



SOCIAL MEDIA IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS: THE CASE OF THE 2019

LOCAL ELECTIONS IN İZMİR

MÜGE UYAR

Thesis Advisor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. BURAK DOĞU

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

İZMİR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS

İZMİR, 2019

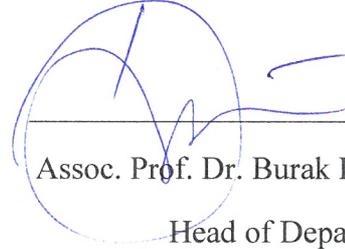
Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences



Assoc. Prof. Dr. M. Efe BİRESSELİOĞLU

Director

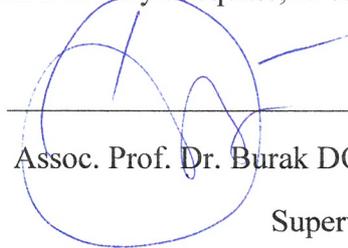
I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Burak DOĞU

Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

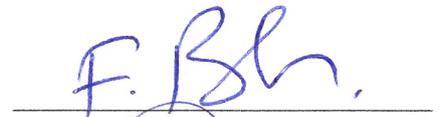


Assoc. Prof. Dr. Burak DOĞU

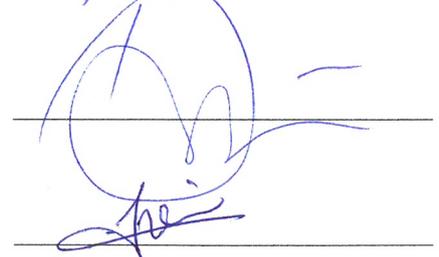
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Prof. Dr. Filiz BAŞKAN



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Burak DOĞU



Asst. Prof. Dr. İrem ÖZGÖREN KINLI



ABSTRACT

With the developing technology, digital media has evolved and started to take more place in human life. There are important changes in the field of communication just like each and every field of the totally modernized life. It is a fact that with the rapid use of the social media platforms, it has become easier for users to produce content and make comments. It became easier for both the candidates and the parties to explain their background, their projects and their ideologies to the electorate just beforehand the general and local elections. On the other hand, the voters have had the opportunity to get to know the candidates they will vote for and gain access, even control to the candidates. The voters are able to comment on the shares at any time, and their intervention in the election campaigns considerably increased.

In this research, the use of social media in election campaigns of the presidential candidates of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Local Elections 2019 are examined in terms of the importance politicians gave to social media platforms. The use of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and their followers are compared with data.

Key Words: Political Communication, Election Campaigns, Local Elections, Social Media, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

ÖZET

Teknoloji ile birlikte dijital medya da gelişmiştir ve insan hayatında daha fazla yer almaya başlamıştır. Her alanda olduğu kadar iletişim alanında da önemli değişimler yaşanmaktadır. Sosyal medya platformları ile birlikte kullanıcıların içerik üretebilmeleri, yorum yapabilmeleri daha da kolaylaşmıştır. Genel ve yerel seçimler öncesi hem adayların hem de partilerin kendilerini, projelerini ve ideolojilerini seçmene anlatması kolaylaşmıştır. Diğer bir yandan seçmen, oy kullanacağı adayları daha yakından tanıma fırsatı bulmuş ve adaylara ulaşabilme imkanı kazanmıştır. Seçmen, istediği zaman paylaşımlara yorum yapabilir duruma gelmiştir ve seçim kampanyalarına olan müdahalesi artmıştır.

Bu araştırmada Türkiye 2019 yerel seçimlerinde İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi başkan adaylarının sosyal medya kullanımları ve seçim kampanyalarında sosyal medyaya verdikleri önem ve bakış açıları incelenmiştir. Facebook, Twitter ve Instagram kullanımları ve takipçi sayıları karşılaştırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Siyasal İletişim, Seçim Kampanyası, Yerel Seçimler, Sosyal Medya, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ÖZET.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	1
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	2
CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION.....	4
1.1. General Framework of Political Communication.....	4
1.2. Election Campaigns and Political Communication	7
1.3. Political Communication and Web 1.0.....	10
1.4. Political Communication and Web 2.0.....	14
1.5. The Political Usage of Instagram, Facebook and Twitter	21
1.6. Examples of Election Campaigns All Around the World	23
CHAPTER 3: POLITICAL PREFERENCES OF THREE MAJOR CITIES.....	27
2.1 The General Political Situation of Turkey: İstanbul and Ankara Municipalities	27
2.2. An Overview of İzmir’s Political History	37
2.3 The Previous İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Election Periods and the Competition.	39
CHAPTER 4: A CLOSER LOOK TO THE 2019 LOCAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.....	41
3.1. General Framework of 2019 Local Election	41
3.2 Hypothesis, Research Method and Research Question	44
3.3 Examination of Candidates' Social Media Accounts: Twitter, Instagram and Facebook	46
3.4 Findings from In-depth Interview.....	57
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY	72
APPENDIX	79

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Instagram Follower Numbers of Parties and Leaders on March 31 st , 2019	31
Figure 2: Twitter Follower Numbers of Parties and Leaders on March 31 st , 2019.....	32
Figure 3: Facebook Follower Numbers of Parties and Leaders on March 31 st , 2019.....	33
Figure 4: Trending Topics on Twitter on May 10 th and 13 th , 2019.....	36
Figure 5: 2014 Local Elections İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Results	39
Figure 6: March 31st, 2019 Local Elections İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Results	43
Figure 10: Twitter Accounts' of Tunç Soyer and Nihat Zeybekçi.....	49
Figure 11: Tunç Soyer's Tweet Samples	51
Figure 12: Nihat Zeybekçi's Tweet Samples.....	53
Figure 13: Instagram Accounts' of Tunç Soyer and Nihat Zeybekçi	54
Figure 15: Nihat Zeybekçi's Instagram Post Samples.....	55
Figure 16: Facebook Accounts' of Tunç Soyer and Nihat Zeybekçi.....	57

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AK Party – Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)

ANAP – Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi)

BTP – Independent Turkey Party (Bağımsız Türkiye Partisi)

CHP – Republican People’s Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)

DP – Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti)

DSP – Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti)

FP – Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi)

HDP – People’s Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi)

IYI Party – İYİ Parti

MHP – Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi)

VP – Patriotic Party (Vatan Partisi)

SODEP – Social Democratic Party (Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi)

SP – Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi)

RP – Welfare Party (Refah Partisi)

TKP – Communist Party of Turkey (Türkiye Komünist Partisi)

YSK – Supreme Electoral Council (Yüksek Seçim Kurulu)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

There have been many changes in our lives with the changing and developing technology. With the advent of the digital, human life has become easier and many of our habits have gradually changed. Communication, which has a great importance in everyday life, has also changed its dimension with the power of the digital. It will be suggesting that with the development of new media, social media has started to take greater part. If there is one specific field in which it is quite possible to observe how communication with social media has changed, it is surely the election campaigns. Communication and propaganda are regarded as the key elements in election campaigns. Politicians and candidates can get votes, interest, even fanaticism through communication. Also, through the effective use communication, they can introduce themselves and their projects. Communication with social media has undoubtedly accelerated and the chances of receiving feedback have considerably increased. It enabled to reach large mass at lower costs. This research focused on the importance of social media in election campaigns. The selection to be reviewed and the sample is 2019 local elections. In the 2019 local elections, election of the Mayor of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality is analyzed and the social media usage of the candidates is statistically compared. In order to compare how actively the candidates used social media platforms and how many people were followed, the number of posts and the number of followers are also broadly examined. With the extensive data analysis, it is determined which candidates use effective social media platforms actively. In-depth interview method is carried throughout the study. The candidates' social media accounts managers are interviewed with an aim to represent the average social media usage of the politicians. In other words, during the election campaign, all sorts of experiences with regards to social media and multiple ways in which the platform is used statistically compared.

In the first chapter, the relation between political communication and its influence on the election campaigns is examined. Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 concepts are the major points that

have been enlightened. The political importance and political use of the social media developing with the new media has been investigated in detail. Selected social media platforms for this research have been presented as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. It has been also examined how social media and new media are used in election campaigns all around the world and the election process carried out in Turkey is taken as an example. Barack Obama's use of digital in the 2008 and 2012 elections has been a model for the whole world.

In the second chapter, the electoral system and electoral campaigns take part in Turkey are projected. The election record of Ankara, the capital of Turkey, and İstanbul, the most populated city of Turkey has been explained and those two cities' attitudes towards 2019 General Elections have been attempted to dealt with. In addition, the success of the political parties in the past elections take part in the study with an aim to resolve the election history and its ideological structure of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality.

In the third chapter, experiences, incidents, and the use of social media in 2019 local elections of Turkey, which is in fact the main focus of the study, have been detailed. Hypothesis, research method and research question of this study are also determined and clearly declared. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts and followers of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality candidates are compared to each other with data and graphics. Research method is selected as in-depth interview. In-depth interviews are conducted with Republican People's Party (CHP), Patriotic Party (VP) and Felicity Party (SP) social media managers and with the independent candidate Yalçın Yanık. As a result of these detailed interviews, it is compared that to what extent candidates give importance to social media and how effectively they use it for political elections.

CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

1.1. General Framework of Political Communication

The use of political communication is the result of social interactions such as self-defense in the society life, providing the social order, keeping records with an aim to determining the status of trade and products, and also using and saving money. In fact, these interactions are the result of power relations that determine political communication (Tokgöz, 2008, p.19). The advancements like the right of voting and electing has become a universal and global norm, the political competition which is carried out by the mass media has strengthened the concept of public opinion, and the increasing of the active participation of the citizens to political process have led to the official start of attaching a considerable importance to political communication all around the world.

Political communication can be defined as communication with the use of various communication types and techniques by political actors in order to adopt certain ideological purposes, certain groups, masses, countries or blocks in society and to transform them into actions when necessary (Aziz, 2007, p. 3). As it can be easily understood from Aziz's statement, communication has become important in every field of life and political communication has taken place in almost every aspect of life. Political communication can be explained as the communication within and outside the political parties. Political parties are the organizations that come together with an aim to achieve their goals by defending certain political views, ideologies, methods and gaining power through elections. Their ultimate goal is to come to power and have a say in ruling of the country. Opposition parties often criticize the policies and actions of the government, in line with the views of the party (Aziz, 2007, p. 87). According to McNair, political communication is a type of communication established by politicians and other political actors to realize certain goals. It is the communication carried out by non-politicians (voters, journalists) who target these actors. It is carried out in relation to these actors

and their activities in other forms of political debate in news, corner posts and in the media (McNair, 2011, p.4).

As for political interests; they are sought in all the political parties' activities. Almost all activities of political parties for the public are related to political communication. In this sense, it can be claimed that effective communication made during the elections has reached the highest point due to its political nature. As a result, it can be argued that all kinds of activities of political parties are a political communication dimension (Aziz, 2007, p. 24). In social relations, the governors seek various methods to emphasize and reinforce their own achievements. All of these methods are meant to protect the power of the rulers. If politicians are not in a position to rule, they want to gain power. The development of mass media and the instant spread of messages to a large number of people have influenced communication, persuasion, management approaches and methods.

Political communication lies at the intersection of politics and communication studies. Its purpose is generally equivalent to being sovereignty, ruling and governing. Political communication has to convince the target audience to reach its goal. The ideological language to be used in this persuasion is determined by the person who makes politics and his environment. Once the ideological language is determined, it is sent to the target audience with various forms of communication (Kılıçaslan, 2008, p. 9). What is more, as Özer well states, “in order to make effective political communication, it is necessary to know the processes and strategies of political communication” (Özer, 2014, p.176).

It is regarded as quite normal and predictable for political parties to communicate with the public and especially with the electorate, in different stages of the election period, and with different methods and techniques. However, communication is also essential before and after the elections. In other words, it is a responsibility of the political parties to communicate directly

and continuously with the public. It is clear that if political parties do not have any difficulty in this issue and if the events caused by their administration are news value, this will be reflected in the public opinion in various ways. It is also rather natural for the political parties to use the most appropriate communication channels to reach a wider audience. The political parties forming the opposition in the parliament have more limited opportunities. It is expected that the opposition parties are sensitive to the various events in the society and they are also expected to transfer the thoughts, attitudes and behaviors that the party advocates through these issues. In particular, it is demanded that the political power carries out critical and constructive messages frequently to the public by closely monitoring its activities and discourses. To put it differently, while they are fulfilling the responsibility of being in opposition, they need to show they're being the counterpart in the parliament and transfer their ideas or promises to the public through various communication means. The political parties that cannot attend to parliament or have no representatives in parliament are more limited in addressing public opinion. While the communication of such parties with the public is similar to the others, they are not as lucky in using them in mass media. In this respect, they try to have their own media or at least have a radio, television or newspaper that supports them (Aziz, 2007, p. 101).

There has always been communication in the history of humanity; yet quite expectedly, the form and the nature of communication has changed with the constantly developing technology. Nowadays, great many institutions, organizations and companies attach importance to communication language since it is one of the most important tools to introduce themselves. Political parties are one of those organizations that attach the considerable amount of importance to communication. Political parties can come to power by election, which is also the voted result of public communication. It is a must to obtain an effective connection with the electorate in order to gain power. The parties transfer their goals and promises to the electorate

through communication. Therefore, political communication functions as beyond a tool, it is an obligatory need for political parties.

1.2. Election Campaigns and Political Communication

Election campaigns, aimed at changing or strengthening voter preferences, are considered to be effective on voters, particularly on floating votes. As party loyalty decreases, election campaigns increase its importance. Political communication campaigns have three main objectives; informing, convincing and public mobilization. Political parties and candidates convey their stance and actions on political issues and problems through campaigns. They also provide information about themselves and answer the questions voters have wondered. Apart from voting, it is also aimed to support voters for party or candidate campaigns and to mobilize their surroundings to convince them of the same voting behavior (Kalender, 2005). During the campaign, problems in the country are raised and public awareness is raised on the agenda. While the campaigns are carried out, all kinds of ideas are shared, and the awareness of voters is aimed to be increased with these discussions and explanations. There is no doubt that campaigns encourage voters to vote so that democracy develops in the country and everyone has the right to speak. The election time helps candidates identify with the party through campaigns. It also helps the voters to better explain themselves.

There are three basic types of political-oriented political communication campaigns and those are having power, holding power and wearing down power, and social movements based on product-oriented advertising or marketing campaigns and ideological reasons. The common ground of these campaigns is to mobilize the target audience in the direction desired by the campaign owner. It is assumed that communication is the most fundamental fact that is necessary for the realization of trust in politics. Communication channels and tools must be

used to reach and convince the target audience. For this reason, in the real sense campaigns can be possible with the development of mass media (Sandıkçioğlu, 2012, p. 20). Democracies are the dialogues between citizens and political candidates. The election campaigns constitute the most significant part of this dialogue. Through campaigns that are colorful and in great conflict, candidates try to convince voters to vote and support them (Lau and Pomper, 2002, p. 47).

The core of the politics is persuasion, as Mutz, Sniderman and Brody (1996) noted. There is a special conviction in political communication. In politics, the idea, issue or candidate is sold to a self-qualifying public on election-day, using modified mainstream principles (Mutz, Sniderman, and Brody, 1996, p. 1). For the election campaigns based on convincing voters, the media can be seen as the primary means to influence citizens' decision-making processes. Interaction is the most important element in the new media order. The change in media has also directly affected the concept, content and tools of the election campaigns (Göksu, 2015a, p. 319). The election campaigns are in direct contact with the citizens through fieldwork of the party organizations. The mass media messages of the election campaigns are provided to the voters by media.

In addition to the promises made by the parties according to their institutional structures, the election campaigns have promises declared by the candidates according to the characteristics of their electoral circles and the demands of the electorate. These promises can be easily defined as complementary elements in the election process. This is the most important point of the campaign, because integrity must be the main strategy in campaigns. What is also worth of notice that in order to become recognizable in the election campaigns, it is necessary to formulate the campaign strategies from the very beginning and put forward them in the most creative and innovative way ever possible. In this sense, new communication technologies offer new and target-oriented channels directly affecting the campaign process. With the fact that the

population uses new communication technologies, a lot of campaign information, such as the background of the party candidates, the statements they promised, the candidate from which party is the candidate for what purpose, surrounds the electorate and can be easily reached if desired (Beril, Akıncı and Bat, 2009, p. 2747). This development of technology has also highlighted the technological dimension of political communication. However, while using technology in political communication; it is still important to successfully identify classical strategies, such as the identification of the message and the target audience, by recognizing the other side well (Özer, 2014, p. 180).

One of the areas in which the concept of social media, which changes the structure of communication and which has various economic, social and cultural effects, is the political election campaigns. Social media, which makes an interactive content possible, has become a medium for conducting election campaigns including the promises of political parties and introducing candidates to the public and voters, and providing a public image and reputation. Through election campaigns conducted on social media, parties and candidates have the opportunity to inform voters and communicate more directly and effectively via text or video or other visual elements. On the other hand, voters, party supporters and critics may also contribute to the production of content by expressing their views on the party or the candidate through social media (Akyol, 2015, p. 99). As Akyol further explores, social media, without time and space limitations, reciprocity and two-way flow of information, allowing users to be a content producer in the foreground with the structure began to be used in election campaigns (Akyol, 2015, p. 99).

1.3. Political Communication and Web 1.0

The electoral works of the politicians often prefer to reach the citizens through the use of political communication method. At this point, political communication can be defined as a sort of communication that is provided through a wide range of written and electronic media. As a general rule, political communication does not consist solely of message from the determined message, the historical context and the political atmosphere affect political communication (McNair, 2011). Leaders and political parties should take the support of the public to gain competence. The public should identify themselves well and demonstrate their activities. Political communication plays an important role in this issue and can be realized through all media and other communication channels. According to Meriç (2017), online communication is seen as the fastest growing and spreading type of communication in our age. The growth rate and capacity of online communication deeply affected political communication. Online communication symbolizes a completely new era and transformation potential in terms of human history, politics and communication. With the help and effective use of online communication citizens can learn the news more easily, share all kinds of information and opinions, organize online and take action, take part interactively, and so on. The reasons noted above have led the researchers to work on the politics of online communication.

In the process of political communication, the purpose of political communication differs for politicians, citizens, activists and pressure groups since ideas and attitudes are brought to the attention of the public through the media for different aims. Nevertheless, if there is one fact valid for the all; it will be the fact that they all aim to create an agenda and to attract public interest through the media. Online communication has a great potential beyond the limitations of traditional media. In particular, it gives disadvantaged groups the opportunity to

take part in the media and create an agenda extending the boundaries of political communication.

With the rapid developments in information and communication technologies, there are many new concepts such as new communication technologies, new media, social media, digital media, digital media and digital communication (Ergüney, 2017, p. 1480). Apart from the recent advancements, new media converged to communication infrastructures, people, enterprises, industries, international regulations, policies and administrations each other, making the transformation permanent and revealing new as a basic condition as Yanık (2014) suggests. The concept of new media, which emerged as a result of internet technology, is a concept that was revealed by researchers who made social, psychological, economic and political studies based on information and communication in the 1970s (Dilmen, 2007, p. 114). In addition to being totally “new” with different options such as video-text, teletext, cable television, digital television, data communication, file transfer, video discs, electronic letters, digital cameras, laptop computers, modems, projections, digital printing machines, digital photocopiers, faxes, communication satellites, internet, digital networks, and multimedia, the new media has the ability to carry 'old' media or mass media (newspaper, radio and television broadcasting) to very different dimensions. The new media has changed the composition of these tools / environments within the meaning of technological features by integrating into traditional media.

As it comes to the distinguishing characteristic of the new media, it can be explained as; unlike the traditional media, it has provided multi-layered communication to the communication process. This feature of the new media also affects the role and participation of the user in the communication process in a variety of ways. In a multi-media environment, indicators, icons, communication diversity and different data types are collected within a single

tool. Different types of communication, such as multimedia, telecommunication, data transmission, mass communication, and various types of new technology such as image, sound, text and digital data are combined and perfectly blended into each other. While the new media individualizes different messages according to the user, it also provides interaction between the sender and the target audience which makes the views of the target audience quite accessible. With these opportunities provided by the new media, the rulers can easily reach to the managed people at any time and place and also convey the message they want to give to the recipient. All of the facts given surely increase the overall control of the governors on the governed and also contribute significantly to the manipulation of the consciousness and behavior of the target audience. In general, this situation can be assumed as effective in providing social control, preventing the problems that may arise and maintaining the order that the rulers desire.

Having enlightened the communication in the virtual environment, it is high time to explore the written, printed and electronic media. The first thing that needs to be covered is that the possibility of reacting like feedback interaction in new media is possible even if it is not reflected in oral communication. In addition to the main content created by the new media in the virtual environment, sound recordings, various graphics, tables, written documents, moving images, and the possibility of being able to connect to other web pages are indicative of a content that is more enriched than traditional mass media (Tokgöz, 2008, p.41). With the new communication technologies, the ideas arouse behind digital screens that the world is changing both in form and content. Undoubtedly, the main determinants of societies are developmental levels, structures, organization and socio-economic power balances. It is imperative to emphasize the role and importance of science, politics, culture and tolerance in terms of political communication. The mass media, which is considered to be the most important and most effective means of political communication activities, is used intensively by political parties both during and outside the election period. Mass media can be classified as written, visual and

oral instruments if they are subjected to a general classification. All kinds of newspapers, magazines, books, brochures, etc. are characterized as written tools sources. Newspapers are one of the most influential written tools to keep track of country and world news. Magazines are another mass communication tool that contain more limited number of subjects than the newspapers (Baltacı and Eke, 2012, p. 116). It goes without saying that mass media is used as a political communication tool through television, newspaper and radio as well as the new communication technology tools which are mainly internet and mobile phone. Recently, however, the mass media has been used most frequently in political communication studies and the internet has started to be used in addition to mobile phones. Thanks to these communication tools, it has become easier for the people to transfer their thoughts directly to each other. In the past, oral communication took the most place in communication, written and visual form can be claimed to be developed with advancing technologies. Internet, however, combines the both ways of communication via the written, verbal, visual, and auditory options it has proudly offered.

Furthermore, creating web pages for parties and candidates have gained prominence in the election campaigns organized by traditional mass media, such as television, newspapers and radio. As the development of communication technologies reveals new concepts such as the acceleration of history or the present, the phenomenon of political communication has spread rapidly both in the national and international level. In better saying, with the development of the Internet, electronic mail and the spread of the Worldwide Web network, the worldwide networks that reach every place, as well as mobile phones, make instant ties between people all over the world, eliminate distances, reduce reaction times to zero, increase the echoes of events, a situation that can change completely (Karaçor, 2009, p. 124). Through an instant look to the recent history of the internet, it can be revealed that in the early 1990s, the internet was thought to be the new media, yet, it could not be adopted to the time. Clinton's challenge with the

internet of the day summarizes all the condition as Leuschner defines; although the use of Clinton's website in the 1992 elections was based on the function of disseminating information only, it was considered an innovative study from the perspective of political communication for that period (Leuschner, 2012). The first effective use of Internet was for the political advertising in the 1996 US presidential elections. This experience has taken its place in the historical process as a small example because of the lack of internet in the society and technical impossibilities (Polat, 2015, pp. 538-539).

1.4. Political Communication and Web 2.0

The concept named Web 2.0 has emerged with the developments in new communication technologies and brought about various innovative social media networks through which users could produce their own content. One-way communication in traditional media has become a two-way and interactive communication with social media (Akyol, 2015, p. 101). Just like the Web 2.0, innovations such as online news sites, instant messaging, chat rooms, digital games, social networks can be evaluated within the new media concept (Binark and Bayraktutan, 2013, p. 18). The concept of Web 2.0 was first mentioned at an international conference held in 2004. Tim O'Reilly, the owner of one of the two companies hosting the conference, expressed the word Web 2.0, which gave a new perspective to the idea of a new situation that emerged in the internet world with the common desire of the participants (Kara, 2013, p. 29).

The structural dimension includes media ownership, control mechanisms and institutional functioning surrounding the area of freedom of communication. According to Dahlgren (2005), the phenomenon of ownership in the network structure may constitute an obstacle to the forms of information production and self-expression. The representation dimension of the new public sphere defines different views and media outputs with ideological

tendencies. At this point, it is meant that plural/opposing camouflages with different views can take place in the new media. The interactional dimension refers to the field of discursive communication and negotiation. How citizens interpret media output and how they use them constitute the interactional dimension. In Dahlgren's insight, the new participant citizen can engage in a number of events, such as sharing information and experience, creating identity, influencing public opinion, campaigning or boycotting through the new media. According to Dahlgren, addressing the new and increasingly deepening relationship between the internet and the public sphere necessitates the inclusion of the public sphere in the realm of offline political processes (Dahlgren, 2005, pp. 148-151). At this point, what is important to note that Dahlgren developed a simple typology in order to avoid the unfair privilege of negotiation on other forms in describing the online political communication environment named it multisector online public sphere. With this approach, he divided the online discussion area into five categories: e-government, advocacy / activist, civic forums, para-political domain and journalism domain. All these categories emphasize that the internet facilitates an impressive communicative heterogeneity (Dahlgren, 2005, pp. 152-153).

When the new media and the traditional media are compared in political advertising; the time spent on the social media is recorded as much shorter. In comparison with other communication tools, the time to reach 50 million users was 38 years on the radio, 13 years on television and 5 years on the Internet (Polat, 2015, pp. 557-558). In the new media, feedback possibilities are possible even if it is not as easy as it is in the oral communication. In addition to the main content created by the new media in the virtual environment, sound recordings and the possibility of being able to connect to various other web pages are indicative of a content enriched by traditional media. The new media can also provide information gathering, preference and selection. In addition to computing capabilities, new communication technologies enable mutual interaction between users.

Social media, by all means, is a media that provides double-sided and simultaneous information sharing. The most important feature of social media tools is to create their own communities by eliminating borders. The community in this environment affects each other, disseminates the information through existing channels and creates special areas for them. While the traditional media products perform the transmission function, which is far from interaction, today, with the new technological developments, every internet user has also become a content producer (Güçdemir, 2010, pp. 29-32). Historically, the emergence and spread of all means of communication has influenced political communication and has been one of the top research topics of political communication. Internet, especially interactional, hyper-mentality, user-oriented content production support, multimedia style has been mostly examined.

It can be suggested that rather than the internet-based conceptualized web applications, what really makes different communication practices in the field of internet and political communication in the most visible way is the social media applications that are conceptualized as Web 2.0. Social media applications consisting of interaction and sharing-based applications that enable users to circulate and disseminate their own content have a variety of dynamics. Those dynamics are quite distinct from Web 1.0 applications which more resemble traditional media. As the most prominent dynamic, there stands the removal of the message delivery limitation to the visitor users. Especially with viral campaigns, political parties and/or actors can reach voters /citizens in different sectors. For this reason, the use of internet applications in political communication campaigns are being given more and more importance.

The most serious power on politicians is the electors. Therefore, it is very important for citizens to reach politicians. In this way, social media carries an important function to provide

politicians with a more transparent period of politics and also enables them to inform their voters. What is more, it becomes much more obvious that feedback and accountability mechanisms work faster and more effective through social media. Considering that the masses reaching the messages of politicians are usually the proponents of the party or politicians, it can be established that social media is not that useful or effective in promoting a political party or a leader to the electorates who are not too politically inclined. With the emergence and rapid development of social media, election campaigns have started to be found in an interactive environment as well as in traditional media such as television, newspaper and radio. It is seen that the relation between political campaign and the political campaign has started to gain more importance over time (Akyol, 2015, p. 101).

Social media platforms have been hailed as potentially revolutionary, creating horizontal spaces of communication inside otherwise hierarchical political campaigns. The elite control over campaign communications during the broadcast era of politics has given way to social media platforms that relate users symmetrically and reciprocally with equal capacities as senders and receivers of communications (Jensen et al., 2012). Kreiss supports this idea further proclaiming that this facilitates dialogical relationships and the decentralized production of political narratives (Jensen, Bang 2013). However, it would be a mistake to infer communication operations from the technical attributes of a communication medium. Political campaigns often use Twitter as a means to shape debates, influencing and framing issues within the campaign (Kreiss, 2016b). Campaigns may create a monologue through their tweets, retaining a hierarchical authority structure, or they may empower ordinary citizens or laypersons as co-producers of campaign messaging. Prevailing accounts of the function of social media in political life either point to its technical affordances that facilitate political mobilization outside of institutionalized spaces or its role as an extension of relatively technocratic communications. Social movement studies have emphasized the role of social

media in creating opportunity structures, organizational infrastructures, and spaces for the formation of counter-publics (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013). However, their import for political campaigns has largely followed a technocratic tradition (Jensen, 2017, p. 24).

The developments in new communication technologies, together with the new media and Web 2.0 concepts, have created the ground for the emergence of the concept of social media and the production of interactive, two-way communication content in various social media networks by the users. The interactive nature of Web 2.0 enables users to produce content and publish content they produce. The tools used include social media, such as social sharing networks and blogs. The use of social media from the Web 2.0 environment in the process of political communication, political parties and leaders, party members, party sympathizers and voters according to traditional political communication methods and techniques, many opportunities for interacting with political text / messages, joining, disseminating and sharing their own content it provides (Akyol, 2015). To summarize Akyol's statements on the use of social media through Web 2.0, it can be foregrounded that social media ended the one-way message communication of politicians. Quite expectedly, a new field of political dialogue has emerged. This enabled politicians to have direct political representation of citizens, and to be in direct contact with complaints and support and in doing so, they do not have to spend astronomic budgets.

Another point which is worth of notice that, as it is well defined, while the politicians are directing the media, the people are directing the new media. The strong relationship between political communication and new media has gained importance in this direction. Within the framework of the election campaign, new media content is formed by the new media expert teams of political parties and political leaders. Social media, which offers transparent communication management, has also become a leading actor of election campaigns (Güçdemir

and Göksu, 2015). In the election periods, social networks provide politicians with an environment in which they can introduce themselves, explain their ideas and objectives and measure the pulse of the electorate. In other words, the politician receives feedback before the elections and thus has the chance to make a more consistent estimate of the vote before the election. This makes it surely easier for the politician to shape his policy before the election. In addition, the electorate finds an objective and free discussion about politicians and their political views. While social networks lead politicians to be more transparent and coherent, they also allow politicians to learn how each action or step is perceived on the electorate side before the elections. At the same time, the interactive communication of these networks helps organizations to make their organizations less costly and much faster. In better saying, social networks are creating new campaign methods as well as being a catalyst for traditional methods. Therefore, considering the use of social media in terms of political communication, it is essential to ensure interaction-based communication with voters and other citizens, to gather data and information about voters, to reach young voters and potential voters, as well as to create and mobilize communities on behalf of the political party or leader (Güçdemir and Göksu, 2015).

Social media now attracts voters to a platform where images are spoken, moving the process far from the classic election campaigns based on slogans. At this point, the greatest aim can be formulated as to mobilize the young electorate and to catch more public interest with various visual platforms. It goes without saying that social media has become the essential of election campaigns. It undoubtedly carries a great significance to have instant feedbacks at the end of the intelligence and effective use of media and to have comfortably easy reporting system along with an opportunity to touch upon the number of people which they cannot reach on the fields. The wish of the leader candidates to demonstrate and introduce themselves is in fact due to the fact that it is the most convenient, effective, and may be the most economical way of

political promotion. If the right movements, the right strategies, the right timing and the right channels are not used through this economical way, the risk of not being heard or known other than your own circle can be appeared on the surface. The need of candidates to use social media for election campaigns is an indisputable fact. The image that the candidate has got should follow an attitude far from insincerity. It should be emphasized that the candidate is an individual among citizens rather than a political figure, what is more, the use of a language that includes overlooked or dull expressions should be strictly avoided.

It is also considerably easier to reach the target audience through social media; allows to reach the right audience, with the right message, and with the right timing. The cost of prominent items such as the cost of advertising materials and the labor used in these organizations, and the cost of promoting equipment used in the election process to address the masses directly are the much greater cost items compared to the online structured social media campaign. All sorts of social media channels are certainly the important tools to reach larger masses and it is possible to create significant awareness with the contents to be produced in social media in parallel to the demands of the target audience. The most important reasons why social media has become a serious political tool can be detailed as the power of interaction, the breadth of the target audience addressed to politicians, and the fact that statistical data are easily obtained. All these facts considered; political communication provides a neutral media for social media compared to traditional media channels. The rapid expansion of the Internet all across the world has led to the intensive use of tablet computers, especially smartphones. While this use expanded the speed and scope of communication through social media tools, it also changed the process of political communication. The use of social media in political communication applications and election campaigns has emerged in various forms. Political parties, political leaders and candidates are benefiting from social media as well as traditional methods and conventional mass media to communicate directly or indirectly with voters.

1.5. The Political Usage of Instagram, Facebook and Twitter

The development of social media and the shift from the use of Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 have brought new opportunities to the field of political communication. The election campaign carried out on social media was launched as a new phenomenon in the 2008 US elections via Facebook. The importance of online campaigns as a political election process is that they embrace the concept of inclusion of these campaigns (Alujevic, 2012, p. 466). All political activities, especially election campaigns, continue to shift from traditional to new media. Considering that the new electorate means new votes, the necessity of politicians to access to young people is becoming more evident day by day. It is possible to raise awareness by using various communication channels, especially in social media. It is doable to create awareness with the innovative contents, especially up to the demands of all the social media channels.

Beyond being web initiatives that enable social networks to communicate and socialize, social networks also play an active role in social movements in terms of acting together, gathering volunteers, organizing instant sharing and mobilizing ideas. The most important reasons why social media has become a serious political tool are listed as the power of interaction, the breadth of the target audience addressed to politicians, and the ease with which statistical data can be obtained. It is also an undeniable fact that in social communication, social media offers much more neutral media compared to traditional media channels.

Furthermore, social media gives the public the opportunity to create their own political content, to disseminate them online and to comment on the content created by other users. For example, although YouTube is primarily a video sharing site, the site also allows users to comment. On the other hand, sites like Facebook are more textual and designed for direct interpersonal and social connections. The most important similarity between social media sites

is that these sites are more user-centric than traditional media. Therefore, these sites allow political interaction that is not possible in previous election campaigns (Hanson, 2010, p. 585). It is observed that users control the political content and contribute to the content in these sites (Akyol, 2015, p. 101). According to Kushin and Yamamoto (2010, p.613), social media enables users to search for information, as well as enable them to send political comments to blogs and social media sites and share multimedia comments, allowing them to interact with other users. For example, Facebook users can express themselves politically in different ways by making online donations, encouraging their friends to vote, sending graphics or expressing their political ideas. Twitter and blogs are used by candidates and voters to comment on social and political issues, to share information and to encourage participation. Online tools such as blogs, podcasts, online web sites, social networks and online video sharing, which provide online participation and feedback, play an important role in the process of political communication (Dimitrova, 2014, p. 97).

Facebook and Twitter are social platforms that enable organizing, sharing information and ideas and grouping beliefs around thoughts, with the apart from merely being web sites that provide users with messaging and dating. Social media plays an important role in the political arena as in many other areas. They are used by political parties and politicians to direct people to political participation. In addition, social networks are used as a propaganda tool, especially during election periods. Prevailing accounts of the function of social media in political life either point to its technical affordances that facilitate political mobilization outside of institutionalized spaces or its role as an extension of relatively technocratic communications. Social movement studies have emphasized the role of social media in creating opportunity structures, organizational infrastructures, and spaces for the formation of counter-publics (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013). However, their import for political campaigns has largely followed a technocratic tradition (Jensen, 2017, p.24).

1.6. Examples of Election Campaigns All Around the World

Starting from 1992, ever since the US presidential elections, internet technologies have been used in the field of political communication. In the early 2000s, social media candidates were part of the election campaign. Particularly in the 2008 US elections, in “Youth-change-hope” for Obama and the spread of the multicultural election campaign, social media tools as well as traditional media have been used extensively. As a result, American history of election has experienced a brand-new political process. Obama's election campaign has revealed the importance of social media in political communication strategies that have created a great potential (Güçdemir and Göksu, 2015). In a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center Internet and the American Life Project, the use of social media in the United States has become an important channel for political and civic engagement for many Americans. 60% of American adults use at least two social media tools for political purposes. 66% of adult social media users share their views on civil and political issues in social networks and engage in political activities. At the beginning of these activities, there stands following the candidates, commenting on the political contents formed, and active participation in political groups formed (Pewinternet, 2012).

One of the first countries employing the internet and its tools in political communication is the USA. Especially with the transition to Web 2.0, many social media platforms such as Twitter, blogs and Facebook are used by political actors to communicate with the masses. The fact that Barack Obama, has been chosen as the president all over the world and Obama's election campaign has been thoroughly studied by many experts. Besides his personal and political history, and his rhetoric and influence on the electorate, the main reason of Obama's success is thought to be his very effective use of social media during the election campaign. As it was in the 2008 election campaign, Obama used social media extensively in his 2012 presidential election campaign. Obama won the presidential elections for two terms,

strengthened the belief in social media in election campaigns. Obama's success encouraged the world leaders who are cautious about social media (Güçdemir and Göksu, 2015). What is also worth of notice is that in these elections, Facebook has attracted the attention of large political parties and candidates, as well as national media, with more than hundred million users as an active policy mobilization tool (Carlisle, 2013, p. 891).

At that time, the most popular media channels were Facebook and Twitter while less discovered social networks such as Vine, Pinterest, Instagram, etc. brought about visual communication and content to the forefront with the impact of the incredible rapid change in mobile technologies. When the 2008 US presidential elections are broadly examined on how social media is beneficial if it is used well in elections, President Obama had reached thirteen million people in the mailing list, five million followers through social networks, and three million online donors. It is also known that Obama has raised over \$500 million on the internet thanks to its successful social media strategy (Çildan et al., 2011).

In the 2008 US presidential election, the strategy of Obama was that his campaign included social media practices in every phase of the election campaign, under the direction of Facebook's co-founder, Chris Hedges. Teddy Goff was the digital campaign director of the 2012 US presidential election campaign (Borins, 2011, pp. 85-93). Obama's campaign was specifically aimed at reaching young voters who were recently added to the list of voters in every election period. By developing a correct strategy in delivering the messages through communication channels used by young people, the power of the internet has been utilized and social media users have been instantly informed about the projects through online media. In this way, Obama's promising image and difference are crystal clear reflected. The election campaign was carried out together with advertising agencies, political communications consultants and digital advertising agencies. Blue State Digital was the digital consultancy

agency which Obama worked with in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections (Bluestatedigital, 2014).

The philosophy which adopted the vision and innovation of the use of social media in Obama's election campaign has continued in 2012 President Election after 2008 US elections. Some promises of the 2012 election campaign address socio-economic middle and lower classes. It is observed that passive crowds who stand at the low-budget side, silent, ineffective, yet who desire to experience a dramatic change in politics rise thanks to Obama's campaign (Leuschner, 2012). What is more, with an aim to spread political messages and access the disorganized masses, on Web 2.0 and social media, which both represent a corporate sphere, many politicians and candidates in West create Facebook and Twitter profiles and integrate the tools of Web 2.0 with the web pages after the election campaigns in America (Minucci, 2010, p. 189).

Smith (2011, p. 28) emphasizes that social media has a significant impact on Obama's major success in the US presidential elections, and this effect will continue for the next elections. Not totally confirming Smith's argument, Andersen and Medaglia (2009, p. 109), who examined the role of Facebook in the Danish elections in 2007, suggest that Facebook does not play an important role in the functioning of politics and the voter-politician interaction. On the other hand, Sweetser and Lariscy (2008, p. 196) state that Facebook is an important channel for candidates, especially for winning young voters and establishing a two-way communication with them. Stieglitz (2012) argue that many politicians in Germany are eager for their own reputations to integrate with social media and participate in current political debates.

Two important uses of social media with regards to digitalization and politics are the election campaigns, and social movements. Social platforms have taken an active part in elections in terms of taking actions collectively, organizing via instant posts, and gathering

around the ideas. Social media also played a role in enhancing the participation in countries in which political discussions on the regime often take place; particularly the Arab Spring. As it comes to the most important reasons why social media has become a serious political tool; they are surely the power of interaction, is the width of the target audience addressed to politicians and the fact that statistical data can be easily obtained. The fact that social rebellion movements, which emerged in 2010 and called as Arab Spring in North African countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Libya have been directed through Facebook and Twitter is an indicator of how social media can be effective on social movements and dynamics (Güngör, 2013, p. 368). What is more, Fernandes (2010, p. 654) argues that Facebook has a positive impact for students to develop dialogue and to ensure political participation. Skoric and Kwan (2011, p. 77), who examine the political participation of young people from Singapore, put forward that those who are the members of a political group on Facebook are more likely to participate in online signature campaigns and read blogs about politics (Akyol, 2015, p. 99).

The innovative use of social media in election campaigns of US has affected Turkey as well as the rest of the world. In this context, the issue of transferring political messages to citizens through social media has gained great importance within the framework of election campaigns (Güçdemir and Göksu, 2015). If the scope light is located on Turkey, unlike the United States, it is proclaimed that the political parties in Turkey cannot be that much active in social media platforms. According to Okmeydan (2013), parties that do not receive election aid from the state use social media more than the parties in the Assembly. When the 2011 general elections in Turkey is taken into consideration, it can be easily claimed that parties apart from CHP are not sufficiently involved in social media platforms. Despite this situation, Okmeydan declares that political parties exist in Turkey have started to give more importance to social media platforms after 2011 General Elections (Okmeydan, 2013, pp. 22-23).

CHAPTER 3: POLITICAL PREFERENCES OF THREE MAJOR CITIES

2.1 The General Political Situation of Turkey: İstanbul and Ankara Municipalities

Political advertisements published during the election campaigns reflect the values and everyday life of the society. The candidate and the party who wish to attract the sympathy of the voters try to make themselves feel close to the electorate. Therefore, advertisements within election campaigns reflect the public. One fact is for sure that ads carry the traces of the period and culture. In this sense, it simply means that analyzing election period ads is almost equal to analyzing society and its values. According to Duman and İpekşen (2013), political parties and leaders have benefited from the opportunities of communication art and technology. Parallel to the developments in the field, it can be observed that the strategies and tactics used in the election campaigns have also improved (Duman and İpekşen, 2013, p. 117).

In the first serious extensive campaign, 1950 elections of Turkey, the electronic mass media broadcasted the limited parts of Ankara and İstanbul through an election talk on radio which declares the recent news about the election. During this election period, DP followed the method of communicating with the public through rallies and the press. After the May 27 coup, the 1961 Constitution secured radio broadcasts on behalf of all political parties, and all parties and independent candidates participating in the elections benefited from the radio for equal periods. Thus, the opposition parties were able to use media without any cost or problem. When television broadcasts officially started in 1968, all parties had equal rights as it was in radio broadcasts. However, parties didn't have the right to make election speech on television. This declaration right was given to the parties in the mid-1970s. The 1977 General Election was recorded as the first election in which the media were widely and the most effectively used. The main reason of it was, in this period, advertising agencies were also included in political campaign activities for the very first time in the political history. In other words, it was the first time for political parties to have a tendency towards professionals, like advertising agencies,

leaving the manual planning the election process by themselves far behind. This surely makes the 1977 elections crucial in the Turkish political history. In 1977 elections, political advertisements were also given to newspapers for the first time. One of the biggest innovations that the 1977 elections brought to Turkish political life was the broadcasting of TV for propaganda or protest purposes. Again, for the first time in the 1991 general elections, all parties cooperated extensively with advertising agencies. Therefore, the election campaigns became a spectacle. Popular singers performed concerts in every rallying area, while big-size screens were used thanks to advanced technology. When 2002 elections are examined, it can be easily seen that the mobilization started digitally. The web pages of the parties started to be designed aiming at reaching and attracting the young voters. However, it is thought that the contribution of political advertising and impact of it on the fore-mentioned elections is still open to debate (Duman, İpekşen, 2013, pp. 120 - 133).

The use of social media for propaganda purposes by the leaders of political parties in Turkey is increasing day by day. According to Alemdar and Köker, since 2000s, social media platforms in our country have been frequently used by the members of the candidates and political parties during election periods. To illustrate, in 2002 general elections, the Young Party used Telsim GSM operator to inform the potential voters on the news of the party- which was also regarded a brand-new experience in the political history. The year 2009 witnessed that the youth community of the political party used Facebook intensively in the local elections, especially to explain the party policy and to announce the events. Turkey became the fourth country with the most Facebook (Internet World Stats) usage during the election period, and this fact has led to the emergence of hundreds of web-pages on political parties and groups on the network (Doğu et al., 2014, p. 53).

According to Ertuğrul Acar (2012, p.259), compared to the first elections where social media was not that effective, June 12, 2011 the General Elections in Turkey, signed under a

great difference. Beforehand, in the 2007 General Elections, social media were not used as widely and actively as it is today. YouTube, a tool that parties use more at previous years, was implicated in the prohibition of access during the election period (Acar, 2012, p. 260). For the reasons attempted to be explained above, this research mainly focuses on 2011 and after when social media is used relatively efficiently.

During the period of Aziz Kocaoğlu, who served as the Mayor of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality between the years 2004 and 2019, had Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts created on behalf of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality. The active use of social media in the election campaigns began during the period of Aziz Kocaoğlu. Instagram followers of the municipality were 139.000, Facebook followers 160.217, and Twitter followers were recorded as 205.000 people. (May 17, 2019). In the 2014 Presidential Election, for the first time that clearly, the benefit of social media on presidential candidates can be openly observed. (Yeniçeri Alemdar and Köker, 2011).

The Justice and Development Party (AK Party) has been the leader with by far the highest general and local votes in every election ever since 2002. The current president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the leader of AK Party. Erdoğan and his party, the AK Party, is known as the most active use of the social media tools. If 2018 general election is taken into consideration, it will be revealed that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (AK Party) won 52.6 % of the votes in the presidential election. His closest rival, Muharrem İnce (CHP), received 30.6% of the votes, whereas Selahattin Demirtaş (HDP) received 8.4%, Meral Akşener (İYİ Party) got 7.3%, Temel Karamollaoğlu (SP) 0.9%, and Doğu Perinçek (VP) received 0.2% of the votes. By merely analyzing the results of the parliamentary elections, it can be reported that AK Party received 42.6%, CHP 22.6%, HDP 11.7%, MHP 11.1%, İYİ Party 10%, SP 1.3%, and VP got 0.2%.

In the figure 1, it is possible to observe the number of followers of the party and party leaders according to the general elections data (2018) in Turkey:

The comparison of the Instagram accounts of the parties and the Instagram accounts of the party leaders is given in the figure. Recep Tayyip Erdogan has got 5,200,000 followers, while the AK Party has 936,000 followers. Kemal Kılıçdaroglu has 427,000 followers, whereas CHP has 207,000 followers. Devlet Bahçeli has 359,000 followers, and MHP has 571,000 followers. Meral Aksener has got 437,000 followers and İYİ Party has 127,000 followers. Sezai Temelli has 12,700 followers, HDP has 428,000 followers. Sezai Temelli has been the co-chairman of HDP since February 2018, so the number of followers according to his party can be considered as low. Temel Karamollaoğlu has 33.300 followers, SP has 25.800 followers. The followers of Doğu Perinçek and VP can be considered as almost equal. The biggest difference in the figure is by far between Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the AK Party. Therefore, it can be easily claimed that Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who is defined as a strong and effective leader in public, outnumbered his ruling party.

Local election campaigns in Turkey generally reflect the general election campaigns. For local election campaigns, national channels are advertised, billboards and posters are used. Party leaders hold public meetings and ask voters to vote for the mayor candidate. The results of the local elections have been in parallel with the general election results. The party's ideology and party leaders may be at the forefront rather than the mayor candidate.

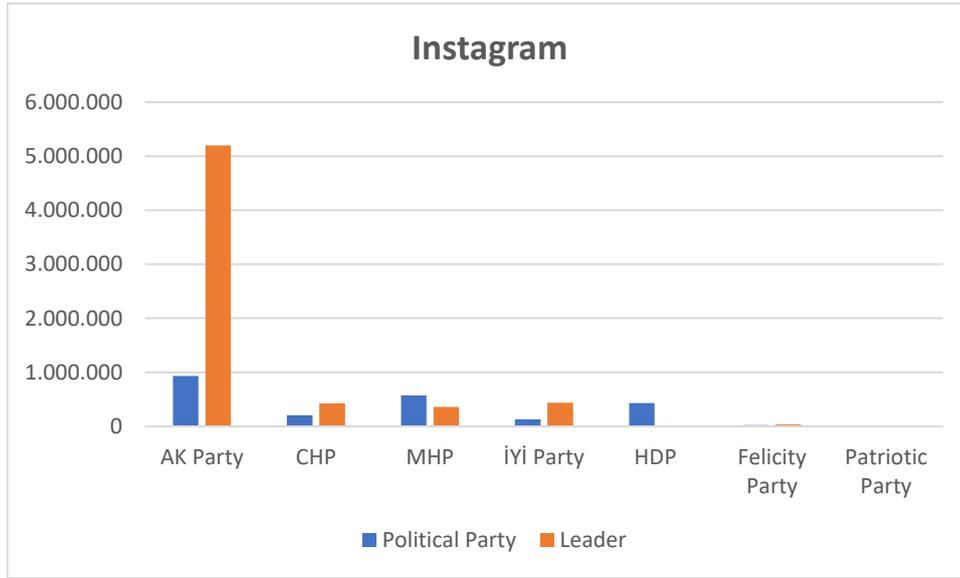


Figure 1: Instagram Follower Numbers of Parties and Leaders on March 31st, 2019

As for the Twitter accounts, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has got 13,608,221 followers while AK Party has 1,781,975 followers. Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu has 6,302,743 followers, CHP has 940,599 followers. Devlet Bahçeli has 4,864,434 followers whereas MHP has 1,458,095 followers. Meral Akşener has 2.822.785 followers, and İYİ Party has 309,880 followers. Meral Akşener is a former political figure who is the Minister of Internal Affairs in 1996 for a short period of time, and the deputy chairman of various periods and finally deputy chairmen of the Parliament. In addition, in the 2004 local elections, she was nominated as a candidate for the İstanbul Metropolitan Presidency for MHP, she then founded İYİ Party. Therefore, while the number of followers of the recently established party are less, Akşener's recognition is higher. Sezai Temelli has 125,685 followers whereas HDP has 940,931 followers. Temel Karamollaoğlu has 358,279 followers, SP has 139,598 followers. Doğu Perinçek has 173.368 followers, and the VP has 98,252 followers. Like on Instagram, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan takes precedence over his party on Twitter. To summarize, in all political parties- apart from HDP, political leaders have more followers than their parties. It can be concluded that Twitter's 140 characters, which enable commenting on events, creating hashtags, and making

daily agenda direct users not to follow parties but to follow people to benefit most from the flow of the instant posts.

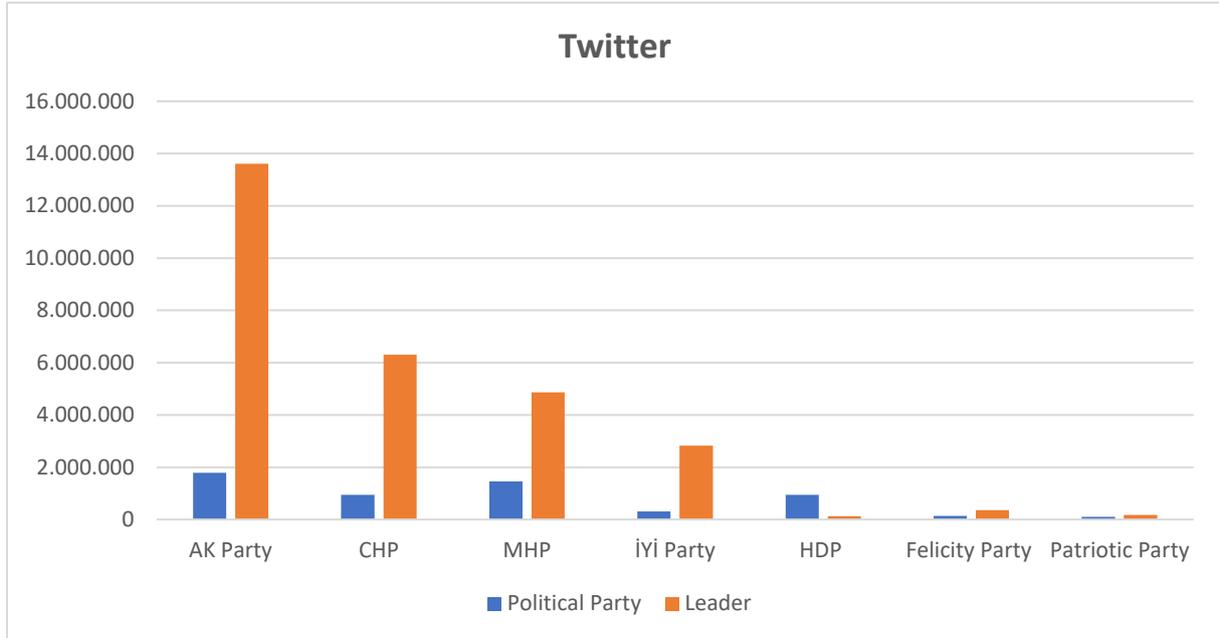


Figure 2: Twitter Follower Numbers of Parties and Leaders on March 31st, 2019

Like Instagram and Twitter, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the leader on Facebook with the highest number of followers. Erdogan has 8.874.091 followers whereas AK Party has 3.119.185 followers. CHP has a total of 1,527,576 followers, while Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu has 1,906,933 followers. Devlet Bahçeli has 306,075 followers, and MHP has 2,218,271 followers. Meral Akşener has 1.088.856 followers while İYİ Party has 364,856 followers. HDP has 1,354,137 followers, while new co-leader Sezai Temelli has 7,728 followers. Temel Karamollaoğlu has 61.267 followers, SP has 158.097 followers. Doğu Perinçek has 29,239 followers while the VP has 93,309 followers.

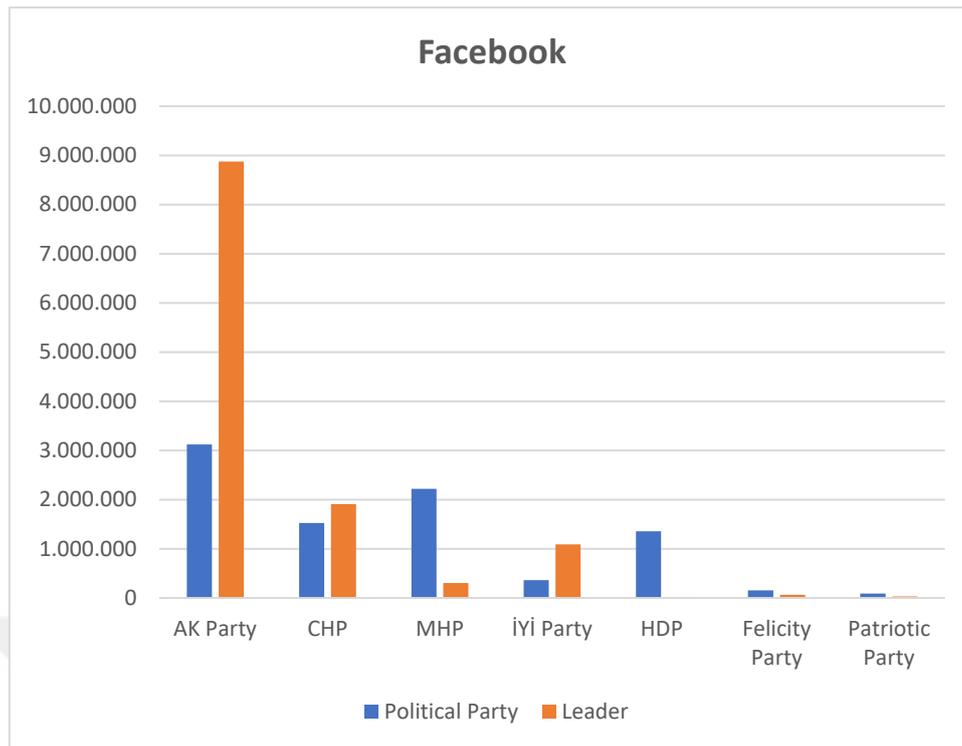


Figure 3: Facebook Follower Numbers of Parties and Leaders on March 31st, 2019

The number of followers of Twitter and Facebook accounts of parties and the party leaders is observed to differ in a great deal, yet Instagram stays as the social media platform with minimum follower numbers. Facebook allows the users to share longer videos, and multiple photos at the same time along with writing long articles without any character limitation, on the other hand Twitter which allows users to share instant and easily accessible announcements. Instagram is totally different compared to those two; it is more like a visual platform. Due to the fact that instant sharing and easy access to news, hashtags, and daily agendas are not the number one priority for Instagram, it may be a step behind Facebook and Twitter in terms of the number of followers political parties and leaders have got.

Prior to the analysis of social media followers of Metropolitan Municipalities 2019 Candidates of Ankara and İstanbul, an extensive comprehension of the ideological structure of

the citizens and the background information about the previous mayors of these two important cities will be quite beneficial.

The Case of İstanbul

After 1984, Turkey's most populated province İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Mayors were respectively from the Motherland Party (ANAP - Bedrettin Dalan), the Social Democratic Party (SODEP - Nurettin Sözen), the Welfare Party (RP - Recep Tayyip Erdoğan), the Virtue Party (FP - Ali Müfit Gürtuna) and the AK Party (Kadir Topbas- Mevlüt Uysal). The Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was the Mayor of İstanbul Municipality between the years 1994 and 1998 representing RP. When the recent history of İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality is studied on, it can be easily stated that right-wing political parties and Islamic parties won the elections. To prove this statement, it can be proclaimed that CHP has not been successful in İstanbul as a left and social-democrat party. AK Party, on the other hand, which was established as a center-right, conservative but reformist party has been successful ever since the very first elections it has attended. However, this should not be a surprising fact considering İstanbul is now a place of immigration from various regions of Turkey. It became a province where conservative right-based parties are more successful due its cosmopolite, multi-cultural, and immigrant centered nature. According to the data of the Anatolia Agency for the March 31st local elections, Ekrem İmamoğlu, the candidate of the CHP, who was recently elected as the Mayor of İstanbul Metropolitan, received 48.8% of the vote. The closest rival, the AK Party candidate Binali Yıldırım, received 48.55% of the votes, which means that after a long break, CHP became successful in İstanbul. When the Instagram accounts on 5 April 2019 are taken into consideration, Ekrem İmamoğlu has 1.7 million followers. Chairman of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Binali Yıldırım's Instagram account "Chairman of the Parliament" as it

says, 576.000 followers and have yet to account for electioneering. The account used during the election period is named as “Binali Yıldırım Communications Office” and has 209.000 followers. On Twitter there are 1,321,485 followers of Ekrem İmamoğlu whereas Binali Yıldırım Communication Office has 1,316,281 followers. As for the Facebook accounts, Ekrem İmamoğlu has 904,947 followers whereas and Binali Yıldırım Communications Office has 232,119 followers.

The election results of İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality were canceled by YSK on 6 May 2019. The district municipal votes, the election of the headman and the district council elections were deemed to be valid and the votes used for the metropolitan municipality were canceled in İstanbul. On June 23, 2019, as it is declared, the vote of the metropolitan municipality will be re-voted. People who were not satisfied with this decision and believed that there was no democracy showed reactions on social media. A high school kid has said to İmamoğlu that “Everything will be good” and on the social media, #herşeyçokgüzelolacak (everything will be good) hashtag actively began to be used. Behind this optimistic hashtag, the reaction of people to the injustice they believed and the comforting support they provide for İmamoğlu can be easily read. Especially on Twitter #herşeyçokgüzelolacak hashtag has pinned as the long-term trend topic in the first place. Many celebrities also gave support using this hashtag. When the May 10th and 13th trending topics list analyzed closely, it becomes clearer that the trend topics are quite optimistic and political as possible; #Ekrem İmamoğlu, # June 23 (the recently determined re-election day), #YSK and #Everything Will Be Good.



Figure 4: Trending Topics on Twitter on May 10th and 13th, 2019

When the number of followers of İmamoğlu and Yıldırım on May 17th is examined, Ekrem İmamoğlu has got 4.300.000 followers. It is rather obvious that the number of followers increased by 2.600.000 people. Binali Yıldırım, while using the “Binali Yıldırım Communications Office” account with 362.000 followers was more active before March 31th He now uses his own personal Binali Yıldırım account with 572,000 followers actively. Yıldırım's number of followers has decreased. On Twitter, the number of followers İmamoğlu had got almost doubled up (from 1.321.485 to 2.388.576) whereas “Binali Yıldırım Communications Office” has a total of 1,397,110 followers and his own personal account has only 211,953 followers. On Facebook, İmamoğlu has 1.409.569 followers and there left 244.739 followers “Binali Yıldırım Communications Office” has got.

The Case of Ankara

Turkey's second most populated province and the capital city Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Mayors can be listed as; ANAP (Mehmet Altınsoy), SODEP (Murat Karayalçın - Vedat Aydın), RP (Melih Gökçek), FP (Melih Gökçek), AK Party (Melih Gökçek - Assoc. Mustafa Tuna). When Ankara and İstanbul are compared, the most basic fact about the two is that in both cities, the same party won at the same year. The capital city, Ankara, is known as a province with the highest numbers of bureaucrats, civil servants and university students. Therefore, it can be assumed that that parties based on right, conservative and political Islam are the most successful ones just like they were in multi-dimensional İstanbul. It is known that CHP, a center-left and social-democrat party, failed to succeed in Ankara in most of the elections. Ever since its foundation, AK Party has won the local elections and directed the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality. According to the data of Anatolian Agency for March 31st local elections, CHP candidate Mansur Yavaş won 50.93% of the votes while his closest rival from the AK Party, Mehmet Özhaseki, received 47,12% of the vote. In 2019 elections, Mansur Yavaş has been successful in Ankara representing CHP and is chosen the mayor of the city. Having elected as the mayor, it is declared that on April 5th, 2019, Mansur Yavaş has got 326,000 followers on his Instagram account. Mehmet Özhaseki has 75,200 followers. Mansur Yavaş has 1.628.279 followers on Twitter, whereas Mehmet Özhaseki has 401,212 followers. As for Facebook, Mansur Yavaş is followed by 186,544 people and there are 100,807 people that follow Özhaseki.

2.2. An Overview of İzmir's Political History

According to the information on İzmir Metropolitan Municipality website; the emergence of local administrations within the Ottoman Empire generally took place after the

second half of the 19th century. The municipal organizations have emerged primarily in the port cities of the empire such as İstanbul, İzmir and Thessaloniki. In addition to being an important commercial center of the empire, these multicultural social structures have also caused the municipal organizations to flourish in these cities for the first time. In the 19th century, having widened European economic expansion following the Industrial Revolution, the municipal units did not only transform the Ottoman port cities like İzmir, Thessaloniki and İstanbul into a western market, but also caused urban infrastructure services to be brought into play until they reached the communication from these cities. Foreigners engaged in trade at the Ottoman ports were constantly raising the inadequacy of the infrastructure services of the Ottoman cities. The first attempts to establish a municipal unit in İzmir came from the foreign traders, consulates and Levantine family companies that continued their commercial activities in and around İzmir. On November 25, 1867, it was understood from the documents that it is allowed to establish a municipality in İzmir.

After the Sixth Chamber of the Municipality, which was inspired from Municipality of Paris, was founded as the first municipal organizational unit of Ottomans, Levantine family companies that traded in İzmir and a large number of consulates in İzmir and also in İstanbul expressed their demand of they need a municipality just like the first samples which had already been structured. With the developments that was brought about with the advancements in industry, starting from roughly 1860s to the Republican period, the mayors in the municipality of İzmir have transformed the beautiful city into a modern urban atmosphere thanks to the infrastructure services they have carried out.

In the post-coup period in 1960, the military governed local municipalities as well as the state. After the elections in 1963, the Justice Party and CHP won the elections. After the military coup in 1980, the local government, like the state, led by soldiers. In 1984, İzmir became Metropolitan Municipality. In the Metropolitan Municipality period, ANAP and CHP

won the elections. Since 1999, the CHP has not lost elections. During the same period, the votes from İzmir in local elections and general elections were always in the direction of CHP.

2.3 The Previous İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Election Periods and the Competition

Two of İzmir's most ambitious candidates were the AK Party and CHP. In the local elections after the establishment of the AK Party, CHP always won the party while the AK Party was ranked as the second party. In 2014 local elections, İzmir citizens have voted as demonstrated in Figure 5;

Party	Candidate	Percentage of Vote	Number of Votes
Republican People's Party (CHP)	Aziz Kocaoğlu	49,60 %	1.308.134
Justice and Development Party (AK Party)	Binali Yıldırım	35,92 %	947.516
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)	Murat Taşer	7,97 %	210.272
People's Democratic Party (HDP)	Osman Özçelik	3,37 %	88.797
Democratic Left Party (DSP)	Selçuk Karakülçe	0,53 %	13.979
Felicity Party (SP)	Mehmet Ali Özüdoğru	0,52 %	13.813
Great Unity Party (BBP)	Vural Turan	0,48 %	12.735
Labor Party (İP)	Hüseyin Tugay Şen	0,41 %	10.755
Rights and Equality Party (HEPAR)	Barış Çınar	0,24 %	6.332
Democratic Party (DP)	Osman Varol	0,17 %	4.559

Figure 5: 2014 Local Elections İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Results

The 1980's are known as the castle of the CHP has won a high number of CHP votes in the general elections in the post-1980 period and in the local elections. When compared to İstanbul and Ankara, CHP has more votes in the municipal elections and in the parliamentary elections. In the last two elections for İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, major politicians such as Binali Yıldırım and Nihat Zeybekci were nominated. Binali Yıldırım is a politician who has served as a deputy, the AK Party chairman, the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. He was the candidate of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality in the 2014 local elections. In 2019, he became a candidate of İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality and lost. Nihat Zeybekci is also a politician who previously served as Denizli Mayor, and Member of Parliament and Economy Minister.

Although Binali Yıldırım and Nihat Zeybekçi used social media professionally and had high number of followers, they did not succeed in local elections. Other political factors have come to the fore for the electorate. The use of social media, promotion and election campaigns are important; however, political ideologies may be more prominent in the elections. The candidates of AK Party recognized by all Turkey and they followed by all candidates in social media. On the other hand, CHP candidates are known only in Izmir. Therefore, the number of followers and their interactions remain lesser. Social media sharing consists of local announcements and news about İzmir.

CHAPTER 4: A CLOSER LOOK TO THE 2019 LOCAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

3.1. General Framework of 2019 Local Election

Elections, which are of great importance for democratic societies, have had a long history in voting and eventually electing the potential leader. Local elections have a history which is older than general elections. Elections are one of the most important practices that are given great significance in the process of political communication. Election campaigns, which are the *sine qua non* of elections and political propaganda, play an important role among candidates, political parties and voters. The importance attached to political communication is particularly evident in the election periods. Since the elections reveal the power and therefore the control of the voters on the process and determine the ruler, those who participate in the elections organize campaigns to win (Yegen, 2018, p. 59).

Today, the use of social media constitutes most of the election campaigns. There are several reasons why municipalities use social media to promote themselves and their party. Thanks to social media, they can connect with the citizens and demonstrate the city and their promising services to a wider audience. They can communicate the urgent announcements and news they want to make to the citizen through social media. They can also measure the citizens' opinion and interact with them in order to advance their service processes and improve themselves since social media is the fastest way of maintaining feedback. Social media is also preferable in emergency announcements as information is spreading fast. There is also a chance to be redirected to other pages with the possibility of adding links on social sites.

Local administrators are the elected political actors who are responsible for the management of the facilities in the city as well as the foundation of social political order in the specific area. It can be claimed that local governments are directly related to the political parties. In this respect, the elections of local administrators depend on the overall party system. The

election campaigns of the local authorities are mostly carried out by the political party to which they are attached. Political party support is an indispensable condition, especially in the election of large-scale local governments. However, in small-scale local administrations, strong independent candidates may have emerged and even win the election. Either in connection with or closely attached to the political party or totally independently, or through providing services to the citizens during the election period, local administrations witness different strategies in each and every election year.

Recently, especially in the municipalities of the big cities in which the public relations and publicity departments are established, the intensity of activities within the scope of political communication is remarkable. For example, the municipalities which provide local government services to make the public have a pleasant time and meet cultural needs such as concerts, exhibitions, meetings, and organize activities under the actual political discourse to remove the merely political purposes are found (Aziz, 2007: 24-25). In the local elections held on March 31st, 2019, there were twelve candidates for the İzmir Metropolitan Presidency. Those were CHP, AK Party, SP, DSP, DP, VP, TKP, BTP and four independent candidates. The party and its candidate name, percentage and the number of the votes can be also seen in the Figure 6 (Source: Anatolian Agency).

Party	Candidate	Percentage of Votes	Number of Votes
Republican People's Party (CHP)	Mustafa Tunç Soyer	58,02 %	1.545358
Justice and Development Party (AK Party)	Nihat Zeybekçi	38,62 %	1.028.544
Felicity Party	Şerafettin Kılıç	1,12 %	29.940

Democratic Left Party	Selçuk Karakülçe	0,75 %	20.079
Democratic Party	Tarcan Ülük	0,44 %	11.755
Patriotic Party	Rifat Mutlu	0,4 %	10.532
Communist Party of Turkey (TKP)	Senem Doruk İnam	0,3 %	8.119
Independent Turkey Party (BTP)	Mehmet Dinç	0,15 %	3.900
Independent Candidate	İbrahim Demir	0,03 %	919
Independent Candidate	Deniz Tütmez	0,03 %	826
Independent Candidate	Yalçın Yanık	0,02 %	617
Independent Candidate	Ali İhsan Erdenilgen	0,01 %	387

Figure 6: March 31st, 2019 Local Elections İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Results

Mustafa Tunç Soyer, who was the mayor of Seferihisar district of İzmir between the years 2009 and 2019, won the election representing CHP according to the March 31st election results and became the Mayor of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality. At this point, it is important to state that the powerful political parties with the highest votes, respectively AK Party, MHP, CHP and İYİ Party, have formed an alliance for the 2019 local elections. Alliances established in all provinces and in most of the districts point out that the AK Party and MHP formed the People's Alliance, and CHP and İYİ Party formed the Nation Alliance. As a result of the alliance established, AK Party did not nominate and support MHP. İYİ Party was not successful in the provinces, CHP has increased the votes in some provinces.

When the official social media accounts of the AK Party and CHP before the elections was examined, it is recorded that AK Party shared videos addressing twelve cities including Ankara, İstanbul, and İzmir and also posted 60 public meetings. While the videos and photos are shared

with enthusiasm and flags, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has always located in the foreground. No other province has come to the forefront. İzmir has also taken place like other cities.

3.2 Hypothesis, Research Method and Research Question

As a consequence of the advancements in new media and communication technologies and their pervasive use, social media have started to take greater part. If there is one specific field in which it is quite possible to observe how communication with social media has changed, it is surely the election campaigns. Communication and propaganda are regarded as the key elements in election campaigns. Politicians and candidates can get votes, interest, even fanaticism through communication. This research focused on the importance of social media in election campaigns. The selection to be reviewed and the sample is 2019 local elections. In the 2019 local elections, election of the Mayor of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality is analyzed and the social media usage of the candidates is statistically compared. In order to compare how actively the candidates used social media platforms and how many people were followed, the number of posts and the number of followers are also broadly examined. With the extensive data analysis, it is determined which candidates use effective social media platforms actively. The in-depth interview method is carried throughout the study. The candidates' social media accounts managers are interviewed with an aim to represent the average social media usage of the politicians. In other words, during the election campaign, all sorts of experiences with regards to social media and multiple ways in which the platform is used statistically compared.

Hypothesis

Social media was a prominent tool for the election campaigns in 2019 local elections.

Research Question

How did the presidential candidates of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality use social media in their election campaigns in 2019 local elections?

Research Method

Qualitative data analysis has been carried out in order to learn the role of social media in the election campaigns. The selected method - qualitative data analysis- is considered as the in-depth interview technique. The in-depth interview is a data collection technique that covers all aspects of the subject under investigation, asks more open-ended questions and allows detailed answers to be obtained by face-to-face interviews. The in-depth interview is a flexible and exploratory data collection technique in which the researcher tries to examine the subject in detail by classifying the answers received from the person interviewed. The questions are created in an open-ended way so that individual experiences can be learned in detail (Tekin, 2006, p.103).

According to Johnson, “A researcher who uses in-depth interviewing commonly seeks deep information and knowledge – usually deeper information and deeper than is sought in surveys, informal interviewing, or focus groups.” (Johnson, p.104). Qualitative research, on the other hand, as Yıldırım suggests, can be defined as the research, where qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview and document analysis are used, and a qualitative process for realizing perceptions and events in a natural environment are conveyed in a realistic and holistic manner (Yıldırım, 2013, p.45). It is the most commonly used interview in qualitative methods. Interview is a very powerful method used to reveal people's perspective, experiences, feelings and perceptions (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). In-depth interview has been acknowledged to have four key characteristics; open-ended questions, semi-structured format, seek understanding and interpretation and recording responses. Additionally, a skilled

qualitative interviewer should be open-minded, flexible and responsive, patient, observant and a good listener (Guion, Diehl, and McDonalds, 2001, pp. 1-2).

3.3 Examination of Candidates' Social Media Accounts: Twitter, Instagram and Facebook

In the March 31st local elections, 12 candidates were nominated for İzmir Metropolitan Municipality. Mustafa Tunç Soyer (CHP), Nihat Zeybekçi (AK Party), Şerafettin Kılıç (SP), Selçuk Karakülçe (DSP), Tarcan Ülük (DP), Rifat Mutlu (VP), Senem Doruk İnam (TKP), Mehmet Dinç (BTP), İbrahim Demir (Independent Candidate), Deniz Tütmez (Independent Candidate), Yalçın Yanık (Independent Candidate) and Ali İhsan Erdenilgen (Independent Candidate) were the candidates. CHP has won the election. The second highest rated party was the AK Party. Twitter, Instagram and Facebook share, followers and following numbers of 12 candidates were compared. Thus, the active use of social media and on which platform they are monitored are examined. Additionally, the shares of top-rated 2 candidates in social media and how they used social media during the election campaign were compared.

Twitter

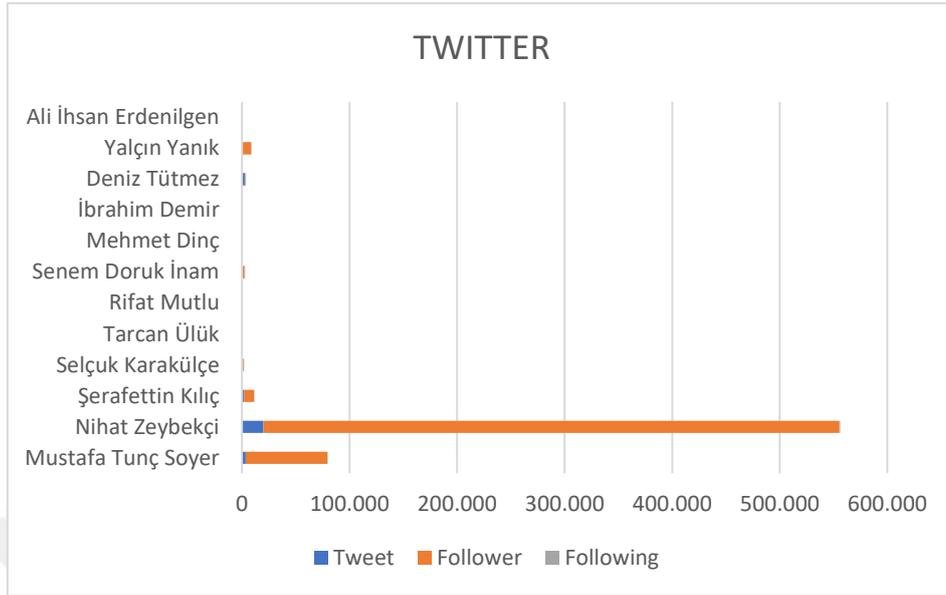


Figure 7: Twitter Accounts' of Candidates on March 31st, 2019

Instagram

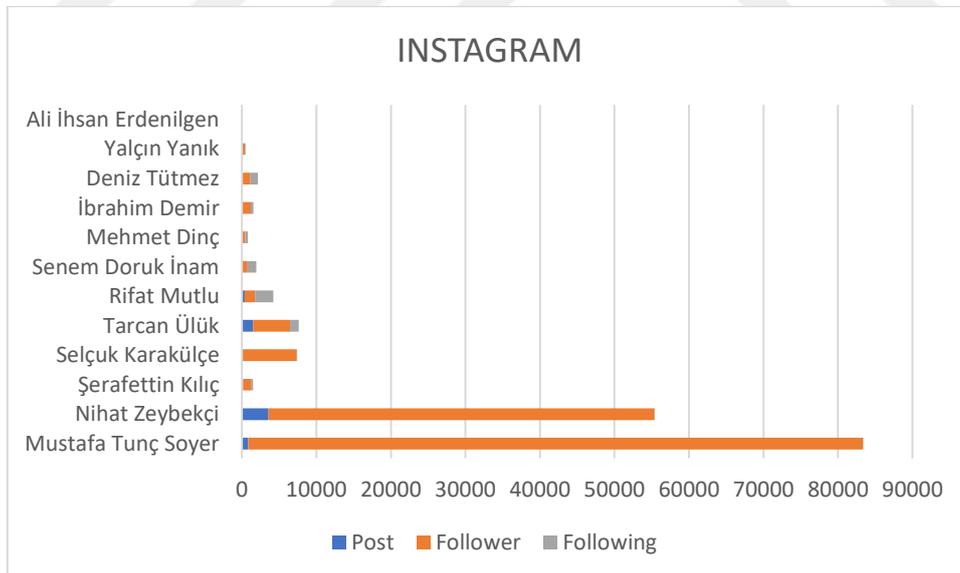


Figure 8: Twitter Accounts' of Candidates on March 31st, 2019

Facebook

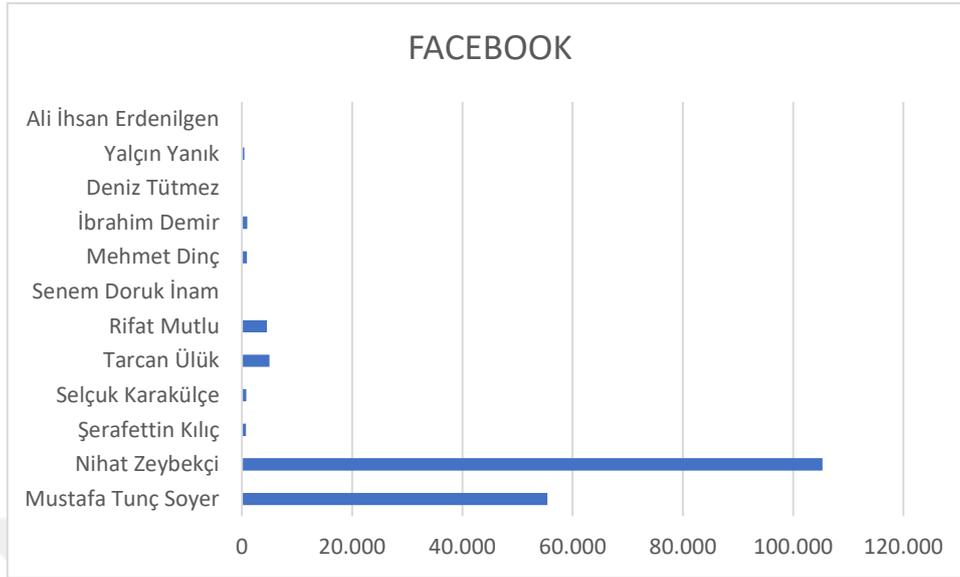


Figure 9: Twitter Accounts' of Candidates on March 31st, 2019

When the fluctuation in the social media accounts of Tunç Soyer, who was elected as the Mayor of İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, and Nihat Zeybekci, who was the second in rank, examined closely; it is revealed that Tunç Soyer and Nihat Zeybekci have a big difference in the number of followers they currently have in Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Nihat Zeybekci is a politician who previously served as Denizli Mayor, Economy Minister and a Member of Parliament in various periods. On the other hand, Tunç Soyer was the mayor of Seferihisar district of İzmir between the years 2009 and 2019. While Nihat Zeybekci is a politician who is recognized by the whole country and followed up on social media, Tunç Soyer is known and followed only by the local people. This situation undoubtedly made a huge difference in the number of followers between the two.

In order to compare Soyer and Zeybekçi's number of followers on social media platforms, it was examined the day of their candidacy was announced, the day of the election and the day after the election.

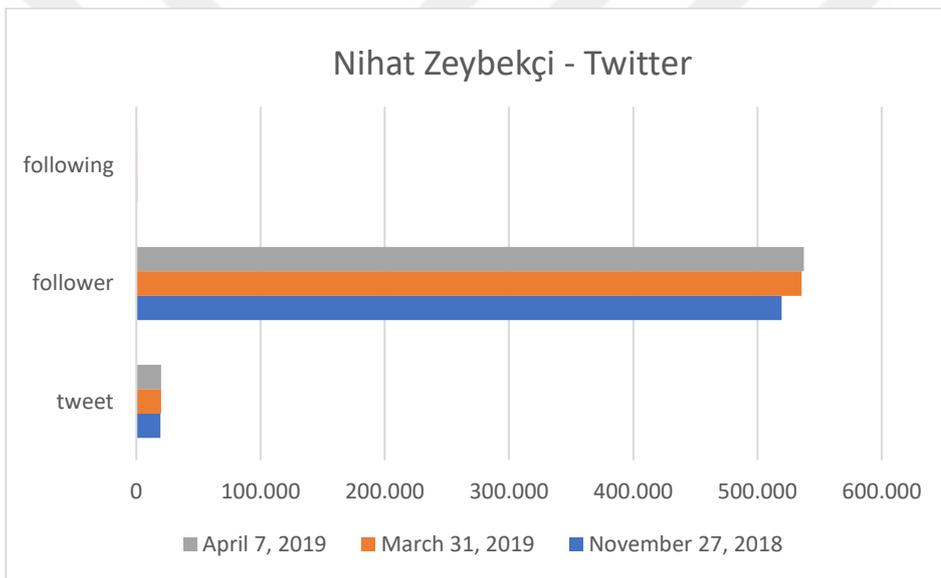
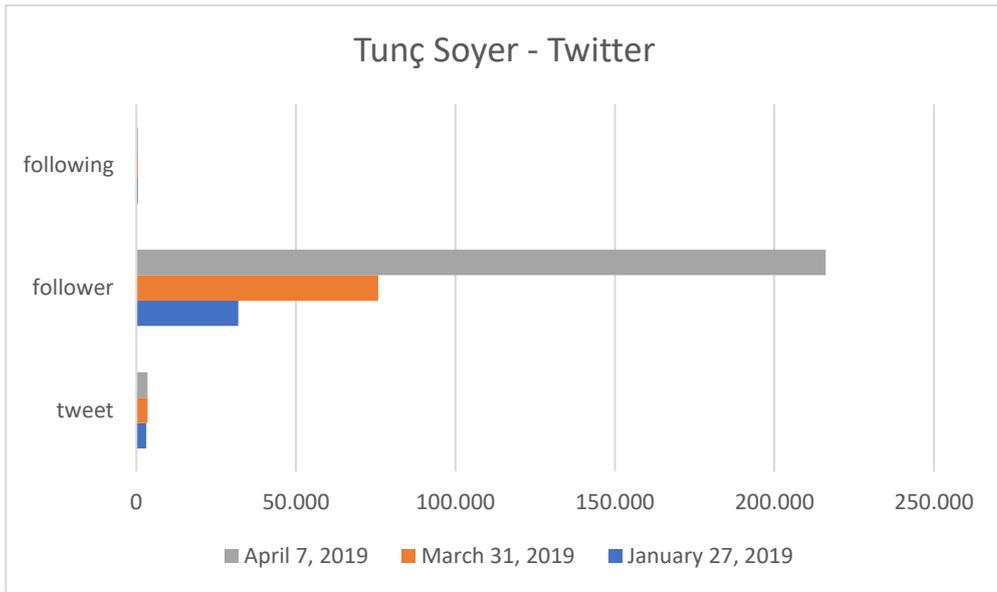


Figure 7: Twitter Accounts' of Tunç Soyer and Nihat Zeybekçi

Having announced his candidacy, Nihat Zeybekci has had 478 posts on Twitter until the election day. Tunç Soyer, on the other hand, has posted 393 tweets during the election campaign. Within the time period that covers the election, the followers of Tunç Soyer has got 43,855 more followers and Nihat Zeybekci has got 16,043 more followers.



Tunç Soyer
@tuncsoyer

Baharın kendisini hissettirdiği bu Pazar sabahında Buca-Şirinyer pazarında dostlarla kucaklaştık. Şehir ne güzel, insanlarımız ne güzel. El ele bitmeyen bir bahara ilerleyeceğiz. #Aşkİzmir #ÇokSesÇokRenkÇokNefes



Tunç Soyer
@tuncsoyer

18 Mart Pazartesi (Yarın) #Aşkİzmir
#MartinSonuBahar



22:26 · 17.03.2019 · Twitter for iPhone

41 Retweet 290 Beğeni

-“In this Sunday morning, when the spring made itself felt, we embraced with friends at Buca/Şirinyer bazaar. How beautiful the city and our people are! We will move towards to an endless spring hand in hand.”

Tunç Soyer. (2019, March 17th). Baharın kendisini hissettirdiği bu Pazar sabahında Buca-Şirinyer pazarında dostlarla kucaklaştık. Şehir ne güzel, insanlarımız ne güzel. El ele bitmeyen bir bahara ilerleyeceğiz. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tuncsoyer/status/1107208731106910209>

-“Monday, March 18 (Tomorrow)”

Tunç Soyer. (2019, March 17th). 18 Mart Pazartesi (Yarın). Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tuncsoyer/status/1107362604937342976>



- “This morning we met with representatives of Balkan and Rumeli Solidarity Associations. I’m indeed an immigrant descendant. My grandfather immigrated to the Aegean Region from Pristina. The Balkan roots of İzmir is in fact one of the essential values of the city. I’m proud of it.”

Tunç Soyer. (2019, March 17th). Bu sabah Buca’da Balkan ve Rumeli Dayanışma dernek ve federasyon temsilcileriyle buluştuk. Ben de aslen bir göçmen torunuyum. Dedem Ege’ye Pristina’dan gelmiş. İzmir’in Balkan kökleri şehrimizin vazgeçilmez değerlerinden biridir. Bununla gurur duyuyorum. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tuncsoyer/status/1107225659309518848>

-“We commemorated the Çanakkale Victory and our martyrs with thousands of citizens, like it is done every single year. I sincerely thank to the people of my hometown Seferihisar who are in love with their country, flag, ancestor and republic.”

Tunç Soyer. (2019, March 18th). Her yıl olduğu gibi bu yıl da Çanakkale Zaferi ve şehitlerimizi yine binlerce vatandaşımızla birlikte andık. Vatanına, bayrağına, Atasına ve cumhuriyetine aşık güzel memleketim Seferihisar’ın insanlarına yürekten teşekkür ediyorum. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tuncsoyer/status/1107743783205195777>

Figure 8: Tunç Soyer’s Tweet Samples



Nihat Zeybekci 
@ZeybekciNihat

Bu akşam saat 21.00'de Haber Türk ekranlarında İzmir'i konuşacağız.



10:28 · 28.03.2019 · Twitter for iPhone

434 Retweet 829 Beğeni



Nihat Zeybekci 
@ZeybekciNihat

Tire'de dostlarımızla birlikteyiz. İnancımızla ve sevdamızla bizlere eşlik eden hemşehrilerimize teşekkür ediyorum.

31 Mart'a tüm gücümüzle ilerliyor, İzmir için gönlümüzü vermeye geliyoruz! #İzmirKazansın



-“We will talk about Izmir on Haber Türk screens at 21.00 this evening.”

Nihat Zeybekçi. (2019, March 28th). Bu akşam saat 21.00'de Haber Türk ekranlarında İzmir'i konuşacağız. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/ZeybekciNihat/status/1111168070834368513>

-“We're in Tire with our friends. I would like to thank our compatriots who accompanied us with our faith and love. We are moving to 31 March with all our strength, we come to give our hearts to İzmir!”

Nihat Zeybekçi. (2019, March 29th). Tire'de dostlarımızla birlikteyiz. İnancımızla ve sevdamızla bizlere eşlik eden hemşehrilerimize teşekkür ediyorum. 31 Mart'a tüm gücümüzle ilerliyor, İzmir için gönlümüzü vermeye geliyoruz! Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/ZeybekciNihat/status/1111730746639683585>



Nihat Zeybekci 
@ZeybekciNihat

Gaziemir Sarnıç'ta dostlarımızın coşkuyla karşılandık. Tek bir ağızdan "İzmir Kazansın!" dedik. Bu sevgi, bu inanç için teşekkürler Gaziemir! #İzmirKazansın



20:01 · 24.03.2019 · Twitter for iPhone



Nihat Zeybekci 
@ZeybekciNihat

Coşkuyla, heyecanla Selçuk'tayız. İzmir sevdamıza ortak olan tüm dostlarımıza teşekkür ediyorum. #İzmirKazansın



22:00 · 29.03.2019 · Twitter for iPhone

321 Retweet 893 Beğeni

-“We were greeted with enthusiasm by our friends at Gaziemir/ Sarnıç. We said “Let İzmir win” with a single voice! Thanks Gaziemir for your love and belief!”

Nihat Zeybekçi. (2019, March 24th). Gaziemir Sarnıç'ta dostlarımızın coşkusuyla karşılandık. Tek bir ağızdan “İzmir Kazansın!” dedik. Bu sevgi, bu inanç için teşekkürler Gaziemir!
Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/ZeybekciNihat/status/1109862884627148806>

-“We are in Selçuk with enthusiasm. I would like to thank all our friends who share our love of Izmir.”

Tunç Soyer. (2019, March 29th). Coşkuyla heyecanla Selçuk'tayız. İzmir sevdamıza ortak olan tüm dostlarımıza teşekkür ediyorum. Retrieved from
<https://twitter.com/ZeybekciNihat/status/1111704784367685633>

Figure 92: Nihat Zeybekçi's Tweet Samples

Since Twitter is regarded as a more widely used platform for making announcements, candidates usually announce their public meetings or events they take part on Twitter. The most majority of the posts Soyer has got are the photos or visuals. However, Soyer doesn't only write or share posts for political purposes. The option of sharing posts simultaneously on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook enabled photographs to take part on Twitter since what has been shared on Instagram and Facebook is now quite convenient to be posted on Twitter with a single click. Instead of commenting on an event, and sharing ideas on trend topics, Twitter functioned more like a corporate election campaign account through which election propaganda is conducted. Zeybekci's Twitter account, for instance, is used as an active corporate election propaganda tool. As for the photos on Twitters, the most probable to come across ones during the election period are the crowded photographs taken together with the public and the photographs of the public meetings of the political party leaders. As for the hashtags, Zeybekci used #İzmirKazansın (Let İzmir win) and the hashtag used by Soyer was #Aşklaİzmir (İzmir with love) and #ÇokRenkÇokSesÇokNefes (much color, louder voice, much breath). In addition, all around Turkey, CHP hashtag #MartınSonuBahar (the end of March is spring) is used frequently and enormously.

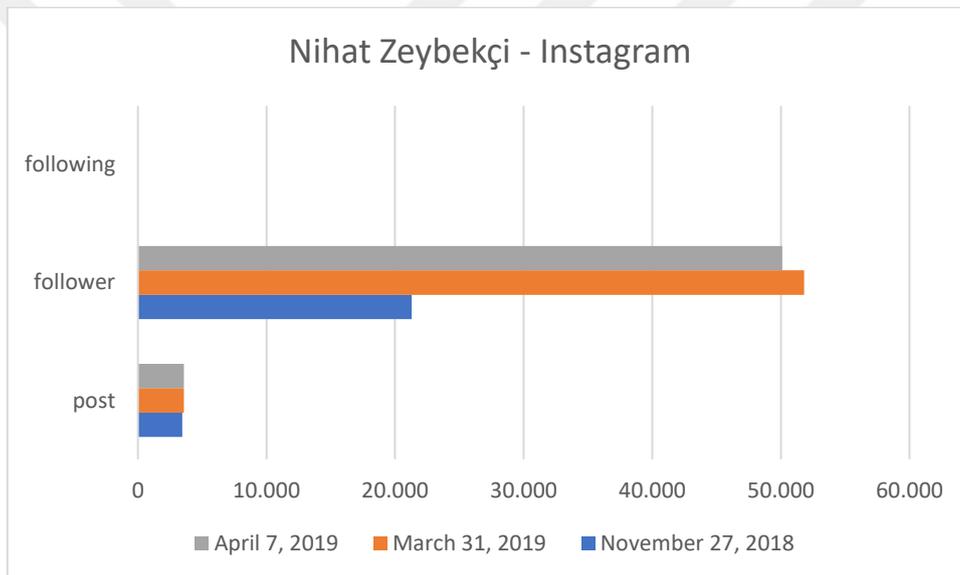
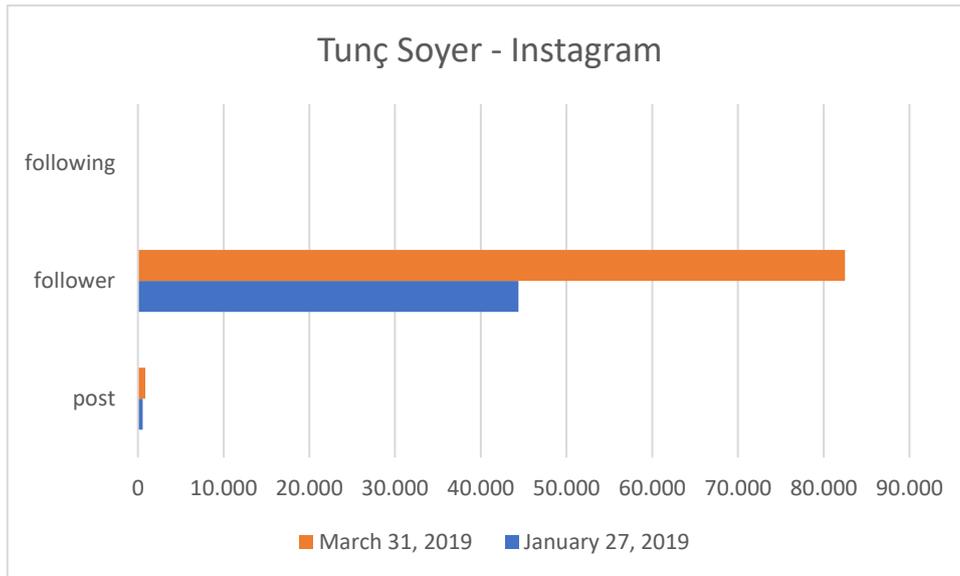


Figure 103: Instagram Accounts' of Tunç Soyer and Nihat Zeybekçi

The graphics reveal that Tunç Soyer posted 299 times on Instagram after announcing his candidacy for president. Nihat Zeybekci shared 123 posts. During the election campaign, Nihat Zeybekci 30,500 and Tunç Soyer 38,100 followers gained.

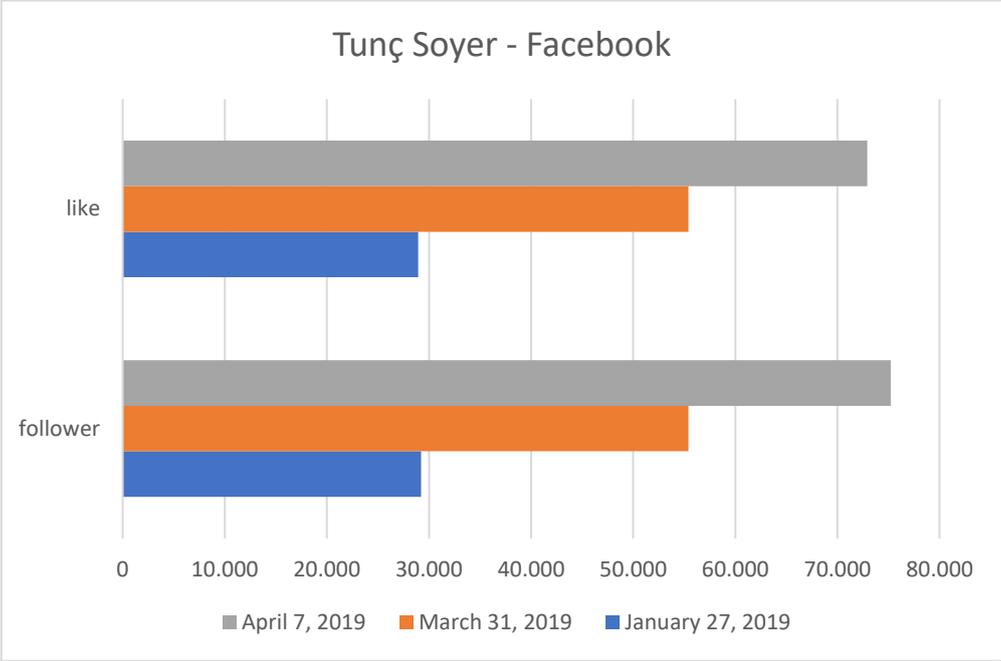


Figure 14: Tunç Soyer's Instagram Post Samples



Figure 115: Nihat Zeybekçi's Instagram Post Samples

When Soyer and Zeybekci's Instagram posts are compared, it can be easily seen that Soyer shares more project-based posts than Zeybekci. Zeybekci has mostly shared the crowded and enthusiastic public meetings he participated in. They both share photos for public visits, meetings and openings. Zeybekci looks neat in suit and seems professional; the photos of the Turkish flag are at the forefront just like Recep Tayyip Erdogan's photos. As for Tunç Soyer, he shared the announcements of his public meetings, his projects for İzmir, the events he participated during the election campaign and the photographs he captured with the public. Like Zeybekci, Soyer is usually in a suit and looks neat in his photos. Rather than crowded public meetings, Soyer prefers to share photographs with the public, closely to the public, and inside the public. Lastly, the number of likes Soyer's and Zeybekci's posts have got are very close to each other.



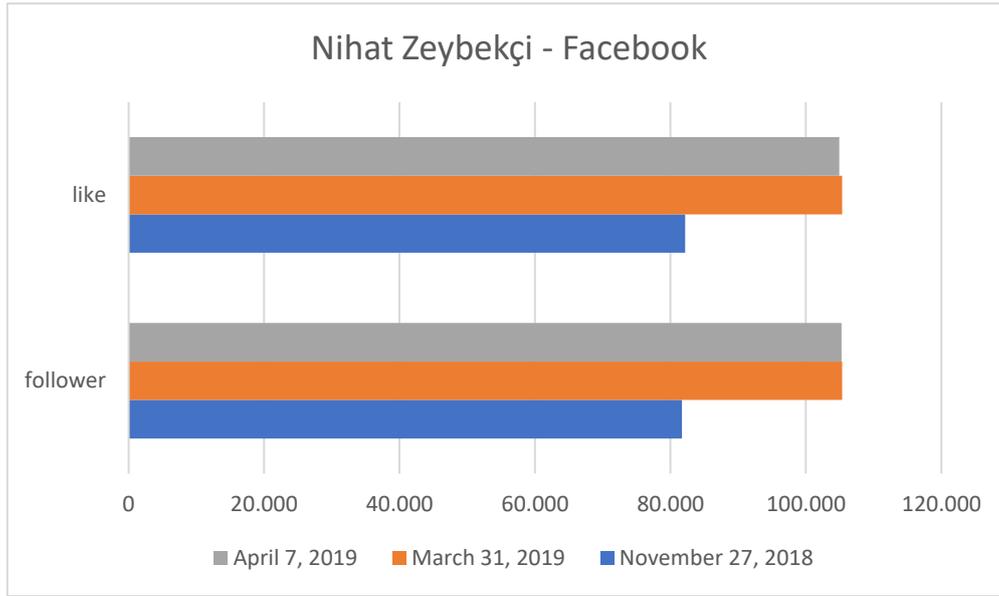


Figure 126: Facebook Accounts' of Tunç Soyer and Nihat Zeybekçi

As for Facebook, after announcing his candidacy for president, Tunç Soyer increased his followers with more 26,173 people and Nihat Zeybekci has got 23,657 more followers on Facebook. Soyer and Zeybekci's Facebook accounts have been used as propaganda tools like Twitter and Instagram. Since simultaneous sharing can be easily made, announcements, news and public meetings were shared with photographs, and projects along with various propaganda posters are broadcasted on Facebook.

3.4 Findings from In-depth Interview

In this study, 2018 general election results are taken as basis for the selection of people to be interviewed. In the 2018 general elections, candidates with the most votes are identified in detail. The joint candidate of AK Party and MHP is Nihat Zeybekci in People's Alliance (Cumhur İttifakı) whereas the joint candidate of the CHP and İYİ Party is Mustafa Tunç Soyer with the name of the Nation Alliance (Millet İttifakı). Candidates for the other high-ranking

and elected parties are the VP - Rifat Mutlu and SP - Şerafettin Kılıç. HDP, a party of Kurdish origin supporters did not nominate a candidate for local elections in İzmir in 2019 elections. HDP İzmir Provincial President said that they will not nominate a candidate for İzmir and instead support Tunç Soyer. Yalçın Yanık, who is an independent candidate in the local elections of 2019, became the candidate for HDP parliamentary elections in the 2018 general elections. An in-depth interview was conducted with only one of the independent candidates. Because of his political background and opinions about social media, Yanık was selected. Yanık did not actively use social media during the election, in other words he did not prioritize the use of social media, so I also added his opinions and ideas. Since Yalçın Yanık managed his own social media, an interview was made directly with him. Social media account managers of the presidential candidates are selected for the interview. Hayal Maraşlı on behalf of CHP, Sercan Topçu on behalf of the SP and Rabia Nur Açar on behalf of the VP have been interviewed. AK Party's candidate Nihat Zeybekçi's WhatsApp line was contacted with the party and the provincial presidency. Neither of the party members could spare time since they worked intensively beforehand the election. After the election, expectedly, the social media team returned to Ankara and there left no one in the party that is to be interviewed.

It is recorded that Tunç Soyer's social media has been running by Maraşlı for four years and they have been working together ever since Soyer's duty on Seferihisar Municipality. Maraşlı, as it is clear, carried out Soyer's first wide-scaled political campaign. Topçu, the communication consultant of Şerafettin Kılıç has been working professionally on digital marketing and corporate communication. Since January 2016, he has been voluntarily working on the communication plan and social media of the SP. Açar, who runs Rifat Mutlu's social media accounts, is a senior student at the Faculty of Letters. Before her university education, she took part in youth branches in another political party. All of the parties and party leaders mentioned also manage their social media with the help of a team consists of the designer,

graphic designer and content produce. Lastly, it is learned that Yalçın Yanık is using social media through his personal account, and he is directing his own friends to help him to run his propaganda on Twitter.

Route Maps

Analyzing the world-wide election samples will be undoubtedly useful to enlighten the way that goes to the election campaigns held in Turkey. The SP and CHP are known with their active campaigns abroad. They are particularly interested in Obama's campaigns, which have an important role in the US election campaigns and the digitalization of election campaigns. In 2008 and 2012, Obama modeled on their election campaign, on the language they used and on the profile they created. According to Sercan Topçu, however, the local parties abroad are insufficient in terms of budget even if how hard they wish to exemplify Obama's election campaign. The VP has already examined more examples from Turkey. They modeled on the government's social media sharing and news composing languages. Like CHP, they kept their leaders, politicians and candidates at other provinces. Yalçın Yanık is one of the politicians who did not copy any of the samples for social media usage in the election campaign. He preferred reaching the target audience face-to-face in the field.

As soon as the candidacy for the 2019 local elections were announced, candidates started to identify their own road maps and form their campaign strategies. Nihat Zeybekci announced his candidacy for the AK Party on the 27th of November 2018 and Tunç Soyer announced his candidacy for the CHP on the 27th of January 2019. Late announcement of the candidate of CHP made people wonder about the potential leader. Ankara CHP deputy Murat Emir participated in a television program and noted that the announcement of the candidate is not delayed, there have strong candidates, one person cannot determine the candidate and the

democracy within the party, he said (Enine Boyuna Programı/ Habertürk – 18 Ocak 2019). When Tunç Soyer was finally announced- which is later than his powerful rivals, Soyer's social media team tried to promote him through sharing introductive posts. The unknown fact about Soyer along with his political career and personal life were tried to be discovered and the public was expected to recognize and sympathize with him. Mutlu's characteristics and career- who is a brain surgeon and caricaturist were also highlighted at the VP in that period. Social networks are used intensively by politicians and political parties during the election periods. In many countries, these networks have become the most important means of communication in election campaigns. In the election periods, social networks provide politicians with an environment in which they can introduce themselves, explain their ideas and objectives and, in turn, measure the pulse of the electorate. In other words, the politician receives feedback before the elections and thus has the chance to make a more consistent estimate of the vote before the election. This makes it easier for the politician to shape his policy before the election. CHP tried to answer all the questions that came through social media in order to get the positive feedback and provide a positive interaction with the public. Public response, interaction, number of followers, follower profiles have been examined and a guiding roadmap has been created to be compatible with them. What is more, the SP has deeply examined the demographic structure. A catalog has been created based on İzmir's trade and tourism capacity, municipal reports and financial reports about them. In addition, the income sources, business volume and economic data of the citizens aged between 25 and 44 years are taken into consideration. After all the data were analyzed, a communication plan is created. Since it is much more difficult to change their minds or their political tendencies for the people over the age of 45, political parties have directed their limited budgets and valuable time to the people under 45. Stating that he has a wide range of voter profiles, Yanık has given priority to people full of ideas. In his face-to-face election campaign, he has expressed that he worked for everyone and for every branch of work.

Social Media vs. Traditional Media

In SP, while social media consists of 4-5% of the political communication plan, 95% is recorded as out of the social media. In the VP, there observed a propaganda unit in the youth branches and in every meeting, new action plans have been taken for propaganda. They want to announce their ideas and activities all around the country and also abroad. To accomplish their desire, they have thought that social media is a good tool to bring success. They believe that they are actively using social media and a large number of young people in their teams invent creative ideas. Yalçın Yanık does not use social media to promote himself as an independent candidate. His own personal account is even private. He conducts field studies in accordance with his ideology yet with limited possibilities. He prefers to share and promote his ideas face to face. For CHP, social media is an important tool, an important role in election campaigns within communication strategies. However, it is observed that party members do not go beyond the corporate identity of the party when using social media. The logo, font, hashtags and articles in the content are in harmony and totally identical with their corporate identity.

When we compare face-to-face interviews, posters, billboards, public meeting, television and newspaper ads and social media during the election period, according to CHP, social media is one step front with its offer to make instant shares. While media such as television and radio are available or easy to access at all times, we can use the live broadcasting feature of social media anytime and anywhere when it is required. It is also a pleasure for voters to see the candidates talking since they want to be closer with their potential leader; they even want to reach out the leaders whenever they have a question or problem in minds. While the television and radio are not convenient to have instant feedbacks, instant return can be easily provided through social media. Citizens now want to be effective in management and want to contribute to the candidate they choose. Citizens now are able to comment and express their problems better and easier so that the party can learn overall problems, demands and

expectations faster. Transparent, uncensored and equal attitude towards the citizens and their probable problems surely makes it easier to reach people. While social networks lead politicians to be more transparent and coherent, it also allows them to learn how each action they perform is perceived on the electorate side. SP believes that the most important feature of social media is that it is transparent and equal. Due to some constraints imposed by both the limited budget and the Supreme Election Council (YSK), they cannot run every ad on every newspaper and television channel, but they can use social media equally and freely. On the other hand, the VP thinks that billboards and posters provide more visibility than social media. In social media, they believe, people don't see candidates, but they are more visible with billboards and posters located on each and every corner. They think that they can make their voice heard more by public meeting, however, they also admit that their budget is insufficient to provide the arrangements of the meetings. Banners and billboards are also rather expensive to afford with a limited budget. They think the face-to-face interview with tradesmen and voters is more effective. Yanık believes that face-to-face interview is more effective. With a limited budget, Yanık has preferred to talk to the public in crowded places believing that it is more effective and catchier to introduce himself that closely. Besides, he believed that there is no cost- such as printing on posters on billboards or arranging for a well-organized public meeting in the self-promotion way he has chosen and actively used.

Budget

All interviewed candidates agree on the point that the most important problem with regards to the election campaign is the budget. The high cost of advertising on the national channel is one of the main distinguishing elements in the competition. One specific candidate or party can promote as much as their budget allows and this inevitably creates differences in the promotion process. At this point, social media comes to the forefront with its costless nature.

With low budget, social media enables candidates to appeal to large segments. The interactive communication of social media also helps political parties to arrange their organizations cheaper, easier, and faster. In other words, social networks are creating new campaign methods as well as being a catalyst for traditional methods. The cost of advertising equipment, such as the cost of materials and labor used in these organizations, the cost of advertising materials, brochure catalogs are much more costly and tedious expenses compared to the one effective social media campaign.

The Youth

Another important factor that leads candidates to use social media platforms more often and more actively is surely the widespread use of social media among young generation. The fact that the young citizens follow the news more through the web and express their views through these social media platforms makes all the social networks to become the most important communication tool for the politicians to reach young people. In other words, the politician who is more active in social media is better known among young people. It is learned from the candidates who are interviewed that they don't have a special application for young people. Young volunteers and the youth branches of the parties worked actively in each party, but the candidates do not have separate posts on their social media to address the youth.

What is also striking that candidates are not one another's followers in any social media, but they all regularly check the share of the opponents or the other candidates. Yalçın Yanık says that all other candidates make social municipality their idol and do not share social problems. He says he doesn't take samples because he attaches more importance to social problems than the social municipality. CHP, VP and Yalçın Yanık all agree that social media is quite effective in public decision especially just before the election. Yanık and VP think that

they can convince the unstable voters to vote for them through campaigns. As the organization team of the VP arranged, face-to-face talk is used as an effective propaganda, but through social media, they say they have reached more people. What Yalçın Yanık thinks is that candidates are more visible in television and newspapers and therefore their persuasion ability is higher there. By giving public speech on television, it is also much easier for candidates to get more support from national media since the greatest budget belongs to the People's Alliance and Nation Alliance. CHP, on the other hand, draws attention to the young population and the accessibility to them. CHP believes that it is more effective to introduce young people to politics through social media who are actively using Twitter, Instagram, and Youtube. It is easier to convince the voters when candidates reach the public easily through social media accounts and respond instantly to the public questions. SP, on the other side, supports the idea that the voters take decisions influencing not only the social media, but also television, newspaper, and the opinion of the people in their circle, therefore, it may not be possible to change their minds completely when there are so many factors that determine their choice. As their budget spared to the communication team is rather insufficient, SP cannot reply the comments and messages simultaneously and cannot use social media as efficiently as their rivals.

The Impact Area of Social Media

CHP, VP and Yalçın Yanık believe that they can reach a larger audience thanks to social media. Yanık thinks that he cannot use social media actively, but more people have been reached through using social media properly. He further states that the content is more important than showcase. However, promises to mean more than the content in the political campaigns. As for CHP, their media organization facilities are located in İstanbul and their campaigns for the local election are carried out by mostly on social media. SP believes that the

rate of social media success is not related to the vote. He thinks that if the percentage in the feedbacks is over 10%, it means that the interaction is high.

CHP, SP and VP are in constant contact with the headquarters of the parties running the social media. Large budget required promotions such as making television commercials are supported by the headquarters of CHP. The parties are also in contact in the non-election period. During the election period, CHP uses social media as a bridge between citizens and administrators while sharing the details of Tunç Soyer's personality and projects. A platform is created by CHP for listening to demands from the public and informing them of the projects. As for SP, the account of Şerafettin Kılıç is known to be an individual account during the election period. However, most social media accounts have returned to the corporate account from the individual account in the election process. Yalçın Yanık considers that during the elections, people use social media more because they are more interested in politics. In both the election and non-election period Yanık uses Twitter actively, yet, it goes without saying that during the election period, the usage Twitter is higher. Rifat Mutlu in VP uses his Instagram account as an individual account, and his Facebook and Twitter accounts are actively used by his team as a corporate account.

Hashtags

When the hashtags used by all the candidates in CHP are examined, it is quite possible to come across the fact that #MartınSonuBahar (the end of March is spring) hashtag have been used all around the country. Additionally, in İzmir, CHP also prefers to use #Aşklaİzmir (İzmir with love) hashtag to support Tunç Soyer. The hashtag that the VP chose and used for Rifat Mutlu was #Mutluİzmir (Happy İzmir). SP is observed while trying to avoid using more than five hashtags. SP prepared a SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunity, Treats) analysis while

preparing the communication plan. The party believed that it would be more effective to increase the number of election offices to promote his candidates. What SP advocates that face-to-face forms or surveys cannot be carried out by social media; it needs a physical interaction to create neighborhood volunteers. They have not preferred to explain their projects and ideas on social media because they think that the number of characters or the duration of the video will be insufficient to explain every detail. As for Yalçın Yanık, he had no budget being an independent candidate therefore he has built up a voluntary team. He thinks he has limited opportunities to run an election campaign and he further believes that an electoral car will surely appeal to the wider community so does the public meeting and other ads, nevertheless, he supports that neither the budget and nor the team is itself enough to win the competition.

Websites

Apart from social media platforms, another platform in which the election campaigns are carried out is the websites designed for the candidates. Tunç Soyer's page (<https://www.Tunçsoyer.com.tr/>) is shared many times during the election process. Anyone who wants to be the “volunteer” for the party, could easily fulfill their wish through a single click on the website. The site includes information, news and press releases for Tunç Soyer. What is more, Soyer's Twitter and Facebook posts appear on the first page. Another candidate, Nihat Zeybekci, has also a personal website through which his activities could be followed by the citizens (<http://www.nihatzeybekci.com.tr/>). The site is utterly and completely designed for the election campaign. Videos, upcoming events, projects and news from Zeybekci's television programs have all demonstrated daily and instantly. Zeybekci also had a WhatsApp line in the election period which enabled citizens to communicate with him whenever they need. The

messages sent on Whatsapp were simultaneously replied by his team and the views of the citizens were tried to be measured beforehand the election. He also had a Youtube account with videos he had used in his election campaign and videos from television programs that he had previously participated in. Şerafettin Kılıç, the candidate of the SP, has also the website page (<http://ŞerafettinKılıç.com.tr/>) on which his election- centered photos, videos and social media accounts are actively shared.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Without any doubt, communication and social media are crucial for political parties. They enable politicians to reach a wide range of people and votes from the electorate who directly shape power. To increase their votes, party leaders must be recognized in public and be accessible. Political campaigns allow candidates to be recognized and appreciated by the public. Campaigns also increase the awareness of popularizing political candidates. Throughout the election campaign, the candidates' attitudes towards political issues and the political preferences can be easily learned thanks to the campaigns.

Candidates must deliver the right message to the right audience at the right time. It should be aimed to draw the attention of those who are far from the elections rather than the ones with the potential for voting. Social media tools have now been replaced by non-governmental organizations, trade unions, newspapers and magazines. We read the news from the websites of newspapers instead of getting newspapers. We keep track of last-minute shares on Twitter. It enables us to reach information more quickly. We can instantly learn the news. The same goes for the political communication. Candidates can share their news and updates instantly. Interactive sharing takes place and communication becomes unilateral. Candidates can ask questions and comment on their shares. This makes it easier for candidates to collect instant and useful feedback.

2002 elections were the elections in which digital movement first began. The web pages of the parties started to be opened, and adaptation to the digital transformation did not take much time or effort thanks to the effective use of social media of the younger generation. Considering that every new electorate means a potential vote, it became more evident for politicians that catching the interest of young generation is the cleverest step to be taken.

Furthermore, it is easier to convince the electorate who votes for the first time than the ones who have been voting for years- especially to a single specific party.

A digital language was grown as soon as digital was integrated to everyday life including voting. It is important to keep up with the age and youth, or the major users of the digital, since the digital world is an important way to use technology to impress the young generation that has grown in and developed within the digital world. Thanks to the digital ads and social media ads, political party candidates become more visible and appreciable. Social media has become *the sine qua non* of election campaigns. It is of great importance that it is possible to receive immediate feedback at the end of rational and effective use in these channels and provide easy access to reporting facilities and the opportunity to touch a large number of people that can never be gathered in arenas. There is no doubt that the social media became the most efficient and most affordable way to reach the masses. You can't reach people if you don't use the right movements, right strategies, right timing and the right channels which is now entitled as the effective use of social media.

Although traditional media, newspapers and televisions play a significant role in reaching the masses of politicians, they are rather insufficient to provide political information to the masses in today's digitalized society. While mass media aims to reach the masses in the traditional sense, it creates its own agenda, decides what is to be presented to the public as news, and shapes the news according to its own position. For this and other reasons, it cannot be said that political information is circulating freely in traditional media. Therefore, citizens were totally in the need of new communication channels that provide information flow from the political sphere to the public space. Online communication has all the features to meet this need. The fact that traditional means of communication are restricted with their structural limitations and don't have a great potential for developing democratic participation increases the importance of online communication for political life. In the present-day political atmosphere

in which a search for a stronger, participatory, negotiated democracy has increased, traditional media are inadequate to meet the expectations of the public. It allows individuals to acquire information from more reliable and easier verifiable sources. In other words, people can learn from the source without any intermediary. Traditional media provides one-way communication in contrast, social media offers multiple sources and multiple perspectives. The content shared on social networks is rapidly spreading and people have the opportunity to discuss this content instantly. This rapid dissemination and controversy allow the social media to play an active role in the political spheres.

The ability to communicate interactively, the politician's ability to address a wider audience in a short time, and to measure their response more easily make social media a political tool. Citizens can express their views more easily by using social media tools and can interpret and respond to the posts of politicians. The manipulation of information or the prevention of access to information is an easy task for governments and for various authorities. Contrary to this situation, the need and demand for obtaining information from reliable and accurate sources is increasing day by day among society. Social media offers a more neutral environment for political communication compared to what has been offered in traditional media. Today, many politicians communicate with their voters by using their accounts on social networking sites and this study, I believe, demonstrated the way in which the candidates have used social media to contribute on their election process.

To sum up, when we look at the in-depth interviews and social media accounts, we can find out some prominent results. Social media and digitalization have an important place in political communication as in all fields. The most intense period of political communication is the election campaign; therefore candidates and parties need to intensify the work for their publicity. Social media enables to reach more people at low cost. It does not cost anything except for sponsored shares. It provides a transparent and equal environment. All parties and

all candidates can use it equally, unlike the television and radio. Candidates can share videos on social media, make public meeting announcements, and broadcast live from their events. They can introduce themselves to the public and measure their reaction. The public can communicate with the party, express their opinions freely, by commenting on the shares or by messages on social media. They can easily reach the young voters who will vote for the first time and introduce themselves. It will be more effective to make digital advertisements for young people who no longer watch television and, watch series and movies on the internet, play games on the internet and use social media.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acar, E. (2012), *Sosyal Medyada 12 Haziran Genel Seçimleri, Hepimiz Globaliz Hepimiz YerliYız* (Der) E. Sözen, İstanbul: Alfa Basım Yayın, İstanbul, pp. 259 - 274
- Akyol, M., (2015), *Seçim Kampanyalarında Sosyal Medya Kullanımı: Facebook ve 2014 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçimleri*, Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, Volume:14 Issue:55 (pp. 98-114)
- Alkan, M. Ö., (2017), *Türkiye’de Seçim Sistemi Tercihinin Misyona Boyutu ve Demokratik Gelişime Etkileri*
- Alujevic, L. V., (2012), *Political Participation and Web 2.0 in Europe: A Case Study of Facebook*, Public Relations Review, 38, pp.466-470
- Andersen, K. N., Medaglia, R., (2009), *The Use of Facebook in National Election Campaigns: Politics as Usual?* Lecture Notes in Computer Science, ePart, Volume: 5694, Springer, pp. 101-111
- Aziz, A., (2007). *Siyasal İletişim*, Ankara: Nobel
- Baltacı, C., Eke E., (2012), *Siyasal Propaganda Araçlarının Seçmen Davranışı Üzerindeki Etkisine Yönelik Seçmen Algısı: Isparta Örnek Olayı*, Uluslararası Alanya İşletme Fakültesi Dergisi, Volume. 4, Issue, 1
- Bennett, W. L., Segerberg, A., (2013) *The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics*, New York: Cambridge University Press
- Beril, Z., Akıncı, V., Bat, M., (2009), *Siyasal Seçim Kampanyalarında Yeni İletişim Teknolojileri Ve Blog Kullanımı: 2008 Amerika Başkanlık Seçimlerine Yönelik Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analiz*, Journal of Yasar University, Volume: 4, Issue: 16
- Blue State Digital, 2014

- Binark, M., Bayraktutan, G., (2008), *Ayin Karanlık Yüzü: Yeni Medya ve Etik*, Kalkedon Yayıncılık, İstanbul, p. 18
- Bogdan, R. C., Biklen, S. K., (1992), *Qualitative Research for Education, an Introduction to Theory and Methods*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon Inc.
- Borins, S., (2011). Online Adaydan Online Başkana, Yusuf Devran (Edt.), Seçim Kampanyalarında Geleneksel Medya, İnternet, Sosyal Medyanın Kullanımı İstanbul: Başlık Yayın Grubu, pp. 85-93
- Carlisle, J. E., Patron, R. C., (2013), *Is Social Media Changing How We Understand Political Engagement? An Analysis of Facebook and the 2008 Presidential Election*, Political Research Quarterly, 66, (4) pp. 883–895
- Çıldan, C., Ertemiz, M., Küçük, E., Tumuçin, H. K., Albayrak, D., (2011), *Sosyal Medyanın Politik Katılım ve Hareketlerdeki Rolü*, Bilkent Üniversitesi, Bilgisayar Teknolojisi ve Bilişim Sistemleri Bölümü, Ankara
- Dahlgren, P., (2005), *The Internet, Public Spheres, and Political Communication: Dispersion and Deliberation*, Political Communication, 22
- Dilber, F., (2012), *Seçmenlerin Kitle İletişim Araçlarından Aldığı Siyasal İçerikli Bilgilerden Etkilenme Düzeyi; Karaman İli Seçmenleri Üzerine Bir Alan Araştırması*, Gümüşhane Ün. İletişim Fakültesi Elektronik Dergisi, Issue. 4
- Dilmen, N. E. (2007), *Yeni Medya Kavramı Çerçevesinde İnternet Günlükleri-Bloglar ve Gazeteciliğe Yansımaları*, Marmara İletişim Dergisi, Sayı Şubat 12, pp. 113-122
- Dimitrova, D. V., Shehata, A., Strömbäck, J., Nord, L. W., (2014), The Effects of Digital Media on Political Knowledge and Participation in Election Campaigns: Evidence From Panel Data, Communication Research, 2014, Vol. 41, (1), pp. 95–118
- Doğu, B., Özçetin, B., Bayraktutan, G., Binark, M., Çomu, T., Telli Aydemir A., İslamoğlu, G., (2014), *Vaka-i Sosyal Medya*

- Duman D., Sun İpekşen, S., (2013), *Türkiye’de Genel Seçim Kampanyaları (1950 – 2002)*, International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic Volume 8/7, pp. 117-135
- Ergüney, M., (2017), *İletişimin Dijitalleşmesi ve İletişim Fakültelerinde Yeni Medya Eğitimi*, Volume 5, Issue 15
- Fernandes, J., Giurcanu, M., Bowers K. W., Neely, J. C., (2010), *The Writing on the Wall: A Content Analysis of College Students' Facebook Groups for the 2008 Presidential Election*, *Mass Communication and Society*, 13:5, pp. 653-675
- Göksu, O., (2015a), *2014 Yerel Seçimlerinde Siyasal İletişim ve Yeni Medya*, Özkan, A., Tandaçgüneş, N., Doğan, B. Ö., (Eds.), *Yeni Medya ve Reklam* (347-379), İstanbul: Derin Yayınları
- Göksu, O., (2015b), *2014 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçim Sürecinde Medyanın Adayların Seçim Kampanyalarındaki Stratejik Konumu*, 4. Türkiye Lisansüstü Çalışmalar Kongresi Bildiriler Kitabı-V
- Gubrium J. F., Holstein, J. A., (2001), *Handbook of Interview Research Context & Method*
- Guion, L. A., Diehl, D. C., McDonalds, D., (2001), *Conducting an In-depth Interview*, University of Florida,
- Güçdemir, Y., (2010), *Sanal Ortamda İletişim - Bir Halkla İlişkiler Perspektifi*, İstanbul: Derin Yayınları,
- Güçdemir, Y., Göksu, O., (2015), *Sosyal medyanın siyasal iletişim aracı olarak kullanımı: Barack Obama'nın 2012 Başkanlık Seçim Kampanyası ile Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'ın 2014 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçim Kampanyasının incelenmesi*, F. Aydoğan (Ed.), pp. 45-62, İstanbul: Der Yayınları.

- G ng r, N., (2013), *İletiŐim, Kuramlar ve YaklaŐımlar*, 2. Baskı, Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi
- Hanson, G., Haridakis, G. H., Cunningham, A. W., Sharma, R., Ponder, J. D., (2010), *The 2008 Presidential Campaign: Political Cynicism in the Age of Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube*, *Mass Communication and Society*, 13: 5, pp.584-607
- Holtz-Bacha, C., (2008) Professionalization, Kaid, L. L., Holtz-Bacha, C., (eds.) *Encyclopedia of political communication*, Volume: 2, pp.656-657, Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage
- Jensen, M. J., Jorba, L., Anduiza, E., (2012), *Introduction: In Digital Media and Political Engagement Worldwide: A Comparative Study*, ed. Anduiza, Eva, Jensen, Michael J., Jorba, Laia, 1–15. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jensen, M. J., Bang, H. P., (2013) *Occupy Wall Street: A New Political Form of Movement and Community?* *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 10 (4): 444–61.
- Jensen, M. J., (2017), *Social Media and Political Campaigning: Changing Terms of Engagement?* *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, Volume 22(1) 23–42
- Johnson, J. M., (2001), *In-Depth Interviewing*, edited by Jaber F. Gubrium&James A. Holstein
- Kalender, A., (2005). *Siyasal İletiŐim: Semenler ve İkna Stratejileri*, Konya: izgi
- Kara, T., (2013), *Sosyal Medya End strisi*, İstanbul: Beta Basım
- Karaor, S., (2009), *Yeni İletiŐim Teknolojileri, Siyasal Katılım, Demokrasi, Y netim ve Ekonomi*, Volume. 16, Issue. 2
- Kılıaslan, E; (2008), *Siyasal İletiŐimde İdeolojik Dil*, YayınlanmamıŐ Y. Lisans Tezi, Trakya  n. Sosyal Bilimler Enstit s , Edirne

- Kreiss, D., (2016) *Seizing the Moment: The Presidential Campaigns' Use of Twitter during the 2012 Electoral Cycle*, New Media & Society 18: pp.1473–1490
- Kushin, M. J., Yamamoto, M., (2010), *Did Social Media Really Matter? College Students' Use of Online Media and Political Decision Making in the 2008 Election*, Mass Communication and Society, 13: 5, pp. 608-630
- Lau, R. R., Pomper, G. M., (2002) *Effectiveness of Negative Campaigning in U.S. Senate Elections, 1988-98.*, American Journal of Political Science 46: 47-66
- Leuschner, K. L., (2012), *The use of the internet and social media in U.S. presidential campaigns: 1992-2012*, Unpublished manuscript, Virginia: James Madison University
- Meriç, Ö., (2017), *Çevrimiçi Siyasal İletişim Üzerine Bir Literatür Değerlendirmesi*, Selçuk Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi
- McNair, B., (2011), *An Introduction to Political Communication*, London: Routledge
- Minucci, S., Mascheroni, G., (2010), *European Elections in the Italian Web Sphere: Campaigning 2.0*, CEU Political Science Journal, Issue: 02, pp. 187-201
- Mutz, D. C., Sniderman, P. M., Brody, R. A., (1996), *Political Persuasion and Attitude Change*, The University of Michigan Press
- Okmeydan, C. K., (2013), *Partiler, Sosyal Medyaya İlgisiz*, Bilişim Dergisi, Year 41, Issue 157,
- Özer, M. A., (2014), *Siyasal İletişimin Etkinliğinde Algılama Yönetiminin Rolü*, HAK-İŞ Uluslararası Emek ve Toplum Dergisi Volume. 3, Year. 3, issue. 7
- Pewinternet, Pew Research Center Internet, 2012
- Polat, C., (2015), *Siyasal Pazarlama ve İletişim*, Nobel Yayıncılık, Ankara, s. 538, 539
- Powell, L., Cowart, J., (2017), *Political Campaign Communication*, Third Edition
- Sandıkçioğlu, B., (2012), *Tarihsel Gelişim Süreci içinde Siyasal İletişim*, Siyasal İletişim, (Ed.) F. Uztuğ-Y.Özgün, Anadolu Ün. Yay., No:2630, Eskişehir

- Skoric, M. M., Kwan, G., (2011), *Do Facebook and Video Games Promote Political Participation Among Youth?* eJournal of eDemocracy and Open Government, 3, 1, pp. 70-79
- Smith, K. N., (2011), *Social Media and Political Campaigns*, University of Tennessee Honors Thesis Projects.
- Solmaz, B., Görkemli, H. N. (2012), *Büyükşehir Belediyeleri ve Sosyal Medya Kullanımı*, Akdeniz İletişim Dergisi, issue. 18, pp. 9-20
- Stieglitz S., Brockmann T., Dang-Xuan L., (2012), *Usage of social media for political communication. In: Proc of 16th Pacific Asia conference on information systems*, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
- Sweetser, K. D., Lariscy, R. W., (2008), *Candidates Make Good Friends: An Analysis of Candidates' Uses of Facebook*, *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 2: 3, pp. 175-198
- Tekin, H. H., (2006), *Nitel Araştırma Yönteminin Bir Veri Toplama Tekniği Olarak Derinlemesine Görüşme*, volume: 3, issue: 13, pp. 101 - 116
- Trent, J. S., & Friedenberg, R. V. (2000). *Political campaign communication: Principles and practices*. Westport, Conn: Praeger.
- Tokgöz, O. (2008), *Siyasal İletişimi Anlamak*, Ankara: İmge
- Topbaş H., (2016), *Demokratik Bir Tehdit Ya Da Katılım Aracı Olarak İnternet Ve Sosyal Medya*, *Uluslararası Hakemli İletişim ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, pp.129-152
- Yanık, A. (2014). *Yeni Medya Kullanımındaki Akış Deneyiminin Risk Algısı ve Online Turistik Satın Alma Niyetine Etkisi*, Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Aydın.
- Yegen, C. (2018), *Siyasal İletişim Propaganda ve Ulusal Kimlik*, İstanbul: Kriter

- Yeniçeri Alemdar, M., Köker, N. E., (2011), *Siyasi Partilerin 2007- 2011 Türkiye Genel Seçimlerinde Web Sitesi Kullanımı Ve Karşılaştırmalı Analizi*
- Yıldırım, A., Şimşek, H., (2013), *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri*, (Dokuzuncu Baskı)



APPENDIX

The Questions of In-depth Interview

1. Can you introduce yourself?
2. Have you had any previous experience in the field of politics? What kind of election campaigns did you run?
3. Have you been involved in any previous election campaigns of the Party?
4. How long have you been working with a party / candidate?
5. Do you have one person, or do you have a team?
6. In the election campaign, you examine the sample from the world or Turkey?
7. When was the election campaign and roadmap created?
8. What preparations did you make for the candidate and voter before you started the election campaign?
9. Is the use of social media related to election campaigns in the party program and strategy created?
10. Are there target audiences that you set for social media use? Are there changes in the use of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram according to the target group? Can you compare them in terms of interaction and feedback?
11. What are the differences when you compare election media channels such as posters, billboards, public meetings, face-to-face meetings, television - newspaper ads, and social media? When you look at the election campaign, where is the social media?
12. Do you have a separate application for digitalization for young voters?
13. Do you follow your competitors' social media accounts? What are the accounts you follow for the election in İzmir?
14. Do you think that social media is an effective method of persuasion? How do you think that the shares you make on social media have an effect on changing the opinion of voters?

15. Do you think that you have reached more audiences through social media usage in election campaigns?
16. Can you comment on the change in the budgets of election campaigns with the spread of social media?
17. Are the same things shared on social media? Is there a difference according to the target group?
18. How do you coordinate with the team that manages your party's social media accounts?
19. What is the difference between the use of social media accounts of the parties and candidates during the non-election period and during the election campaigns?
20. Which hashtags do you use? What do you choose by Hashtags?
21. Do you have individual accounts other than your corporate accounts? Are there other accounts for election campaigns other than your individual accounts?
22. Is there a platform for new media out of social media?
23. Do you follow the social media agenda?
24. Who do you recommend me to interview?
25. Is there anything you want to add?