



Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICAL MARKETING ELEMENTS AFFECTING THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION BEHAVIOR OF VOTERS: A FIELD RESEARCH ON SYRIAN MIGRANTS*

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Abstract

Political parties and candidates seek the votes of the voters in the elections with the policies and promises they create within the scope of political marketing. It is frequently seen in the elections held in Turkey that there is very little difference in votes between the parties in the elections. Elections are either won or lost with a very small margin of votes. When evaluated in this direction, it is very important for political parties and candidates to determine the factors that are effective in the political participation behavior of Syrian immigrants, one of the nations with the highest immigrant population living in Turkey. In this study, it is aimed to determine the social media and political marketing elements that are effective in the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants after they migrate. Data were obtained with a semi-structured interview form by interviewing face to face with 20 Syrian immigrants living in Gaziantep. When the data obtained are evaluated, it has been determined that the political thought of the environment, the attitudes and behaviors of the party leader and the candidate, social media and political marketing factors are effective on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants. Another important finding within the scope of the study is that the discourses and actions of the party and the candidate towards Syrian immigrants, the perspective of the party towards immigrants, religious values, customs and ideologies are important factors on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants.

Keywords: Social Media, Political Marketing, Voter Behavior, Political Participation, Gaziantep.

Jel Codes: M31, M38, L31

SEÇMENLERİN SİYASAL KATILIM DAVRANIŞLARI ÜZERİNDE ETKİLİ OLAN SOSYAL MEDYA VE POLİTİK PAZARLAMA UNSURLARI: SURIYELİ GÖÇMENLER ÜZERİNE BİR SAHA ARAŞTIRMASI

Öz

Siyasi partiler ve adaylar politik pazarlama kapsamında oluşturdukları politikalar ve vaatler ile seçimlerde seçmenlerin oylarına talip olmaktadır. Türkiye’de yapılan seçimlerde sıkça görülmektedir ki çok az oy farkı ile seçimler ya kazanılmakta ya da kaybedilmektedir. Bu doğrultuda değerlendirildiğinde Türkiye’de yaşayan ve en çok göçmen nüfusa sahip milletlerden biri olan Suriyeli göçmenlerin siyasal katılım davranışında etkili olan unsurların belirlenmesi siyasi partiler ve adaylar için oldukça önem arz eden bir durumdur. Bu kapsamda yapılan bu çalışmada, Suriyeli göçmenlerin göç ettikten sonra siyasal katılım davranışlarında etkili olan sosyal medya ve politik pazarlama unsurlarını tespit etmek amacıyla Gaziantep’te yaşayan 20 Suriyeli göçmen ile yüz yüze görüşülerek yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat formu ile veriler elde edilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler değerlendirildiğinde çevrenin siyasal düşüncesi, parti lideri ve adayın tutum ve davranışları, sosyal medya ve politik pazarlama unsurlarının Suriyeli göçmenlerin siyasal katılım davranışları üzerinde etkili olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bununla birlikte partinin ve adayın Suriyeli göçmenlere yönelik söylemleri ve icraatları, partinin göçmenlere bakış açısı, dini değerlerin, örf ve adetlerin ve ideolojilerin Suriyeli göçmenlerin siyasal katılım davranışları üzerinde önemli birer etken olduğu çalışma kapsamında tespit edilen diğer bir önemli bulgudur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Politik Pazarlama, Seçmen Davranışı, Siyasal Katılım, Gaziantep.

Jel Kodları: M31, M38, L31

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Introduction

The behavior of political participation, which is an indicator of modernization with the emergence of states, is actually the most bureaucratic form of communication between the government and the people (Duran, 2005: 2). The transition to democracy movement in 1950 and the increasing party competition with this movement, especially the vertical networks in rural areas, can be considered as the beginning of political participation in Turkey (Sayarı, 1975: 126). In other words, political participation fully expresses the way of communication between the person who will be in power and the people, the person in power and the people, or in the most general sense, the administration and the citizen. Just as there are factors that affect communication in communication, there can be many factors that can affect this participation behavior in political participation (Çam, 1987: 279). In the continuation of the study, political participation and the factors affecting political participation will be mentioned and the subject will be further detailed in order to make the study understandable.

When evaluated in this context, one of the most important factors in determining the power in the elections held in the countries is the voters and the factors that affect the political participation behaviors of the voters. Voters decide the party that will be in power by voting in the elections. From this point of view, the votes of the voters are very important for political parties and candidates. The small or large number of votes has the power to completely determine the power and administration in some elections. In addition, when it is considered that the difference between the two political leaders in the elections held on March 31, 2019 in Istanbul was only 13,777 votes, it is very important for political parties and candidates to determine the factors that are effective in the political participation behavior of Syrian immigrants (53,099 people who have the right to vote), living in our country and one of the nations with the highest immigrant population (multeciler.org.tr; tr.wikipedia.org). In this context, the main purpose of this study is to determine the effects of social media and political marketing elements on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants residing in Gaziantep after their migration. However, determining the conditions necessary for the return of Syrian immigrants to their homeland (Syria) reveals another aim of the study.

This study consists of four parts. In the first part of this study, general information about political participation and the factors affecting political participation is given under the title of conceptual framework. The purpose, importance, method, limitations, problems and hypotheses of the research and the model of the research are given under the title of methodology in the second part of the study. In the third part of the study, findings regarding the demographic characteristics of the participants, the role of the environment in the participants' political participation behaviors, the role of the party leader and the candidate's attitudes and behaviors in the participants' political participation behaviors, the role of political marketing elements in the political participation behaviors of the participants and the role of social media applications in the political participation behaviors of the participants, the participants' future plans and the conditions that must be met for their return to their countries and other general statements asked to the participants are included under the title of the findings and results of the research. Finally, the conclusion and recommendations part of the evaluation of the findings obtained within the scope of the study are given in the fourth part of the study. Before starting the research, permission was obtained from Gaziantep University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee (decision no. 2022/40-190887) for the survey.

1. Conceptual Framework

1.1. Political Participation

Political participation is an important issue for many states in democratization processes. Political participation can have many forms, factors and forms of influence. In order to talk about political participation, it is necessary to look at the formation of states; because it is possible with the formation of states that people can influence the state and state administration to such a degree. The right to political participation became one of the cornerstones of democratic systems after the Second World War, as liberal values began to dominate in the economic and political field (Yontar and Savut, 2016: 254).

Political participation is the determination of the policies regarding the establishment, management and control of the social order, the determination of the policies regarding the making and implementation of the decisions (Karaçor, 2009: 126). Political participation is basically a way for citizens to determine decision-making bodies and protect their own interests. They can convey their self-interested ideas to the leaders of the administration thanks to the people they choose from among themselves, and they can provide both individual and social benefits with political participation (Güven, 2017: 176). Kapani (1975), on the other hand, defines political participation as all the activities related to the attitudes and behaviors of the voters in a political activity. Parry (1992) defines the decisions made by the voters and the activities that influence the formation of governments or governments as a product of political participation. Turan, Şen and Aydilek, (2015) include the following statements while describing political participation;

“The functions of being a member of a party, participating in congresses, taking a position within or outside the party or being a candidate for a job, sitting and expressing their thoughts to a community, opening banners, participating in rallies can also be described as political behavior or political participation.” (s. 102).

Evre (2020) defines political participation as follows: Political participation covers a wide range of activities from voting to signing petitions and boycotting to demonstrations (Evre, 2020: 5). In order to define political participation, it is necessary to examine primarily two approaches. Political participation is an indicator of modernization and politicization, and voting is a tool of this modernization. Another approach is to examine the factors that are based on voter behavior and influence voter behavior (Akin, 2013: 86; Bayburt, 2021: 21).

Another issue that should be mentioned when explaining political participation is that political participation should be based on voluntary participation. If there is an activity in authoritarian regimes where the public is touched by the hand of the state, its name is not fully political participation (Bayram and Gülcan, 2021: 39). As can be understood from this, political participation can be exposed to effects that can be affected by many similar factors and change the direction and shape of the process. In the continuation of the study, it will be necessary to mention the factors affecting political participation at this point.

Voters perform a political participation behavior in three different ways. While the first of these adapts itself to the existing political system, the second takes a counter action to adapt the political system to its own interests and mentality. Finally, in the factor explained as the third attitude of political participation, it is the type of behavior in which individuals do not have any positive or negative reaction to the political system (Daver, 1993: 203).

1.2. Factors Affecting Political Participation

There are three factors that affect political participation. These factors affecting political participation consist of three basic factors as gender, education and income level. When evaluated in this context, the relationship between political participation and gender is based on gender

inequality. According to Yücekök (1987), the fact that women are deprived of their citizenship rights such as education, voting and being elected, and that they obtain their political rights later than men, are factors that affect their political participation (Eser and Sarışahin, 2016: 42). The status of men in our country depending on their socioeconomic level and their proximity to media communication tools are higher than that of women. This situation is a clear indication that a regular political participation life is offered to men more than women (Alkan, 1979: 124; Afacan, 1999: 266). Education, on the other hand, is a situation in which the political socialization of the individual is generally ensured and this process is fundamentally revealed. The basis of political behaviors and attitudes on individuals is laid in the school and education process (Altan, 2011: 322). In addition, the friendship relations that individuals have established at school, their social environment, and the groups and organizations they participate in can also be a situation that can fundamentally affect the individual in the development process (Erdoğan, 2009: 81). Income level, on the other hand, is related to the increase in the social status of the individual and the good education they receive; because the individuals in the upper classes have received quality education and are in a position to establish social relations with the bureaucratic environment. In this case, the political participation styles of individuals with high income and those with low income may differ from each other (Eser and Sarışahin, 2016: 43).

The acceleration of internet and technological developments is one of the factors affecting political participation (Kalaycıoğlu, 1983: 33). It is stated that the widespread use of the Internet creates a new public space for individuals. In this regard, the media can be a very successful and effective tool in conveying complaints and demands from the public (Bayraktutan, 2007: 380). In this way, the individual can feel more active and active in the public space created. It has been revealed that technology and new media tools can affect the political participation levels of individuals (Karaçor, 2009: 129). Political participation can show differences by being exposed to change due to developing new media and technologies. With the new and developing technology, it is possible to change the political communication processes and to carry out political campaigns via the internet and to reach individuals through this internet (Güven, 2017: 176). People are exposed to political messages dozens of times a day on social media, and they themselves share the posts again and again. The opportunity to comment on the posts made by others naturally increases the rate of political participation (Özkaynar, Altunışık and Yolcu, 2017: 107).

Empathy should be mentioned as another factor affecting political participation. Empathy is an emotional process that develops the individual's sense of citizenship and citizenship, and allows to think about social interest rather than individual interest. Individuals can adopt the understanding of common interest with empathy and shape their political participation within this framework (Şimşek and Sezgin, 2021: 513). Politics is the idealistic evaluation of an idea that can benefit everyone and creating a common world order. In that case, it can be stated that political participation is effective in creating a common order and society with the empathy of the individual.

In addition, it is necessary to take into account the factors that are effective in voter preferences, which are a part of political participation. At this point, it would be correct to define voter preferences under three headings: economic approaches, sociological approaches and psychological approaches. First of all, it is known that the factor affecting the political participation behavior of the individual in the economic approach is the economic benefit from the state. According to this approach, there is a political participation behavior that changes in line with individual interests. Whether the person who will come to the head of the government can increase the welfare level of the country is significant in the choices of the people (Çam, 2011: 206). For the sociological approach, the social identities of individuals can be mentioned. Religious, ethnic, cultural or any feature of individuals that causes division can affect their political participation

behaviors. Finally, it is mentioned on the basis of the psychological approach that the partisan behavior of individuals and the level of political participation can be affected (Dökmen and Ova, 2016: 21-23). Based on these ideas, it is stated that individuals identify themselves with the political party or its ideologies and establish an emotional relationship in this political process. Citizenship feelings such as love, dedication and commitment are factors that can affect the participation processes of the individual (Öz, 1996: 29).

Another factor affecting political participation is political trust. Political trust consists of individuals' perceptions of the functioning of political processes. The low or insufficient political confidence of individuals may cause them to become alienated during the election processes and to move away from their voting behaviors (Russel, 2016: 443). However, political trust is a trust that is formed both with the activities of the government, its activities in the election process and what it can do for the future. The individual's belief that he or she can successfully manage is called political confidence.

As another factor affecting political participation, it is necessary to mention citizenship consciousness; because political participation ultimately consists of elections that will be held within the framework of consciousness and it is closely related to the fact that the individual has become a social whole in these elections and feels himself as a citizen (Akman, 2020: 160). At this point, it would not be wrong to consider the citizen, the person who will make the right choice with a sense of responsibility and patriotic duty, as an important factor that also affects the level and size of political participation. In the framework of knowledge conveyed from Heywood (2006), political participation, which is a form of acting for a community, also takes place on a plane that intensifies socialization (Akman, 2020: 161).

Non-governmental organizations and organizations, which are bridges between the state and citizens, are among the factors that can affect political participation. The fact that society can play a larger and more active role in the political decision-making mechanism through non-governmental organizations can be a factor that affects political participation as it is a mechanism that motivates them both politically and socially (Usta and Dilber, 2020: 953).

Since the ideas that an individual thinks are correct at a young age can change and some differences can be observed in their political orientations, another factor affecting political participation is the age factor. Baykal expresses this situation in his study in 1970 as follows: “*Political participation rates of young and elderly people are low. The increasing political interest from youth peaks between the ages of 40-50 and then gradually decreases*” (Baykal, 1970: 82). At the same time, since the age factor will also be related to reaching the age to have right to vote and to be elected, it is again a factor affecting political participation. In addition to age, generation gap is also a factor affecting political participation, and generational differences are more effective in political participation behaviors due to long-term differences such as war, economic crisis, political regime change, revolution, etc. (Evre, 2020: 6).

In addition to academic life and scientific studies, it should be mentioned that universities and education also affect political participation. The academic and individual development of university students, the influence of communities and clubs operating within the school, academicians, faculty members and lecturers can also affect political participation. The raising of individuals who can start with the problems of the students and address the problems in the social sense, and who can make an attitude towards the problems as a personal and social behavior can also be one of the factors affecting the participation in question (Usta and Dilber, 2020: 953).

2. Methodology

2.1. Purpose of the Research

Due to the economic, health, food and social problems caused by the civil war in Syria, Syrian citizens had to migrate from their own countries. The effect of this migration is mostly seen in Gaziantep, one of the most developed industrial cities of Turkey, neighboring Syria and the region. In this context, the target population of this study was determined as Gaziantep. In this direction, the aim of this research is to determine the effects of social media and political marketing elements on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants residing in Gaziantep. In addition, determining the conditions necessary for the return of Syrian immigrants to their homeland (SYRIA) reveals another aim of the research.

2.2. Importance of This Research

Many studies on Syrian migrants residing in Gaziantep after migrating from their homeland have been reached. In the course of these researches, no studies on political marketing and social media practices affecting the political participation behaviors of Syrian migrants were found. For this reason, this study has a significant role. However, determining the necessary conditions or conditions for the return of Syrian immigrants to their own countries reveals another importance of this study. In addition, this study is a continuation of the study of Armutcu and Mavi (2022). The data were collected from the same participants to determine the difference in the behavior of Syrian migrants in the previous study conducted by Armutcu and Mavi (2022). In this context, this research, which was carried out to determine the changes in the same observation, reveals another importance of the study.

2.3. Research Method

In this study, a semi-structured interview form was created to investigate the effects of social media and political marketing elements on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants after they migrated from their own countries. With this form, data were collected through face-to-face interviews with 20 participants. The semi-structured questionnaire used within the scope of the study was prepared by professional experts (Turkish academics, Syrian academics and translators) in the form of open-ended questions in Arabic and Turkish. In the first part of the semi-structured interview form, there were questions prepared to obtain the demographic information of the participants (age, gender, income, educational status, etc.).

In the second part of the form, there are questions to determine the factors that are effective in the political participation behavior of the participants after their migration, to determine the social media applications they follow the political events through, and to determine the effects of political marketing elements on their political participation behaviors. In the third part of the semi-structured interview form, there are questions to determine the conditions for the return of Syrian refugees to their country. The semi-structured interview form used in the study was taken from Şimdi (2009). As a continuation of Armutcu and Mavi's (2022) study, data collected from the same participants were included in the analysis in order to determine the difference in the behavior of Syrian immigrants in the first study. Finally, the names of the participants were added to the study by using the coding method (P1, P2, P3, ...) in order not to include the names and personal information of the participants. Before starting the research, permission was obtained from Gaziantep University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee (decision no. 2022/40-190887) for the survey. The research process lasted 51 days. During the interview with the participants, no audio and video recordings were taken for the safety of the participants. On the other hand, the statements and thoughts of the participants were recorded by taking notes during the interview.

2.4. Problems of Research

In line with this study, which was conducted to determine the effects of political marketing elements and social media on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants residing in Gaziantep from their own countries to Turkey, answers were sought to the following problems within the scope of the study:

- Does the environment have an effect on the political views and thoughts of Syrian immigrants after they migrate?
- Do legal obligations, individual interests and environmental pressures have an effect on the behavior of political participation in political parties after the migration of Syrian immigrants?
- Does social media have an effect on Syrian immigrants following political events and their political participation behaviors after emigrating?
- What are the issues that Syrian immigrants care about when voting or supporting any person?
- Do the ethnic origin, adherence to religious values, customs and traditions, gender and ideology of the party leader, politician, parliamentary candidate, ministers, and bureaucrats after the migration of Syrian immigrants have an impact on the political participation behaviors of the participants?
- Have there been any changes in the political attitudes and behaviors of Syrian immigrants after they migrated?
- Are political marketing elements effective in the political attitudes and behaviors of Syrian immigrants?
- Do Syrian refugees consider returning to Syria or not in their future plans? What are the factors affecting these thoughts?

2.5. Research Hypotheses and Research Model

The hypotheses and the model of the research created to determine the social media and political marketing factors that are effective on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants living in Gaziantep are as follows:

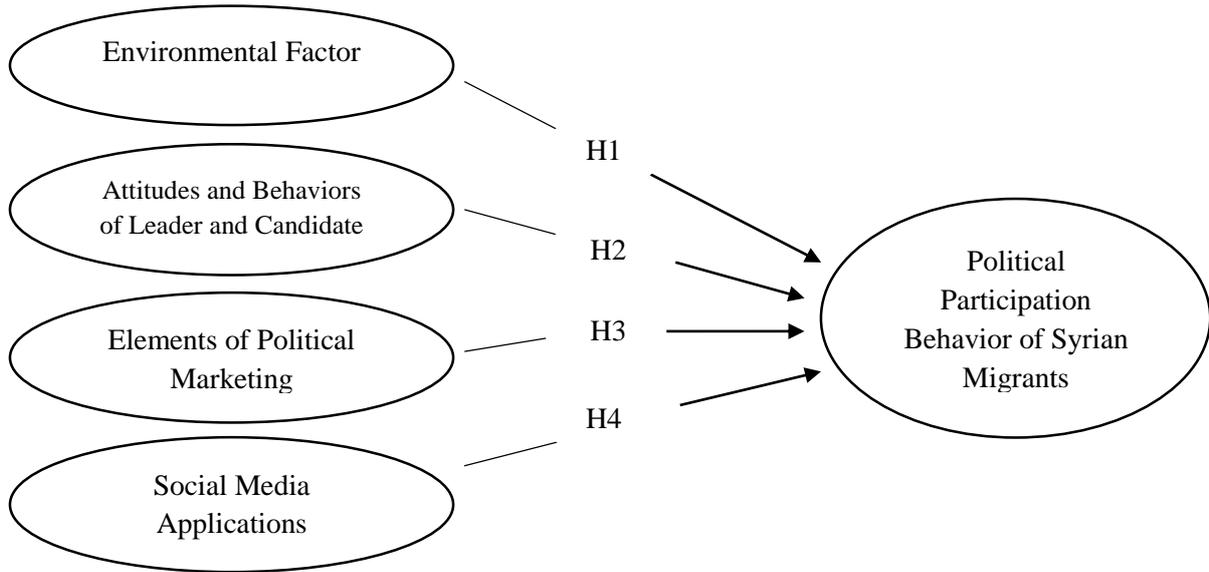
H1: The political thought of the environment is influential on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants.

H2: The attitudes and behaviors of the party leader and the candidate are influential on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants.

H3: social media has an impact on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants.

H4: Political marketing elements are effective on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants.

Figure 1: Model of the Study



3. Findings and Results of the Research

In this part of the study, the findings obtained from the surveys conducted to determine the effect of social media and political marketing elements on the political participation behaviors of the participants are included. In this context, descriptive information about the demographic characteristics of the participants will be explained first.

3.1. Findings of the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Within the scope of this study, information on the demographic information of 20 Syrian immigrant participants obtained from the semi-structured interview form is given in Table 1 below. When Table 1, which includes the demographic information of the participants, is examined, it was determined that 12 of the 13 male participants participating in the study were married and 1 was single. It is seen that 7 of the participants were female and married. According to the educational status of the participants in the study, it was determined that 3 of the participants were High School graduates, 12 of the participants were bachelors, 4 of the participants were post graduates, and 1 of the participants had PhD. However, it has been determined that the majority of the participants work as businessmen/business females, teachers and translators.

Table 1: Findings of the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Participant	Year of Birth	Gender	Educational Status	Income status	Marital status	Profession
P1	1971	Male	Post graduate	5500 TL	Married	Translator-Teacher
P2	1971	Female	Bachelor	2500 TL	Married	Pharmacist-Teacher
P3	1989	Male	Post graduate	2500 TL	Married	Finance Manager
P4	1992	Female	High school	0 TL	Married	Housewife
P5	1988	Male	Bachelor	3500 TL	Single	Accountant
P6	1971	Male	Bachelor	10.000TL	Married	Businessman
P7	1978	Male	Bachelor	3000 TL	Married	Teacher
P8	1979	Female	Bachelor	0 TL	Married	Teacher-Housewife
P9	1982	Male	Bachelor	12.000 TL	Married	Businessman
P10	1993	Male	Bachelor	3500 TL	Married	Translator-Teacher
P11	1996	Female	Bachelor	0 TL	Married	Teacher-Housewife
P12	1983	Male	Doctorate	7000 TL	Married	Academician
P13	1988	Female	High school	15.000 TL	Married	Business woman
P14	1988	Male	Bachelor	Earn enough	Married	Businessman
P15	1981	Male	Post graduate	15.000 TL	Married	Interpreter
P16	1983	Female	Bachelor	10.000 TL	Married	Accountant
P17	1982	Male	Post graduate	10.500 TL	Married	Private Sector Emp.
P18	1965	Male	High school	5000 TL	Married	Chauffeur
P19	1961	Male	Bachelor	35.000 TL	Married	Businessman
P20	1973	Female	Bachelor	15.000 TL	Married	Business woman

3.2. The Role of the Environment in the Political Participation Behaviors of the Participants

Within the scope of the study, the participants were asked, “Does the dominant political view/thought in your environment have any effect on your political participation?” Some of the findings obtained from this question were expressed by the participants as follows;

“Of course, the environment has an impact.” (P1). “As a Syrian immigrant, we love immigration and parties that support immigrants. My friends and neighbors give me advice on which party I should vote for, and I do what they say relatively, because I still don’t know enough about politics in Turkey.” (P5). “I could not find time to deal with politics in Turkey. The people around me have the same political views as me, but there is no participation, we just vote.” (P8). “No, I’m usually not influenced by anyone and I’m a person who makes my own decisions.” (P9). “Yes, there are no friends in politics, only interests.” (P10). “Yes, I voted to support the party that favors us as immigrants.” (P13). “Sometimes...” (P15). “Sometimes it does...” (P16). ““Yes, as Syrians, we owe our gratitude to the political party that supported us.” (P17). “Yes, we are talking to my Syrian friends and we are deciding who to vote for.” (P18). “No, I like to make my own decisions.” (P20).

According to the findings obtained in this context, the answers given by the participants mostly show that the dominant political view/thought structure around them is an important factor on the political participation behaviors of individuals. In other words, it can be stated that while the participants exhibit political participation behaviors, they are affected by the political structure of the environment on their political attitudes and behaviors, and they give their preferences in this direction.

3.3. The Role of the Attitudes and Behaviors of the Party Leader and the Candidate in the Political Participation Behavior of the Participants

The participants were asked, "Does the ethnic origin, adherence to religious values, customs and traditions, gender, ideology of the party leader, politician, candidate for parliament, ministers, and bureaucrats affect your political participation style/behavior?" The findings obtained from the answers given to this question are given in this part of the study. In this context, the answers given by the participants are as follows:

"The party's adherence and ideology to religious values, customs and traditions influence my decision." (P2). "It doesn't affect my decision at all." (P4). "Of course, I am generally a conservative person and it is important for me that the leader and candidates adhere to religious values, customs and traditions." (P5). "Of course, the adherence and ideology of politicians, especially religious values, customs and traditions, affect my decision." (P6). "Yes, the adherence, gender and ideology of politicians to religious values, customs and traditions affect me." (P7). "Yes, the leader's adherence to religious values, customs, and ideology affect my decision." (P8). "Of course, his adherence to religious values and his ideology are very important to me." (P12). "Yes, Candidate's adherence to religious values, customs, gender, ideology influences my decision." (P13). "Yes, these matters affect my decision a lot." (P16). "Candidate's adherence to religious values influences my decision." (P17). "The commitment and ideology of the leader and candidate to religious values, customs and traditions is very important to me." (P18).

When the answers given to the question of "Does the ethnic origin, adherence to religious values, customs and traditions, gender, ideology of the party leader, politician, candidate for parliament, ministers, and bureaucrats affect your political participation style/behavior?" are evaluated, it is seen that religious values, customs and traditions, ideologies and genders are important factors on the political participation behaviors of the majority of the participants.

3.4. The Role of Political Marketing Elements in Participants' Political Participation Behavior

In this part of the study, whether political marketing elements have an effect on the political participation behaviors of the participants was determined by the questions in Table 2 below. In this context, when Table 2 is examined, the political marketing elements that the participants are most affected by are as follows: Leader of the political party (20 Participants), Leader/Candidate (19 Participants), Immigration policy (19 Participants), Citizenship acquisition/grant status (19 Participants), discourses or actions towards Syrians (19 Participants), general practices of the Party (18 Participants) and ideological approach of the Party or candidate (18 Participants). However, according to Table 2, the factors that affected the participants the least are as follows: Spouse (5 Participants), Family (6 Participants), Financial aids (7 Participants), Parliamentary candidates (11 Participants), Political party or leader's staff/team (12 Participants) and Politicians communicating one-on-one (12 Participants).

Table 2: *The Effect of Political Marketing Elements on Participants' Political Participation Behaviors*

Expressions	Answers	
	Yes	No
Does the leader of the political party affect your political participation behavior?	20	0
Do the promises of the political party or leader affect your political participation behavior?	17	3
Does the ideology of the political party or leader affect your political participation behavior?	17	3
Do the past actions of the political party or leader affect your political participation behavior?	15	5
Does the staff/team of the political party or leader affect your political participation behavior?	12	8
Do the personal characteristics of the leader affect your political participation behavior?	16	4
Are the general practices of the party important in your political participation behavior?	18	2
Is the leader effective in your political participation behavior?	19	1
Is the ideological approach of the party or candidate effective in your political participation behavior?	18	2
Are parliamentary candidates important in your political participation behavior?	11	9
Is the opinion of the party or candidate important in your political participation behavior?	16	4
Are the past actions of the party/candidate important in your political participation behavior?	17	3
Is your family influential in your political participation behavior?	6	14
Is your spouse influential in your political participation behavior?	5	15
Is immigration policy important in your political participation behavior?	19	1
Is the status of acquisition of/granting citizenship important in your political participation behavior?	19	1
Are discourses and actions against Syrians important in political participation behavior?	19	1
Is it important for your political participation behavior that politicians communicate with you one-on-one?	12	8
Are financial aids effective in political participation behavior?	7	13

While investigating the effect of political marketing elements on the political participation behaviors of the participants, the answers given to another open-ended question as "Is there any other factor affecting your political attitude and behavior?" are as follows:

“Yes, the party's views and attitudes towards immigrants.” (P1). “Because it is suitable for your mentality and according to the discourses or actions against the Syrians.” (P3). “The party's perspective on immigrants and their attitudes towards Syrians.” (P5). “The economic policy of the candidate and the party influences my political attitude and behavior.” (P9). “The party's attitude towards Syrians and immigration policy.” (P11). “The fact that the party and the leader stay away from racist rhetoric affects my political attitude and behavior.” (P12). “The party's support of women and adherence to religious values affect my political attitude and behavior.” (P13). “The economic policy of the party influences my political attitude and behavior.” (P14). “The most influential issues: Party Leader, Ideological approach, Past actions, Immigrant policy, Citizenship acquisition/granting status, political attitudes and behaviors according to discourses or actions towards Syrians.” (P15). “Topics that affect the most: Party Leader, Ideological approach, Immigration policy, Citizenship acquisition/granting status, discourses or actions towards Syrians. My political attitude is shaped according to these factors.” (P16).

In this context, other factors that affect the political attitudes and behaviors of the participants are as follows: The party's views and attitudes towards immigrants, its discourses or actions towards

Syrians, the party's perspective on immigrants, the candidate's and the party's economic policy, the party and the leader's staying away from racist rhetoric, the party's support for women, the party's commitment to religious values, elements such as the past actions of the party and the status of granting/taking citizenship.

3.5. The Role of Social Media Applications in Participants' Political Participation Behaviors

In this part of the study, some of the findings obtained from the following questions conveyed to the participants in order to determine from where they follow social media practices and news about politics in their political participation behaviors were expressed by the participants as follows: “Did you know all the parties when you were going to vote? If so, where did you learn from?”, “How do you follow the political events in Turkey?” “Do you follow the events in Syria closely?”, “Where do you follow the political developments in Turkey?”, “Which application do you use the most?”, “In your opinion, which language should be used to analyze the developments in Turkey well (Turkish or Arabic?). Does this language factor change/affect your political participation behavior?”

“Yes, I am aware of almost all parties because I have a good command of the Turkish language and I always follow the news. Yes, I follow the news on television and social media. I mean Television and Facebook. My Turkish is very good, but I would prefer it to be in Arabic.” (P1). “Yes, I knew. I follow it mostly on television, but sometimes when I see the news on social media, I read it quickly. No. I haven't been following the news for a long time because I have no hope anymore. The situation in Syria has reached an impasse and there is no hope of improvement anymore. I think it will go like this for a very long time. I follow through television and social media.” (P2). “I only know AKP and CHP parties. I have information about these two parties on social media and people around me. I don't usually watch TV, but sometimes I come across news in Arabic on social media and read it quickly. For the first few years, I was watching the news very closely, but in the last two or three years, I have lost hope for the fall of the Assad Regime and I watch very little. Sometimes I just browse the news in Arabic language. I follow the news on WhatsApp and Facebook. I think it should be in both Turkish and Arabic languages. Since my Turkish is still not good enough, I think that if it is in Arabic, it will help me understand everything better and it will also affect my political thoughts.” (P5). “Yes, I follow it very closely through the media, social media and the internet. I use Facebook and Twitter. It has to be in both languages. Those who are good at Turkish can follow Turkish and those whose Turkish is not good can follow Arabic.” (P6). “There are many parties in Turkey and it is very difficult for immigrants to know all of them. I only know some parties (CHP, AKP, DHP, MHP, Future party). I follow the news from my environment and social media. I can follow Arabic news on social media. Yes, I follow Arabic news on social media as much as possible on Facebook and Instagram. If it is in Arabic, I can follow the news more often. But I don't think it will affect my voting behavior.” (P9).

When the answers given to the questions asked to determine the effect of social media practices on the political participation behaviors of the participants are evaluated, it is seen that the participants closely follow the political situations in Turkey and Syria, and the effect of the news on television and social media is most important in their follow-up tools. It has been determined that the most used social media applications by the participants are Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. However, it can be stated that the presence of news and content in the social media and television applications of the participants in the Arabic language will have an impact on the political attitudes and behaviors of the participants.

3.6. Findings Regarding the Future Plans of the Participants and the Conditions to be Provided for their Return to their Country

In this part of the study, the findings obtained from the interviews about the future plans of the Syrian migrant participants and the conditions necessary for their return to their country (Syria) are included. In this context, some of the findings obtained from the following questions conveyed to the participants were expressed by the participants as follows; “Why did you choose Turkey when making the migration decision?”, “Do you intend to return to Syria in the future? Why?”, “What conditions might you consider returning to Syria in the future?”

“I chose Turkey because it is close to Syria, because it is a Muslim country, because it has cultures similar to ours, because I am Turkmen and I know Turkish. No, I do not intend to return to Syria. My children are students here and I think their future will be better here. If security and peace are restored in Syria, if the Assad regime changes, if living conditions (Health, Education, employment, safety) are restored in Syria, I can return.” (P1). “We came to Turkey because of its proximity to Syria, kinship relations and the thought of returning to Syria. I do not know. In the current situation no, I do not intend to return to Syria. Trust needs to be rebuilt. The improvement in living conditions will greatly affect my decision to return.” (P2). “In addition to proximity in terms of distance, I came to Turkey because of the social environment and values that are similar to the environment and traditions in Syria. I loved Turkey very much and I want to continue my life here. But my family still lives in Syria so I would like to visit them in the future if possible. The current political structure needs to be completely changed. Living conditions need to improve.” (P5). “Being close to the city of Aleppo and being a European country caused me to come to Turkey. In the beginning, I had a plan to immigrate to Europe and I came here because it was more convenient to migrate from Turkey to Europe. Since Syria is my homeland, I definitely want to return one day. For me to return to Syria, the regime must fall and a just government must be established, peace and freedom must be established, and basic living conditions must be reestablished.” (P9). “I came to Turkey because the Turkish government's political views and attitudes towards the Assad regime were the same as mine. Also, Turkey opened its border gates to all Syrians and I chose Turkey because it embraced everyone fleeing persecution.... Yes, I will return to Syria if it becomes a free country... (The Assad regime must go - Human rights must be protected - Political parties must be established - Free elections must be held. - Everyone must be treated equally according to the law. - There needs to be economic development and restructuring- Job opportunities and unemployment need to decrease - Inflation (inflation) needs to come down. There needs to be religious, ideological and ethnic freedom).” (P15). “We came to Turkey because it was my husband's choice. There are geographical proximity and cultural similarities. I just think of it as a visit. It is very difficult to go back to Syria and live now because I have a home and a private job here and I am very satisfied with my life. The regime in Syria needs to change and living conditions need to improve.” (P20).

When the findings regarding the future plans of the participants and the conditions to be met for their return to their countries are evaluated, the main reasons for the participants to choose Turkey during migration are that Turkey is the closest country to Syria, its cultural characteristics are the same, being a Muslim country in terms of religious belief and the political attitude and behavior of the Turkish government against the Assad regime. However, when the statements regarding the necessary conditions for the return of Syrian immigrants to their countries are evaluated, some participants stated that they can return to their countries provided that the Assad regime changes,

Syria is a free country, different political parties are established, economic development is completed, and peace and tranquility prevail. It has been determined that some participants want to stay in Turkey and do not want to return to their countries.

3.7. Findings of Other General Statements Asked to the Participants

In this part of the study, the answers given by the participants to the questions asked under the title of "Factors Affecting Political Participation Behavior After Immigration" are as follows: "At what level is your political participation behavior in Turkey? (No Participation in Politics, Voting Only, Active or Passive Participation, Open or Secret Participation, Verbal or Nonverbal Participation...)", "Are you a member of any political party or organization in Turkey?", "What is your reason for active or passive behavior in political participation?", "Who do you know of political party leaders in Turkey?" "Did the shared values, your cultural capital, the relations produced with the new society have any effect on your political behavior after you migrated?"

"The perspectives and stances of political parties towards refugees and the Syrian issue affect my political bias and participation. Positive participation, especially journalism, which is my profession..... we can say open participation. I am not a member of any party. I don't know anyone directly personally, but we get together at the same activities or events as some people close to the leaders. If you're asking me if I only know them by name, I know them all by name." (P6). "My political participation is limited to voting only. I'm voting because I'm an immigrant and they said it would be a hassle not to vote. I never thought of joining a political party. I know Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Fatma Şahin. No, I am not a political volunteer." (P4). "I don't like politics. I think people use politics to achieve their own interests. I know Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, Devlet Bahçeli. Of course, the shared values, my cultural capital, the relations produced with the new society had an effect on my political behavior. Because there is democracy and freedom in Turkey." (P2). "Just voting. No, I don't want to be involved in politics. I know Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, Devlet Bahçeli. The shared values, my cultural capital, the relations produced with the new society haven't had an effect on my political behavior, yet." (P17). "Just voting. No, but I'm thinking of becoming a member of the party in my head in the future. I love politics, but I don't have time to deal with politics. Having freedom and democracy in Turkey triggers my interest in politics and encourages me to take an active role in the party I support in the future. I know Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, Meral Akşener, Ali Babacan, Ahmet Davutoğlu and Devlet Bahçeli.

When the findings of the general statements asked to the participants about politics are evaluated, it is seen that the participants generally only engage in political participation, do not take an active part in politics and are not members of any political party or organization. However, it is determined that the participants are not interested in politics. Among the names they know in Turkish politics, there are three political leaders such as the most well-known names, Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, Kemal KILIÇDAROĞLU, and Devlet BAHÇELİ. At the same time, it is another important finding that Meral AKŞENER, Fatma ŞAHİN, Ali BABACAN, Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU are among other well-known politicians.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

One of the most important factors in determining the power in the elections held in the countries is the voters and the factors that affect the political participation behaviors of the voters. Voters decide the party that will be in power by voting in the elections. From this point of view, the votes of the voters are very important for political parties and candidates. The few or the majority of the

votes here have the power to completely determine the power and administration in some elections. Considering that the difference between the two political leaders in the elections held on March 31, 2019 in Istanbul was only 13,777 votes, it is very important for political parties and candidates to determine the factors that are effective in the political participation behavior of Syrian immigrants (53,099 people who have the right to vote), one of the nations with the highest immigrant population living in our country.

In this study, data were collected through face-to-face interviews with 20 participants with a semi-structured interview form created to investigate the effects of social media and political marketing elements on the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants after they migrated from their own countries. Before starting the research, permission was obtained from Gaziantep University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee (decision no. 2022/40- 190887) for the survey. The semi-structured questionnaire used within the scope of the study includes questions prepared in Arabic and Turkish in the form of open-ended and yes/no. The questionnaire is prepared by professional experts. According to the findings obtained from the interviews conducted in this direction, it has been determined that the dominant political view/thought structure in the environment of the participants is effective on the political participation behaviors of the participants. In addition, it is another important finding that religious values, customs, ideologies and genders are important factors on the political participation behavior of the participants.

The political marketing elements on which the participants are most influenced by their political participation behavior are the leader of the political party, the leader/candidate, the immigration policy, the status of granting/granting citizenship, and the discourses or actions towards Syrians. It has been determined that the factors that the participants are least affected by are their spouse, family, financial aid and parliamentary candidates. When other factors that are effective in the political attitudes and behaviors of the participants are evaluated, factors such as the party's views and attitudes towards immigrants, its discourses or actions towards Syrians, the party's point of view towards immigrants, the candidate and the party's economic policy, the party and the leader's avoidance of racist discourses affect the political attitudes and behaviors of the participants. When the effect of social media applications on the political participation behaviors of the participants is evaluated, it is seen that the participants closely follow the political situations in Turkey and Syria with the news on TV and social media. It has been determined that the most used social media applications by the participants are Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. In addition, it is another important finding that the presence of news or content in the Arabic language of the participants in the social media and television applications will have an impact on the political attitudes and behaviors of the participants.

Considering the main reasons why the participants chose Turkey during migration, it is seen that Turkey's being the closest country to Syria, having the same cultural characteristics, being a Muslim country in terms of religious belief, and the Turkish government's political attitude and behavior towards the Assad regime are the most important factors in this context. However, when the necessary conditions for the return of Syrian immigrants to their countries are evaluated, some participants stated that they can return to their country provided that the Assad regime changes, Syria is a free country, different political parties are established in Syria, economic development is completed in Syria, and peace and tranquility prevail. Another important finding is that some participants want to stay in Turkey and do not want to return to their countries.

When the findings obtained are evaluated, it can be stated that planning the political marketing implementation activities of political parties and candidates by taking into account the factors that are effective in the political participation behaviors of Syrian immigrants living in Turkey and

producing and implementing policies in this direction will make a positive contribution to the vote rates.

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