

# Economic Environment And Political Uncertainty In Turkey, The Effect Of Political Differences Of Brand To Voters Choose

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## **Abstract**

*In the political uncertainty in Turkey, a long period from the date of the Republic, has been dominated by a severe economic and political uncertainty. During this period, certain political parties shaped our economic and political life. Voters, on the other hand, preferred political parties within certain frameworks. In traditional markets, just as various brands are effective in the preference of any good, in political markets, political parties are preferred with the brands they represent. In this context, the political brand for political markets consists of the party name. Symbols and logos are also used to reinforce this brand.*

**Key Words:** *Political Brand, Marketing Mix, A Survey in Corum Province.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

At different periods in Turkey in political uncertainty, the Republic over a long period at a certain period, a serious economic and political uncertainties, the society has been active in his life. The living in these times of crisis, Turkey's economic and political conditions, gave direction to a certain political parties. In this process, the voters preferred political parties within certain frameworks in line with their point of view and world views.

In the preference of any product in traditional product markets, just as the brand represented by the product is effective in the preference of the product, the brands that have emerged in political markets are also effective and direct voter preferences. In these markets, political parties are preferred together with the brands they represent and the elements expressed with the brand. When evaluated in this context, the political brand for political markets consists of the party name and its prominent leader. Symbols and logos used in the process are also used to reinforce the political brand in question.

In this study, it will be investigated how the political brand preferences of the voters in the environment of economic and political uncertainty emerged in the Republic period.

## **2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

In the political uncertainty in Turkey, even if the history of the early years of the Republic, in subsequent periods, has experienced various political and economic crises. These crises caused economic and political uncertainty. During these periods, the party propaganda and public discourse carried out by the political parties caused the society to gather in certain camps. The voters preferred political parties in line with the discourse of political parties.

In the above-mentioned period, it is possible to come across to the interim regime in Turkey. Intermediate regimes are more common in underdeveloped and developing countries where civilian governance-governance relations are not sufficiently institutionalized, education level is low, democratic consciousness is not sufficiently developed, people have difficulty in adapting to slow democratic processes, politicians are trying to gain the support of the army to be in power, and where economic dependency is high. It is common (Demir and Üzümcü, 2001).

Pluralist party failed attempts in Turkey until 1946, the CHP during the single-party system from 1923 to 1946, has maintained its power alone multiparty system in the 1946-1950 period. Despite the transition to a multi-party system in 1946, the single-party rule (DP government) continued in the 1950-1960 period. Since politics in the country has long been based on the understanding of shaping the people and dominating the opportunities provided by public resources, every road to power has been tried to be legitimized. In this context, a confrontational culture dominated politics, election propaganda turned into mutual smear campaigns, demagoguery came to the fore, and even the support of the soldiers was sought to be in power. Sometimes, the soldiers made an open, de facto intervention to the civilian administration, thinking that the civilian governments were unsuccessful and Atatürk's principles and revolutions were in danger. Thus, the 27 May 1960 Coup, the 12 March 1971 Memorandum, the 12 September 1980 Coup and the 28 February 1997 Process were experienced (Demir and Üzümcü, 2001).

## **3. POLICY MARKETING DEFINITION AND ITS ELEMENTS**

Political marketing, which encompasses campaigns, party management, and the political behaviour of voters and parties, is a fairly new issue according to Baines et al. (1999). However, there are also those who base this marketing issue to earlier times (Bayraktaroğlu, 2002: 59).

Political parties are organizations organized to influence political decisions and seize political power within the framework of a program. Their structural differences also reflect the differences of their social base and therefore their ideology. Political decisions that can direct our social life and determine our agenda at any moment are ultimately taken by political parties, and their actions can affect every segment of society with their goals, presentation styles and methods of implementation (Parılı and Baş, 2002: 9).

Just as various brands are effective in the preference of any product in traditional markets, political parties are preferred with the brands they represent in political markets. In this

context, the political brand for political markets consists of the party name. Symbols and logos are also used to reinforce this brand.

#### **4. POLITICAL MARKETING MIX AND STRATEGIES**

It is possible to define the political marketing system as a system of exchange in which two or more candidates with valuable ideas are trading their ideas. In this system, the candidates demand representation from the voters in return for their words and promises (Parıltı and Baş: 2002: 19).

##### **a. Political Marketing Composite**

Kotler (1981) states that there are similarities rather than differences between political marketing and marketing in businesses. According to Harrop (1990), the political product; It is similar to invisible and invisible service marketing. In this context, the political marketing mix also consists of product, price, promotion and place composite (Bayraktaroğlu, 2002: 62). These are briefly explained below in terms of political marketing.

##### **i. Product (Leader, Party Program and Candidates)**

There is no general standard in political product definition. In general, within the scope of this definition, the package of policies, leadership style and specifying political values are included (Bayraktaroğlu, 2002: 68). While in traditional marketing, businesses that do not make profit are excluded from the product mix, such a situation in the political product mix is out of question because political parties are obliged to find solutions to all problems (Dalkıran, 1995: 68). The main task of the administration is to identify a suitable leader that can be adopted by the voter, to program and develop candidates with the party program. It is of vital importance to make changes in the current leader, party program and candidates, to develop new words and promises and to cover the problems of the country (Parıltı and Baş, 2002: 19). If the political parties cannot respond to the demands of the society in this direction, they may face to disappear in the market.

##### **ii. Price (Voting)**

In political marketing, it is not possible to talk about a real price that will affect the voting decision of the voters (Bayraktaroğlu, 2002: 61). However, the vote given to the candidate in the election for the price, the membership fees, the evaluation of the services provided for the candidate and the party as a vote may be a constraint in terms of determining the price (Tek, 1999). Although the production of private brands is shaped according to market conditions, the society is influential and guiding the decisions to be taken in the political process with their choices when voting (Standford, 1995: 15). Another aspect of pricing is social approval. The vote, which shows that the product determined as the leader, party and candidates is accepted by the voters, is a social confirmation of the promises promised to be made in the future, ie participation in the cost of public goods (Parıltı and Baş, 2002: 21).

##### **iii. Promotion**

Election campaigns focus on themes, not on themes. The reason for this is to simplify the complex issues and to make them easier to understand. In addition, the information reaching

the voters through marketing tools is generally sensational and will remain on the agenda. In this context, campaign topics can also be reduced to local characteristics. Negative advertising themes can also be used to weaken the rival candidate (Bayraktaroğlu, 2002: 72-73). In order to measure the awareness level of the voters, opinion polls at various scales can be made and presented to the voter information.

#### **iv. Place**

Ensuring the continuous flow of information to the voters during the election campaign period has an important effect on the achievement of the political party's goals (Parılı and Baş: 2002: 21). At the same time, in Political Marketing, all communication tools are seen as place tools. In political marketing, besides media tools as a marketing tool, tools such as open air rallies, news in the media (personal salesmen, missionary salesmen, media volunteers) are also used as means (Bayraktaroğlu, 2002: 72).

### **b. Political Marketing Strategies**

During the election process, the leader, candidates and political parties should apply a set of strategies to achieve their goals.

#### **i. Offensive Strategies**

Due to the structure of the society, there are various opinions and political views clustered around these views and different solutions. In order for the voters to reach concrete decisions on issues that concern the whole society, those who may diverge from different interests and views should be united and all political tendencies should be reduced to a few options. Party strategies are formed in this direction (Parılı and Baş, 2002: 21).

#### **ii. Defense Strategies**

Defence can be considered as an attitude in cases that do not lead to a final result but the situation is adopted temporarily. Defence, which is considered as a revision for opposition parties, is the process of adopting actions for the government (Çiftlikçi, 1996: 69). For radical and ideological parties, defence is the spreading of political views and values as a belief system (Yücekök, 1987: 19).

#### **iii. Imitative Strategies**

The type of strategy that handles an action or an idea indirectly according to its own values, accepts that it is actually the same with its own values, but simulates or repeats an action or thought is called imitative strategy (Parılı and Baş: 2002: 19).

#### **iv. Audience Strategies**

This concept is actually used in countries that have not yet crystallized, but are not affiliated with political parties with clear directions, which are the scene of intense political agitation, even though the number of them is high. They can be considered as strategies to take an attitude according to the general conjuncture (Yücekök, 1987: 21).

## **5. A RESEARCH ON THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL BRAND DIFFERENCES ON VOTER PREFERENCES**

### **a. Purpose of the Research**

Survey research investigated the Çorum dimension of the effect of political brand differences on voter preferences.

### **b. Scope and Limitations of the Research**

Questionnaire forms containing 7 questions based on dependent and independent variables and hypotheses were used in the study. Resident voters in Çorum Province and its districts were included in the survey.

### **c. Research Variables**

The dependent variable of the research; It is the "Rate of Preference of Political Parties".

Independent variables can be listed as follows; Political Expectations, Reliable and Honest Leaders and Candidates, Innovative, Pro-Democracy, Promises Made And Hopes Distributed, Beliefs and Ideology, Trials, Affection and Affection for the Political Party, Best of Current Political Parties, Jobs and Past Achievements, A New Hope, A More Logical and Realistic Party, Traditional Family Behaviors, Reactive Causes, Relative Relations, Current Conditions

### **d. Research Methodology**

The assumptions and hypotheses of the research are listed below.

#### **i. Assumptions**

The hypotheses are listed in the evaluation of the survey data, and the assumptions of the study are as follows:

1. It was assumed that the respondents perceived and answered the questions correctly.
2. 1.766 voters included in the survey were chosen by random sampling method, and it was assumed that they represent the general voter structure in Çorum and its districts.

#### **ii. Hypotheses**

The hypotheses on which the research is based are listed below:

**Hypothesis 1:** The voter usually votes for political parties that represent their ideology.

**Hypothesis 2:** Voters generally change the party they vote, but they do not change their views.

#### **iii. Findings from the Research and Their Evaluation**

The research is based on the questionnaire and the data obtained from 1,766 voters in Çorum were evaluated with the "simple percentage method". The findings and their interpretation were analyzed using an econometric program, program by applying the Chi-Square Skewness (Chi-Square Pearson-Test of Conformity) and the hypothesis test. This section includes

comments on the findings obtained as a result of processing and analyzing the collected data. Findings are generally given in the form of tables, and comments about the tables are located at the end of the tables.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Participants

	Frequencies	Vertical Percentage
Vomen	346	0,196
Men	1420	0,804
Total	1766	1,000

Table 1 shows the distribution of the total number of voters participating in the study by gender. Accordingly, 80% of the participants in the survey are men and 20% are women.

Table 2: Age of Participants

	Frequencies	Vertical Percentage
Between 18-25 Ages	372	0,211
Between 26-35 Ages	447	0,253
Between 36-40 Ages	342	0,194
Between 41-55 Ages	428	0,242
More than 56 Ages	177	0,100
Total	1766	1,000

The age distribution of the voters participating in the study is shown in Table 2. Accordingly, more than 65% of the respondents are under the age of 40. In other words, they are in the young and middle age generation.

Table 3: 1 Kasım 2015 Milletvekili Genel Seçimlerinde Oy Verilen Parti

	Frekans	Dikey Yüzde
Vatan Partisi	6	0,003
Genç Parti	3	0,002
Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP)	401	0,227
Saadet Partisi (SP)	35	0,020
Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP)	297	0,168
Liberal Demokratik Partisi (LDP)	3	0,002
Halkların Demokratik Partisi (HDP)	5	0,003
Büyük Birlik Partisi (BBP)	15	0,008
Ak Parti	757	0,429
Komünist Parti	7	0,004
Cevapsız	237	0,134
Toplam	1766	1,000

Table 3 shows the distribution of voters participating in the study among the parties in the 1 November 2015 parliamentary elections. The ranking places of political parties given in the table were based on the ranking on the ballot paper in the 1 November 2015 parliamentary elections. Accordingly, 43% of the respondents voted for the Ak Party, 23% for the CHP and 17% for the MHP. The reasons for voters to vote for these parties are listed in the next table.

Tablo 4: Reason for Voting for the Party Voted in the 1 November 2015 General Elections

	Frekans	Dikey Yüzde
Siyasi Beklentiler	87	0,049
Güvenilir ve Dürüst	193	0,109
Yenilikçi	16	0,009
Demokrasi Yanlısı	5	0,003
Verilen Vaatler Ve Dağıtılan Umutlar	52	0,029
İnançlar Ve İdeoloji	617	0,349
Deneme	63	0,036
Siyasi Partiye Duyulan Sevgi ve Yakınlık	13	0,007
Cevapsız	376	0,213
Mevcut Siyasi Partilerin En İyisi	4	0,002
Yapılan İşler ve Geçmişteki Başarılar	12	0,007
Yeni Bir Umut	2	0,001
Daha Mantıklı ve Gerçekçi Bir Parti	14	0,008
Geleneksel Aile Davranışları	92	0,052
Tepkisel Nedenler	8	0,005
Akraba İlişkileri	25	0,014
Başörtüsü	26	0,015
Mevcut Şartlar	66	0,037
Siyasi Parti Lideri	95	0,054
Toplam	1766	1,000

Table 4 shows the voters' reasons for choosing political parties. According to the table, the most important factors in voter choice were beliefs and ideological reasons. This is followed by the trustworthiness and honesty of the candidates with 10%.

Table 5: Which Political Party Did You Vote in the 24 June 2018 Parliamentary Elections?

	Frequence	Vertical Percentage
Ak Parti	745	0,422
Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP)	217	0,123
Vatan Partisi	18	0,010
Halkların Demokrasi Partisi (HDP)	23	0,013
Büyük Türkiye Partisi (BTP)	5	0,003
Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP)	341	0,193
Saadet Partisi (SP)	39	0,022
İYİ Parti	122	0,069
Unstable (Not Responding)	256	0,145
Total	1766	1,000

Table 5 shows the distribution of voters participating in the study among the parties in the parliamentary elections of June 24, 2018. Accordingly, 42% of the participants in the survey voted for the Ak Party, 19% for the CHP and 12% for the MHP in the June 24, 2018 general elections, the reasons of the voters to vote for these parties are listed in Table 6.

Table 6 shows the reasons for voters to choose political parties.

Table 6: Reasons for Voting for the Political Party Voted in the 24 June 2018 Parliamentary Elections

	Frekans	Dikey Yüzde
Siyasi Beklentiler	64	0,036
Güvenilir ve Dürüst	300	0,168
Yenilikçi	108	0,060
Turgut Özal	1	0,001
Demokrasi Yanlısı	6	0,003
Verilen Vaatler Ve Dağıtılan Umutlar	9	0,005
İnançlar Ve İdeoloji	378	0,211
Deneme	176	0,098
Siyasi Partiye Duyulan Sevgi ve Yakınlık	52	0,029
Cevapsız	315	0,176
Mevcut Siyasi Partilerin En İyisi	19	0,011
Yapılan İşler ve Geçmişteki Başarılar	11	0,006
Yeni Bir Umut	11	0,006
Daha Mantıklı ve Gerçekçi Bir Parti	22	0,012
Geleneksel Aile Davranışları	34	0,019
Tepkisel Nedenler	23	0,013
Akraba İlişkileri	9	0,005
Başörtüsü	1	0,001
Mevcut Şartlar	75	0,042
Siyasi Parti Lideri	177	0,099
Toplam	1791	1,000

According to the table, beliefs and ideological reasons were the most important factors in voter choice in the 24 June 2018 general elections. This is followed by the fact that the candidates are reliable and honest with 17%. According to the elections of November 1, 2015, the increase in expectations in the honesty and reliability characteristics sought in candidates may be due to excessive pollution and corruption in politics and bureaucracy.

One of the striking options in both selections is the "Test" option. The voter is very eager to try the candidate he perceives as new. Again, another point that draws attention in both elections is the fact that the leader of the political party can influence the voters with his features alone. If the candidate and political party leader, who is perceived as a product in political marketing, can make a good publicity, they can get votes that will affect the result.

Table 7 shows the distribution of votes for the parties to be elected in determining an alternative party in the parliamentary elections of 24 June 2018.

Table 7: Which Political Party Would Be The Second Alternative If The Political Party Voted In The 24 June 2018 Parliamentary Elections Had Not Voted

	Frekans	Dikey Yüzde
Ak Parti	167	0,095
MHP	163	0,092
Vatan Partisi	16	0,009
HDP	133	0,075
BTP		0,000
CHP	85	0,048
SP	76	0,043
İYİ Parti	236	0,134
BBP	102	0,058
Unstable (Not Responding)	619	0,351
No alternative	169	0,096
Toplam	1766	1,000

Accordingly, 35% of the respondents were undecided about choosing a second party. However, the rate of those who state that the party they have chosen has no alternative reaches a serious rate of 10%. The distribution of the parties was ranked as İYİ 13%, Ak Parti

10%, MHP 9%, HDP 7% and CHP 5%, respectively. In general, there is a tendency for right-wing parties as the second party at 42%, while there is a tendency for left-wing parties as an alternative party at 13%. The following can be said by looking at the tables; The voters voted for different parties in the 1 November 2015 general elections and 24 June 2018 general elections, but did not change their preference.

## 6. RESULT

The survey results show primarily that the voters generally vote for political parties that represent their ideology. This situation is clearly seen in Table 4 and Table 6. In both general elections, the voters did not change their reasons for preference. Again, another situation revealed by this study; voters generally do not change their views even if they change the party they vote. As a result, they vote for political parties that will represent their views.

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