; has a wide perspective and focuses on single subject; has a common principal, ideology, identity, preference and program (Kapani, 1996:160; Tuncay 2000:28; Sarıbay, 2001:6; Heywood 2007:356).

Matters such as correlating political opinions and benefits, forming political staff, using and controlling government are among the responsibilities of political parties (Tekin et al. 2006:74). In addition, one of the important functions of political parties is to provide election of political staff, management staff and leaders (Kapani, 1996:166).

Political parties have various membership statuses in terms of organization. In general look, party membership can be stated in five ways such as leaders, active members, ordinary members, pre-voters (only exist in the U.S) and supporters. However, generally, leaders, active members and ordinary members are accepted (Sarıbay, 2001:21). It can be said that active members have an important role in political staff's being raised and elected. In this regard, active membership gives clue about in-party operation and whether the party has a powerful staff which are dependent on each other in terms of organization or not. The way of interdependency in the party, leaders' and members' way of election, limit of members' activity, in other words, the effects of organizations on behaviors reveal the power and efficiency of the party (Tuncay, 2000:3).

The degree of organization of a party can be stated as whether in-party relations are tied to certain behavior patterns by figural rules or unwritten rules and traditions. In other words, consistency degree in terms of political party's organization means attitude and behavior unity among party members. General criteria of this consistency can be expressed as legislation consistency, party discipline and schism. The more legislation consistency, party discipline, the less schism the party has, the more consistent it will be and the more behavior unity it will have (Emiroğlu, 2006:608).

4. POLITICAL PARTIES IN TERMS OF ACTIVE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION (AKTİF SİYASAL KATILIM BAKIMINDAN SİYASAL PARTİLER)

Political participation kinds can be stated as traditional, non-traditional and post-modern participation. Traditional participation can be expressed as a kind of participation starting with being interested in political subjects and going to take actions in political parties and other political organizations. Non-traditional participation is a political behavior presents participation to politics alternatives by legal and illegal ways besides participation by means of party. Post-modern participation is a kind of participation provided by internet, civil society and social

activities. Among these participation kinds traditional participation still rises as an efficient one (Özyurt, 2010:291-292).

Political parties as an important part of traditional participation can show differences depending on factors such as becoming organized, internal structure, society and ideology. These differences are determinative factors in classifying political parties. When prominent ones are analyzed, we can see that while Duverger divides parties into two parts as staff and mass parties, Neumann divides them as individual representation and social unity party. In these divisions it is possible to see traces of democratic development caused by historic developments. Staff parties and individual representation parties present in both divisions express old kind of parties taking actions during elections and not giving importance to organization of political parties. Mass parties and social unity parties are the ones that have powerful organization system in centers and locals. The aim of these parties is not only to be in charge of the country but also to affect and control people in other fields of social life (Kapani, 1996:168-174).

When political party's way of being organized is analyzed nowadays, it can be said that they are organized as mass parties and social unity ones. For this reason, parties need more members and voluntary participation. Thus, loyalty of voters to the party comes out as an important factor.

5. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT (KURUMSAL BAĞLILIK)

Human capital's coming to the forefront makes institution and employees relation a current issue. Basic condition to have healthy and fertile relations between the institution and employees to develop relations depend on cooperation and loyalty. At this point, concept of "organizational commitment" meaning that employees should accept institution's aims and values, making efforts to reach those aims and desire to continue membership in the institution comes to the forefront.

Organizational commitment's definition dimensions and relations with other concepts are comprehensive and disputable subjects. Researchers define the concept in different ways according to their field of interest. For instance, while Reicher (1985:342) defines the concept of commitment as individual's being identified with institution's aims and values, Robbins (1998:43) defines it as the desire of employee's to maintain the membership by being identified with his institution and its aims. Sheldon's (1971:143) definition of organizational commitment is that employee's evaluating the institution the he works in a positive way and reacts according to its aims. This definition is short but comprehensive. Another definition was made by Wiener (1982:7) and he sees this concept as total of interiorized normative pressures to behave to meet organizational aims and profits. Two of the important names of organizational concepts Allen and Meyer (1997) describe committed employee as a person working regularly, volunteer to make extra efforts, trying to protect his institution and adopting institution's aims and values. When all the definitions are analyzed, the concept of organizational commitment can be summarized as loyalty of employees, emotional tie; efficient commitment of employee's to institution's aims and values (Güllüoğlu, 2011:50). Commitment to a party in terms of organizational commitment can be stated as that a voter's being identified with party, his desire to maintain membership relations, having positive attitude towards message and practices and having tendency to take an active role.

Organizational commitment reflects the union degree of individual and institution. In this respect, it can be said that organizational commitment has three important parts (Reichers, 1985: 468; Randall, 1987:461):

- Individual's acceptance of institution's aims and the powerful belief for them.
- Individual's desire to make more effort than expected.
- Individual's certain desire to continue his membership in the institution.

Since organizational commitment is one of the important components controlling employee's attitude and behaviors towards the institution and his efforts and ideology (Gordon, 2007:193), it is important in terms of institution's maintaining its presence and employees being compatible and productive. It is thought that employees living with high level of satisfaction feelings will have positive attitude towards business and will be more beneficial for the institution.

Commitment of staff to the institution is important in terms of personal, organizational and social points. Powerful commitment improves the feeling of belonging, security, efficiency, career development and internal awards. It provides institution with staff remain in their work, limited staff circulation, lessening education cost, high work satisfaction, accepting request of institution and meeting organizational aims. In terms of social point, it helps quality and fertility of goods and service to increase (Mowday et al. 1982; Randall, 1987). Therefore, while commitment to a political party is an opportunity for a voter having political tendency and desire to advance in politics, it also can make contribution to politics for it to be built on principles in terms of social point. Because, a voter's personal benefit may remain behind the party aims who internalizes party identity.

Organizational commitment is to improve trust between manager and staff. Providing consistency and innovation in the institution plays an important role in reaching planned targets. Relations between manager-staff become better and organizational climate occurs. It can provide a reliable communication between a candidate and a voter for political parties. Individuals having high commitment to institution are the ones who are hardworking, successful, aiming at high qualified production focused on customer satisfaction, having high work satisfaction and having less desire to leave job (Boselie et al. 2001). Commitment to institution is important on the grounds that there is a high possibility that employees in this profile will make self-sacrifice (Jaworsky et al. 1993:53-70).

Researches about the concept of organizational commitment first dealt with by Whyte and then by Porter, Mowday, Steers, Allen, Meyer and Becker bring about a lot of approaches. All these approaches are a new breath and in literature concepts of Attitudinal Commitment Approach, Multi-Dimensional Commitment Approach and Behavioral Commitment Approach are emphasized.

5.1. Approaches towards Organizational Commitment (Kurumsal Bağlılığa Yönelik Yaklaşımlar)

5.1.1. Attitudinal Commitment (Tutumsal Bağlılık)

Attitudinal commitment emerges in the case when an individual identifies himself with an institution and this institution's target, value and aims and wants to keep his membership in the party to realize these aims. In such kind of a commitment, there is an interchange that individuals commit themselves to the institution in

return for some spiritual awards and benefits (Mowday et al. 1979:225).

In literature, the most accepted attitudinal approach is the one developed by Allen and Meyer (Ada et al. 2008:497). In the model that Allen and Meyer (1990:4) developed, organizational commitment was handled in three different approaches. In affective commitment, people remain in the institution because they want to, in continuance commitment they remain because they need to and in normative commitment, they remain because they feel obligation. According to this, an employee can live each of these situations in different degrees. For example, while some employees feel powerful need and obligation about remaining in the institution they do not do it willingly. Other employees remain in the institution just for their desire even they do not feel any need or obligation. Therefore, individual's commitment to the institution is total projection of these psychological situations.

5.1.2. Multi-Dimensional Commitment Approach (Çoklu Bağlılık Yaklaşımı)

According to Reichers (1985:469-470) although institution theoreticians focus on aims which conflict with different values that institution members try to service, they are not interested in institution's nature itself. From this point, Reichers (1985) put forwards the concept of Multi-Dimensional Commitment Approach by improving attitudinal approach a bit more. Multi-Dimensional Commitment Approach makes emphasis on that individuals show different commitment to their institutions, occupations, managers, supervisors, customers and colleagues. This approach, basically, advocates that it will be truer for organizational commitment to be understood as total commitment of various internal and external groups composing the institution (Randall, 1987:467).

Multi-Dimensional Commitment Approach foresees that commitment of someone can be different than the one that somebody else feels. Therefore, while an individual's commitment can be stemmed from that institution presents qualified goods in a reasonable price, the other one's can be stemmed from institution's humanistic treatment for employees. However, a global criterion of commitment is to show both employees in equal commitment to the institution. Thus, this kind of commitment aims to show presence, absence and power of private commitment (Reichers, 1985:467).

5.1.3. Behavioral Commitment (Davranışsal Bağlılık)

Behavioral commitment is built on socio-psychological perspective. It is an approach corresponding to the process that individuals' becoming committed to their institutions according to their experience and adaptation to the institution (Mowday et al. 1982:25; Cliffort, 1989:144). In behavioral commitment, employee feels commitment because of past actions such as nonfinancial benefits, income (social security, age and salary increase because of seniority). The Employee develops commitment because he thinks that leaving the job will cost high. In this approach organizational commitment transforms into a more cheeseparing structure (Blau et al. 1987:290).

While Attitudinal Approach is an emotional reaction committing individual to the institution, Behavioral Approach is individual's decision to remain in the institution because of the investments that he does not want to lose. In other words, the commitment that an employee has is a kind of commitment which is cheeseparing (Gül, 2002:47).

It is disputable to put forward that which of the approaches from attitudinal, behavioral and multi ones is more superior, valid and applicable (Varoğlu, 1993:18). There are occasions when all these organizational commitment classification are valid. Because, organizational commitment is quite susceptible to time, place and conditions. Institution's culture, way of management and leadership, personal and demographic features of employees, socio-economic structure, social features, environmental conditions are quite important internal and external factors in application of attitudinal and behavioral commitment. All these factors play an important role choosing a kind of organizational commitment.

6. EFFECT OF COMMITMENT TO PARTY ON VOTER'S PREFERENCE IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS (SEÇİM KAMPANYALARINDA PARTİ BAĞLILIĞININ SEÇMEN TERCİHİNE ETKİSİ)

Political leader's or candidate's having qualifications valuable for society is not enough for voter's preference. Therefore, his working with best advisors and staff, making them meet in common base, transferring their work into an easiest wastable communicational production by his management talent are important factor that increase efficiency of leader or candidate on voters (Anık, 2005:160). In other words, factors effecting planning and managing of political candidate image are not limited with politicians and voters. There is an interrelation between party delegates, local leaders and political leader depend on desire and promises (Uztuğ, 2004:55).

In a research it is found out that from the beginning of 1990s to 2000s in Soviet Union and East Europe, organizational structure of parties found instead of old communist ones influenced election success. These parties emerged as heritor of previous communist parties during decline of Soviet Union mostly consist of public officers. This situation emerges as a factor giving less confidence for mass membership (Ishiyama, 2001:860). Therefore, old staffs losing voters' trust and commitment were not successful in their new party.

Long-term and short-term factors are matters of subject in voter's preference. Long-term factors are generally connected to ones like party commitment, short-term ones are related to subjects in election campaigns. However, short-term factor can be affected from identification relation with part occurring in the long-term. Therefore, it can be said that party commitment is also effective on short-term factors (Miller et al. 1976:33-34). In other words, although it is said that party commitment is lessening nowadays, candidate's party has an important effect on voter's preference (Güllüpunar, 2010:68). For this reason, parties influence candidates' success in election campaigns. Because parties have experienced teams who can take part in candidate's campaign voluntarily (Grey, 1999:69-70). Consequently, parties and candidates firstly should motivate their hearts and reinforce their beliefs and attitudes. Thus, they can reach wider voter mass (Uztuğ, 2004:310).

Party volunteers take on important tasks in door to door canvassing. Voluntary canvassers establish one to one communication with voters. Because of that selection of canvassers is important for voter's perception. For example, a male candidate whose all volunteers are male can be said to have some unpleasant feelings about women's place in politics (Kalender, 2005:103; Uztuğ, 1999:164). In addition, these volunteers' features such as behaviors, attitudes, dressing style and way of speaking are important effect factors on voters (Kalender, 2005:105; Kalender, 2007:152; Uztuğ, 2004:309).

Women's taking active role in election campaigns can create a positive image in terms of voter perception. Women's taking place in

political campaigns can make daily life come to the forefront with regards to politic expression. Because way of women's self expression create an alternation in politic expression. For example, a Christian parliamentary states this situation in this way (Say, 1998:167):

"Women are giving more examples, talking with specific examples and reacts from their experiences and events happening around them while they are making a speech. Their observations are details of daily life."

In a study conducted in USA and Canada it is found out that women are more enthusiastic compared to men in features such as allocating more time to party works, enjoying more and taking place in more front rows (Clarke et al. 1979:475).

Young people's taking part in election campaigns can broaden sphere of influence of campaign like women, because, young people and the ones who is going to vote for the first time constitute base of campaigns activities. Determining what kind of a political party or a leader that young people and the ones who are going to vote for the first time expect and developing a political process according to this influence success of party or candidate (Polat et al. 2006:194). Therefore, volunteer young people and party youth branches have important functions to reach young voters.

7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS (ARAŞTIRMA SORULARI)

Technological developments, urbanization, democracy, individualization, priority of rational preference decrease level of people's loyalty to a party. However, loyalty to a party is still an effective factor for voter's preference. Loyalty to a party comes out as an important indicator for analyzing voters and predicting their behaviors. Therefore, to know the level of voter's loyalty to a party and socio-demographic and political factors affecting this level will make important contribution to political communication. For this reason, questions of the research are identified as follow:

- What is general level of voter's loyalty to a party in Turkey?
- What is the level of loyalty to a party in terms of organizational commitment factors?
- What is the most important loyalty factor effecting general loyalty to a party?
- What are the effects of socio-demographic features on Turkish voters' loyalty to a party?
- What are the effects of political variables on Turkish voters' loyalty to a party?

8. METHOD (YÖNTEM)

8.1. Application of the Research and Sample (Araştırmanın Uygulanması ve Örneklem)

This research handles party commitment of voters in 16 metropolitan municipalities composing about 58% of total number of voters in Turkey. These metropolitan municipalities Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Bursa, Samsun, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Kayseri, Konya, Antalya, Adana, Mersin and Eskisehir. In application of questionnaires students from Faculty of Communication from University of Gumushane and University of Erciyes take part as interviewers. Simple coincidental sample method and face to face questionnaire method are used in the study. It was carried out in February and March in 2012.

Number of questionnaire in each city was determined in direct proportion to number of voters in those cities. Hence, in total 1663 forms were given to interviewers. However, 1389 of them were taken to

analysis because of mistakes in filling and reliability. Therefore, there were some changes in the voter numbers determined in each city.

8.2. Data Acquisition Tools (Veri Toplama Araçları)

Turkish voters' level of loyalty to a party was tried to be measured by 'A Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment developed by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1979) and revised by Allen and Meyer (1990). Organizational commitment consists of three parts: (1) Affective commitment (the most wanted kind of commitment. It means that an employee identifies himself with the institution, remains in it willingly and feels affective commitment, (2) Continuance commitment (It is a situation that an employee feels commitment upon calculating the cost he is going to confront with in the case of leaving the institution) (3) Normative commitment (An employee does not feel any obligation but he feels moral commitment and finds unethical to leave his institution).

A questionnaire form in which points of organizational commitment are revised in terms of party loyalty consists of two parts. The first part consists of 32 items about party loyalty. The answers are 'Strongly Disagree' (1), 'Disagree' (2), 'Undecided' (3), 'Agree' (4), 'Strongly Agree' (5).

In the second part of the questionnaire there were multiple choice questions about voters' socio-demographic features, the party to which one they voted before, how long they vote for the party, whether they voted for any other one and their political thoughts. Before application of the questionnaire, a pre-test was done on 50 people. Some modifications were made according to the pre-test and after that the questionnaire was applied.

8.3. Analysis of Data and Used Tests (Verilerin Analizi ve Kullanılan Testler)

Data acquired in the study was analyzed by using program SPSS 15.0. Descriptive statistics techniques were used to reveal party commitment items and party loyalty factors of respondents. Regression analysis was done to define party commitment factors heaviness. Moreover, Independent Samples T-test and ANOVA were used in analysis of socio-demographic and political variables.

Some of the party loyalty points were not answered by respondents. Therefore, unanswered points were coded as 0 and excluded during the process of analysis. In addition, there were negative questions as control questions. These points having negative sentence structure cause commitment average decrease. Because of that, the questions' coding were done in the opposite direction in Likert scale.

9. STATISTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT RESPONDENTS (ARAŞTIRMAYA KATILANLARLA İLGİLİ İSTATİSTİKİ BİLGİLER)

1663 questionnaires were given to interviewers in total. Because of mistakes occurring during application and reliability 1389 questionnaires were taken to evaluation and analyzed.

60% of respondents are male and 40% of them are female. 33.8% of them are between 26-28 ages, 25.8% of them are 27-35, 24.8% of them are 36-46 and 15.6% of them are 47-78. 27.6% of respondents are graduated from primary school, 36% of them graduated from high school, 26.5% of them graduated from university, 9.9% of them did master degree and PhD. In terms of their income, the classification is as follows: 19.4% of them have 100-800 TL, 23.6% of them have 800-1250 TL, 30.5% of them have 1251-2500 TL, 15.9% of them 2501-3500 TL and 10.6% of them have 3501-30000 TL.

48.6% of the respondents in the survey in general parliamentary election in 2011 voted for AKP, 28.2% of them voted for CHP, 14.3% of them MHP and 9% of them voted for other parties. These results mean approximate results with the real ones. AKP has 49.83% of total votes, CHP has 25.98% of them and MHP has 13.1% of them in general parliamentary election in 2011 (<http://www.ysk.gov.tr/ysk/index.html>). In addition, 29% of the respondents in survey defined themselves 29% of them as nationalist, 13.4% of them as conservative, 8.3% of them as conservative democrat, 11.2% of them as islamist, 13.9% of them as social democrat, 8.9% of them as socialist, 4.1% of them as liberal and 1.6% of them as others.

This survey was carried out in 16 metropolis. Questionnaires were given to interviewers in proportion to city's number of votes. However, after excluding some numbers because of feedback and reliability, participation rate in the cities was found as follows: Istanbul 29%, Izmir 11%, Ankara 10%, Bursa 6%, Adana 5.1%, Kayseri 4.9%, Kocaeli 4.6%, Antalya 4.5%, Gaziantep 4.5%, Samsun 4.1%, Mersin 4%, Konya 3.2%, Sakarya 2.2% Eskisehir 2.2% and Erzurum 0.8%.

10. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION (BULGULAR VE TARTIŞMA)

10.1. Voters' Party Loyalty and Party Loyalty Factors

(Seçmenlerin Parti Bağlılığı ve Parti Bağlılık Faktörleri)

Average of each item in the scale was emphasized to define Turkish voters' level of party loyalty. In total of 32 items in the scale the highest average (3.652) belongs to the one 'I give importance to my party's future'. The lowest average (2.196) belongs to the one 'It was a big mistake to decide to vote for this party' (Table 1). This situation can be commented as those Turkish voters have loyalty to their party in general terms, but they do not have a very high commitment. Since, according to survey results voters give importance to future of the party they vote for. Unsatisfaction level is low because of the party they vote for.

The items in the scale are classified in 3 groups. Affective commitment factor has (F1) 11 items, continuance commitment (F2) has 12 items and normative commitment (F3) has 9 items. Reliability analysis of total 32 items shows that scale is highly reliable ($\alpha=0.848$). When you look at the factors, you can see that while 'affective commitment' has a reliability which can be said high ($\alpha=0.782$), continuance commitment factor ($\alpha=0.694$) and normative commitment factor ($\alpha=0.642$) has a validity which can be accepted as quite reliable (Table 2). Since, if validity of a scale connected to Alfa (α) is between $0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$, the scale is not reliable; if it is between $0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$, its reliability is low; if it is between $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$, the scale is quite reliable and if it is between $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$, the scale is highly reliable (Kayış, 2006:403).

In affective commitment factor consisting of 11 items (Table 2) the highest loyalty average (3.652) was acquired from the item "I give importance to my party's future". On the other hand, the lowest average (2.467) was acquired from the item "I can feel loyalty to other parties as I feel to my party" (Table 1). As control questions the scale has negative items. These items were inserted with respect to positive items in quinary likert scale. In this regard, high averages of negative items in this factor means that the positive response averages of these items. Consequently, it can be said that the items supporting party loyalty and partaking in affective commitment factor have higher average in general.

Table 1. Party Loyalty Items Central Tendency Statistics
 (Tablo 1. Parti Bağlılığı Yargılarının Merkezi Eğilim İstatistikleri)

I.N.	Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D
1	I do not feel myself as a part of my party	1367	1,00	5,00	3,286	1,2758
2	I do not feel loyalty to my party emotionally	1368	1,00	5,00	3,195	1,2438
3	My party is a source of inspiration for my political view	1361	1,00	5,00	3,308	1,1056
4	My party's values and my personal values are close to each other	1363	1,00	5,00	3,250	1,1443
5	I can feel loyalty to another party as I feel to my party	1362	1,00	5,00	2,467	1,1535
6	I am proud of telling other people my support to my party	1360	1,00	5,00	3,344	1,1721
7	I feel happy to serve my party for the rest of my life	1360	1,00	5,00	3,208	1,1612
8	I feel my party's problem as my problems	1360	1,00	5,00	2,718	1,2273
9	I am ready to accept any responsibilities that my party can give me	1368	1,00	5,00	2,819	1,1987
10	I am ready to do more than expected for my party's success	1373	1,00	5,00	3,072	1,1825
11	I am proud of voting for my party despite other ones	1372	1,00	5,00	3,583	1,1159
12	I give importance to my party's future	1369	1,00	5,00	3,652	1,0728
13	I am telling other people that my party is an ideal place to vote, to be a member and to take responsibility	1374	1,00	5,00	3,392	1,1007
14	I am telling other people that my party is an ideal place to be a member of it	1373	1,00	5,00	3,152	1,1767
15	I am telling other people that my party is an ideal place to take responsibility in it	1366	1,00	5,00	3,336	1,1183
16	I do not think to show loyalty to my party in the long term will be beneficial for me	1379	1,00	5,00	3,198	1,1874
17	I do not approve my party's policies and attitudes to its members and voters	1370	1,00	5,00	3,219	1,1948
18	I vote for my party because of some obligations now	1369	1,00	5,00	2,577	1,2507
19	The basic reason for remaining in the party is that I cannot obtain the things that I obtain here in another party	1370	1,00	5,00	2,879	1,2162
20	It was a big mistake to decide to vote for this party	1371	1,00	5,00	2,196	1,1494
21	I can think to be transferred to another party if the conditions require so	1368	1,00	5,00	2,633	1,2375
22	I think that people transfer to other parties too frequently and in an unprincipled way	1371	1,00	5,00	3,396	1,1315
23	I do not think to be transferred from one party to another one is ethical	1374	1,00	5,00	2,876	1,2048
24	I do not feel loyalty to my party	1368	1,00	5,00	3,248	1,1954
25	I do not feel any obligation to remain in this party	1366	1,00	5,00	2,862	1,1866
26	I do not think that leaving my party now is right even though it has advantages for me	1359	1,00	5,00	2,824	1,1716
27	I think that remaining in my party is quite a right decision when I think about other parties	1359	1,00	5,00	3,541	1,1140
28	I do not believe that a person should show loyalty to his party all the time	1359	1,00	5,00	3,137	1,1844
29	It is not right to leave my party right now as I have responsibilities for my friends in the party	1349	1,00	5,00	3,193	1,1486
30	I feel as an ethical obligation to remain in my party	1356	1,00	5,00	2,876	1,1446
31	I owe many things to my party	1356	1,00	5,00	2,983	1,1670
32	Even a single change in present conditions will be a reason to leave my party	1365	1,00	5,00	2,728	1,2041

Table 2. Factors and Reliability Values
(Tablo 2. Faktörler ve Güvenirlilik Değerleri)

Factors	Items number belongs to factors	Reliability Values (Crombach Alpha)
Affective Commitment	1-2-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12	,782
Continuance Commitment	2-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-27-32	,694
Normative Commitment	22-23-24-25-26-28-29-30-31	,642
General Commitment	32 items	,848

The highest average (3.541) in continuance commitment factor was acquired from the item that "I think that remaining in my party is quite a right decision when I think about other parties". The lowest average (2.196) was acquired from the provision that "It was a big mistake to decide to vote for this party". Considering normative commitment factor while the item "I think that people transfer to other parties too frequently and in an unprincipled way" has the highest average (3.396), the item " I do not think that leaving my party now is right even though it has advantages for me" has the lowest average (2.824). As this item is negative, the average acquired from the analysis shows that leaving the party is the right decision.

When viewed generally, in terms of both general commitment items and items partaking in factors it can be said that party loyalty average is not very high but the items involving commitment content have higher average.

Table 3. Central Tendency Statistics of Party Loyalty Factors
(Tablo 3. Parti Bağlılığı Faktörlerinin Merkezi Eğilim İstatistikleri)

	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
General Commitment	1194	1.50	5.00	3.658	,41106
Factors					
Affective Commitment	1315	1.00	5.00	3.1464	,70468
Continuance Commitment	1287	1.33	5.00	3.0172	,44176
Normative Commitment	1279	1.56	5.00	3.0441	,42982

In research, responses expressing 1.00 as minimum and 5.00 as maximum were acquired with likert scale. These responses can be used specifying central tendencies of factors. As responses are between 1.00 and 5.00 and a satisfaction index was constituted, in 4/5= .80 score interval starting from 1.00 a graduation was made. Therefore, 1.00-1.80 was gradated as 'very low commitment level', 1.81-2.60 was gradated as 'low commitment level', 2.61-3.40 was gradated as 'medium commitment level', 3.41-4.20 was gradated as 'high commitment level' and 4.21-5.00 was gradated as 'very high commitment level'. Accordingly, participants of the research have high general party loyalty level (3.658). Moreover, it was seen that commitment level is medium in terms of every 3 factors (Table 3). When factors were discussed in terms of their averages, it was seen that 'affective commitment' factor has the highest average (3.146) and 'continuance commitment' factor has the lowest average (3.017).

10.2. Commitment Factors Effects on General Commitment

(Bağlılık Faktörlerinin Genel Bağlılık Üzerindeki Etkisi)

Regression Analysis was made in order to discuss the effects of commitment factors on general commitment. According to that in terms of dual correlation, between general commitment and affective commitment medium level (.569), between general commitment and continuance commitment high level (.705) and between general commitment and normative commitment high level (.696) of correlation was acquired.

Table 4. General Commitment and Regression Analysis of Commitment Factors

(Tablo 4. Genel Bağlılık ve Bağlılık Faktörleri Regresyon Analizi)

General Commitment (GC) =	-1.534 +	0.341 AC	+ 0.525 CC	+ 0.603 NC
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	
Standardized Coefficients		0.300	0.414	0.489
R= 0.896,	R ² =0.803,	F ₍₃₋₁₃₇₉₎ =1878.514	P= .000	
P values are in parenthesis				

There is a high leveled and significant relation between 'affective commitment'(AC), 'continuance commitment'(CC), and 'normative commitment'(NC) and general commitment (GC) (R=.896, R²=.803, P<.01). Factors explain 80.3% of total variance in general commitment. In addition, in research, according to standardized beta coefficients the relativistic importance order of commitment factors on general commitment was acquired as normative commitment (β =.489), continuance commitment (β =.414) and affective commitment (β =.300). When t-Test results related regression parameters' meaningfulness are examined, it is seen that commitment factors are important precursors (p=.000) on general commitment.

These results show that in terms of general party commitment the most effective factor is normative commitment. The second factor is continuance commitment and the third one is affective commitment. In other words, it can be said that the party commitment of the electors in Turkey occurred mainly in terms of ethical principles. Being 'normative commitment' the first factor and the 'continuance factor's the second factor may be originated from environment factor has influence on Turkish voters. Research results show that even if one's commitment for his party weakens emotionally, party loyalty will sustain as a principle and ethical value.

10.3. Party Loyalty and Variables Analysis

(Parti Bağlılığı ve Değişkenler Analizi)

10.3.1. Party Loyalty and Socio-Demographic Variables

(Parti Bağlılığı ve Sosyo-Demografik Değişkenler)

In research, age, education and income were regarded as socio-demographic variables. A significant difference was found between the income levels of participants of research and their loyalty in terms of all commitment factors and general commitment (p<.050). Considering other socio-demographic variables, meaningfulness was acquired at lower level.

There is a significant difference between participants' income level and general party commitment (F=4.430, df=4, p=.001), affective commitment (F=3.619, df=4, p=.000), continuance commitment (F=5.033, df=4, p=.001) and normative commitment (F=3.563, df=4, p=.007). Commitment averages according to income level were found between 100 and 800 TL as 3.044, between 801 and 1250 TL as 3.092, 1251 and 2500 TL as 3.100, between 2501 and 3500 TL as 2.954 and between 3501 and 30000 as 3.015. Depending upon 2500 TL income groups party loyalty rises. This rise is very low. However, in 2501-3500 TL income level average falls and in 3501-30000 TL group average rises again. This situation, generally, happens in terms of affective commitment factor too. In continuance factor commitment average of people having income 100-800 is (2.922). In normative factor, voters' level of commitment decreases depending on their income increase. It can be considered as

an important result that people having low income, have low party loyalty in continuance commitment and commitment's becoming decrease in parallel to income rise in normative commitment. A voter having low income may not show loyalty to his party because of economic concerns. Voters in this group can have mostly rational preference. Moreover, it can be said that environment's pressure on voters can decrease depending on income rise. Therefore, voters can show less normative commitment as their income rises.

There is no significant difference ($p > .050$) between general commitment level, commitment factors and respondents' ages. However, while there is a significant difference ($p < .050$) between respondents' education level, general party commitment ($F=2.754$, $df=3$, $p=.041$) and affective commitment ($F=3.787$, $df=3$, $p=.010$), there is no significant difference ($p > .050$) between their education level, continuance commitment and normative commitment. In mutual comparison tables, there is a significant difference between MA, PhD and secondary education in terms of both general commitment and affective commitment. It can be said that as education level rises, party loyalty level decreases. Party loyalty of voters whose education level is primary and secondary school is higher than the ones graduating from university, MA and PhD. In continuance and normative commitment in which there is no significant difference, averages of voters graduating from MA and PhD are lower than the other voters.

It is seen that men have more party loyalty than women in the analysis done on genders of respondents. While there is a significant difference ($F=7.868$, $t=2.450$, $df=1268$, $p=.014$) between genders and affective commitment, there is no significant difference ($p > .050$) in terms of general and other commitment factors. However, when commitment averages analyzed, it is seen that men have higher averages. It can be said that men are dominant in an important part of Turkish political structure. Therefore, women's being less interested in politics can make their loyalty level low.

In political parties in Turkey, issue of women are ignored and politics closed its doors to women to a great extend. Nowadays, women do not exist in politics because of social gender roles or they try to survive around male roles (Altındal, 2009:351). This situation cause women to be seem more unwilling in terms of active participation. For example, it is concluded in a research done on university students that number of male students who want to take an active role in politics is higher than female students (Özyurt, 2010:318).

10.3.2. Party Loyalty and Political Variables (Parti Bağlılığı ve Siyasal Değişkenler)

Parties that voters voted in general parliamentary election in 2011, for how many years they have voted for it, whether they have voted for another party before and voters' political opinions were handled in the study in terms of party loyalty.

There is a significant difference between parties voted in general parliamentary election in 2011, general party commitment ($F=10.917$, $df=3$, $p=.000$) and commitment factors (affective commitment: $F=10.282$, $df=3$, $p=.000$; continuance commitment: $F=2.956$, $df=3$, $p=.031$; normative commitment: $F=7.147$, $df=3$, $p=.000$). In general view, three parties' exceeding election threshold (AKP, CHP, MHP) commitment averages are quite close to each other. However, it is seen that voters of MHP's have more general commitment (3.178), affective commitment (3.339), continuance commitment (3.034) and normative commitment (3.145) than other party's voters. In addition, voters of CHP's have higher party loyalty than AKP's. When real election results are analyzed it is seen that while AKP having the most votes has the

least party loyalty of voters, MHP having the least votes has the most party loyalty of voters. Therefore, it can be said that voters' party loyalty decreases depending on party's number of vote increasement. In another research which studies on voter's organizational commitment level, it is seen that voters having the most organizational commitment level are MHP voters and the ones having the least organizational commitment level are AKP voters. CHP is the second one in terms of party loyalty (Uygur et al. 2010:89). In other words, both of these researches have similar results.

While there is no significant difference between the length of the period that voters are voting for the party and general party commitment and normative commitment ($p>.050$); there is a significant difference between affective commitment ($F=2.352$, $df=5$, $p=.039$) and continuance commitment ($F=2.667$, $df=5$, $p=.021$). The averages are close to each other generally. However, there is an important difference in continuance commitment. Voters saying that voting for his party for two and less than two years have less commitment than the ones saying that they have voted for a longer time. While all the other averages are above 3.0, in voting including two years and a longer time in continuance commitment average is 2.9. It can be said that there is an increase in repeating voting behavior in terms of continuance commitment.

There is a significant difference between whether voters have voted for another party before and general commitment ($F=2.422$, $df=1160$, $t=-2.754$, $p=.006$), affective commitment ($F=2.456$, $df=1276$, $t=-3.005$, $p=.003$) and normative commitment ($F=3.208$, $sd=1244$, $t=-2.798$, $p=.005$). On the other hand, there is no significant difference in continuance commitment ($F=0.45$, $df=1251$, $t=353$, $p=.724$). When all averages analyzed it is found out that voters' party loyalty who have voted for another party before is lower.

There is no significant difference between respondents political view and general party commitment, commitment factors ($p>.050$). However, when averages are handled it is seen that the highest general commitment average belongs to conservative democrat (3.081) and nationalist (3.080), the least general commitment average belongs to democrat (2.995).

11. RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (SONUÇ VE ÖNERİLER)

To know voters' level of commitment is quite important to predict voters' reactions. It can be said that in places where party loyalty level is high there is a slow change in party preference. One of the change factors in numerical structure is a change that can be occurred in voters' level of commitment. Individualization process in the world decrease party loyalty. 1990s can be said as years when party loyalty level decreased in an important extend. For example, during this period, voters party commitment decreased and number of voters who had tendency to change their party increased in the USA (Powell et al. 2003:33). Nowadays, people spend more time and energy to understand the subjects that they are going to vote. Therefore, less desire comes out of a behavior of voting according to party commitment (Newman, 1994:29).

In the study carried out to define Turkish voters' level of party loyalty, it is concluded that Turkish voters' general party commitment level is high. The level of commitment is midlevel in terms of commitment factors such as affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

Normative commitment factor emerges as the most efficient factor on voters' general commitment level. The second and the third one are continuance and affective commitment. This situation shows that

Turkish voters have sociological way of voting. Since items in normative factors are mostly related to voter's principled and ethical stance. Therefore, voter's environment comes out as an important factor in this situation. In addition, it can be said that this opinion is supported by the fact that second important factor is continuance commitment.

In addition, it is found out in the study that voter's income, education level, length of period that he is in his party and whether he voted for another party before are influential in voters' party commitment in terms of socio-demographic and political variables. Even though there is no significant difference in terms of gender, averages show that males have more party loyalty than females. Voters' income and education level's being high make their party loyalty decrease. A voter's party loyalty is low who voted for another party before. In addition, in terms of continuance commitment, the more a voter remains in a party, the more commitment he has.

This study makes important contribution in terms of analyzing political changes. Voters' present party commitment, changes that they show according to socio-demographic and political changes are revealed in the study. Therefore, it is an important data for analysis of voters in election campaigns. However, as mentioned above, voters' party loyalty show changes nowadays. In today's society in which individualization is more and more important, this situation will be more evident. Therefore, different studies done in various district will make important contributions to analysis of Turkish voters. In addition, socio-demographic and political variables which are influential in party commitment are provided to be revealed in a more detailed way.

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