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Usage of Social Media by Politicians During Election Campaign: Comparative Analysis About Presidential Elections in Turkey on June 24th, 2018

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Abstract

Social media which has improved itself after Web 2.0 has started shaping all the world communication. As a result of social media improvement, the politicians start also using social media platforms as a communication tool. This rapid growth in communication had a major impact on political communication strategies of politicians. Politicians use social media to promote their parties and express their ideas and ideologies to their candidates to change their behavior and take their votes in the elections. Politicians start using social media more after 2010 and this had a big increase from year to year. The aim of this paper is to make a comparative analysis of social media platforms Facebook and Twitter accounts of the six Turkish candidate leaders who had compete with each other for the presidential elections of June 24th, 2018. The leaders who were the candidates of this elections Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (AKP), Muharrem İnce (CHP), Meral Akşener (İyi Party), Temel Karamollaoğlu (SP), Selahattin Demirtaş (HDP) and Doğu Perinçek (VP) used social media as a communication tool. The method used in this study was content analysis. The official Facebook and Twitter accounts of these six leaders examined from the 1st of April until the 24th of June for 54 days. These accounts and their messages were examined during this period and analyzed both in qualitative and quantitative ways. The messages were collected, and the frequency of social media usage of these leaders were analyzed. In the findings the leader was compared on the view of how many messages were spread, how much interaction was taken and how often do these leaders used these social media platforms. In the study the top 5 most interactive messages of the leaders were analyzed and the format of these messages were described. The main question of this study is “Did the leader who won the elections in social media win the elections in real life?”. The voting success of these six leaders were compared with the success of their social media impact and reach and effect of social media to elections was admitted to the table for further discussion in the future researches.

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Keywords— Social Media, Politic Campaign, Turkey, Elections, Facebook, Twitter

Political Marketing and Political Marketing Mix

Just the same as marketing of goods and services in normal life, politicians and political parties are also getting into a contest of collecting supporters and votes by marketing their opinions to the public. While a marketing activity of daily life is in question in marketing of goods and services, the future marketing is in question in the political marketing. Because, political parties wish to govern the country in line with their own ideas, which means that this is marketing of the future, not the present.

Just to define the political marketing, it includes all efforts to ensure that political parties’ “products” such as their leaders, party programs and candidates are demanded by voters (Demirtaş & Özgüven, 2012:241). Akay (2012:152) defines the political marketing as a form of political communication method based on competing political parties’ run for influencing the voters. Kılıçaslan (2011:28) defines the political marketing as activities aimed at promoting persons or parties, being candidates to fulfil voters’ needs and expectations, and person and party programs to voters, in a sense, carrying out promotional activities.

Political marketing is a complement of techniques that are used to make a political party or candidate eligible for voters, to ensure that the political party or candidate is recognized by the voters, in order to demonstrate the difference between the competitors and to win the election with the least expenditure. These techniques are used to influence the behaviour of voters (Şengün, 2016:523-524).

As can be seen from the definitions, political marketing is the marketing of ideas in one sense. Ideas about how the country will be in the future are marketed rather than an existing product or service and voters are tried to be influenced. It is possible to examine the political marketing in two dimensions. First of them is the explanatory structure in which the political marketing management activities managed by professionals employed by political actors are included, and the second is the dimension including researches that is carried out to explain the changes in the political environment (Yalçınkaya and Ay, 2017:201).

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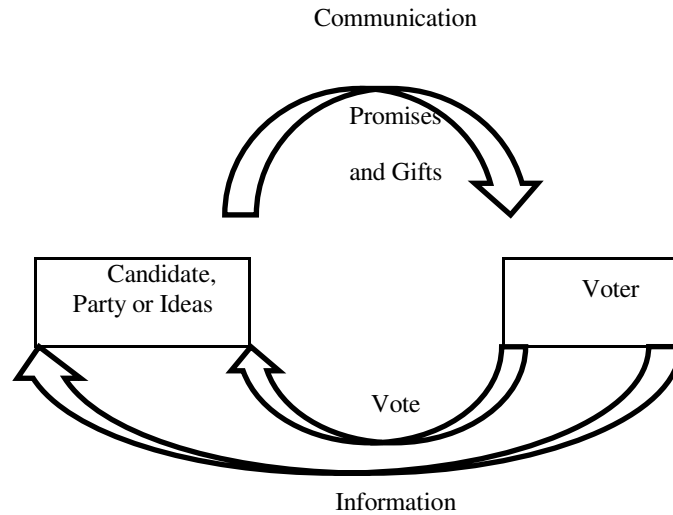


Figure 1: Political Marketing (Akar, 2009: 2)

Political Marketing is generally performed to plan the leaders and candidates of the political parties that may be adopted by voters and to develop the party program. Due to the fact that the inaccurate planning arises costs for the political party, it is necessary to handle marketing activities as a whole, plan together and provide optimal benefit. In summary, there is a marketing mix in the political marketing as in the normal marketing and this is called the political marketing mix in the literature (Saritaş, 2016:327). The elements involved in this political marketing mix are as follows:

Political Product: In political marketing, the product includes the image of the political party, the image of its leader, political promises, political party program, candidates, members, volunteers, symbols, ideas and opinions generated by the party and values of the party.

Political Price: In political marketing, the price is votes of the voters. Therefore, the voter makes a payment to the political product in one sense by voting in political marketing activities.

Political Distribution: Efforts to deliver political products and political messages to voters in the shortest time, in the most effective way and at the least cost, constitute the political distribution element of political marketing mix.

Political Promotion: The ultimate goal of political parties is to come to power and take over the country. For this reason, it is necessary for them to analyse the requests and expectations of their target groups accurately and to generate policies accordingly, to communicate with them continuously, to transmit their ideas and messages in the most effective and costless way. This will be possible by continuously announcing their ideas to their target groups.

The Relationship Between Marketing Science and Politics

Events and phenomena such as world wars, the development of mass media and globalization that are experienced in the 20th century have affected the social life deeply, have also influenced the politics as in all areas of life. Blind allegiance of voters to ideologies particularly during the Second World War, has given place to the loss of party loyalty and numbers of members after the spread of mass communication. Today, the number of supporters of political ideologies that have played a role in the beginning of the Second World War has been seriously reduced. Therefore, the action of acting over social transformation and ideology has given place to the action of approaching the middle of the political line (centre) to collect as many votes as possible (Akıncı and Akın, 2013:333).

Politics and marketing concepts have begun to come together with the American President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressing to American citizens via radio on 12 March 1933 (Roosevelt, 1933). Again, in the USA in 1960, the television duel between Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy, the presidential candidates of the period, has enabled the integration of politics and marketing (Andaç, Akbıyık, 2016:895). These two events have been a milestone in the use of traditional media in political marketing.

Since politics and marketing came together in the USA for the first time, the political marketing understanding of the next period has continued to be under American influence. Especially after the 1980s, with the increasingly stronger relations of the media and politics, the image of political party leaders both in their own parties and before voters has been strengthened. Approaching the subject in terms of Turkey, the one-man logic, brought by 600-year Ottoman domination causes the dominance of the political leaders in our country, the weakening of party affiliation

and focusing on the leader while voting. Therefore, especially in Turkey, the marketing of leaders generally comes to the fore in the political marketing. This is reflected even in the visuals used by the party in the election campaigns, and the photograph of the party leader precludes the party's identity, logo and program (Avcı, 2015:154).

It is possible bring the beginning of political marketing practices in Turkey to 1945, the beginning of a multi-party political life. 1945 is the year when more than one party joined the elections and a political competition started for the first time in Turkey. In 1970s, as television entered into daily life, the understanding of political propaganda began to change and political communication became more important. During this period, the first political campaign carried out by Cen Ajans for the general elections of 1977, newspaper ads, banners and bands were prepared on behalf of the Justice Party (Adalet Partisi); so the first professional political marketing activities were carried out in Turkey. After September 12, political marketing activities were carried out consciously in 1983 for the first time.

Strategies Used in The Political Marketing

In general, political marketing activities are carried out by corporate identities of political parties or directly by politicians. These activities are political advertising, propaganda and opinion researches (Erođlu and Bayraktar, 2010:191):

Political Advertising: This is the process that a political party or candidate purchases time on mass media channels and uses that purchased time to communicate its/his/her political messages to influence voters' beliefs and attitudes or behaviours. It is basically applied to publicize the candidate/party adequately, to display its/his/her features and talents, to stimulate interest in the voter, to encourage the voter for political participation, to express opinions she/he/it wants to discuss publicly through the media, and to ensure the voters to vote.

Propaganda: Propaganda, which is the most important means of coming to power in modern democracies, are attempts to influence the society and individuals in a way to adopt a certain view and behaviour (Köseođlu and Al, 2013:106). Propaganda is the programs that are created by propaganda-makers with the aim of obtaining support of voter to grab the political system and generally in a way meeting voters' expectations. The success of propaganda is measured by the level of adoption of views and behaviour by the society and individuals. In other words, to what extent voters' views and behaviours can be affected, propaganda is successful at that level.

Opinion Researches: The voter can sometimes follow opinion researches in order to learn the party that is preferred by the majority and the leading party of the group in order not to divide the votes of the group s/he sympathizes, and may be influenced by these researches. Opinion researches can be used as propaganda material by political parties and leaders.

Political activities are generally an item of political campaigns. Political campaigns are designed as a linear communication process. In the linear process, Lasswell's Model of Political Communication models who is communicating what through which media to whom and with which effect.



Figure 2: Lasswell's Model of Political Communication (Yaşın, 2016: 636).

Who?: The first factor in Lasswell's Model is "Who?". This is the first phase in which political actors are included in the model. These political actors can be the political party, the political party's candidate, or an independent candidate. At this point, political actors are first performing image and identity studies.

What ?: The second factor is messages of political actors. At this stage, political actors begin to transmit their political discourse and campaign themes through slogans, messages and campaign texts.

Through Which Channel?: This is the propaganda phase of political campaigns. Media planning is done at this stage.

To whom?: This is the target group of political activities. So voters. This is the targeted mass of voters that political actors (who) transmit their political discourse (what) through media planning (through which channel).

With Which Effect?: This is the extent to which political actors are able to affect their target groups' preferences and behaviours. Thus, the success of the political communication activity can be determined (Age, 2016: 637).

In political marketing campaigns, the aim is to continue positive behaviours of members, partisans and voters (continuation of voters who vote for them), to transform attitudes of those unconcerned (those who are not voting) into positive and to transform dissidents' opinions into at least neutral, if possible into positive. For this reason, it is

necessary for political actors to determine their comparative advantage over their competitors for an effective campaign. These advantages are features that will make the party or candidate different from other parties or candidates, and will allow voters to vote for that party or candidate. Parties use these advantages and features to create marketing objectives. It is possible to divide these objectives basically as economic and psychological marketing objectives (Karaçor, 2006:87). Table 1 shows the economic and psychological marketing objectives of political parties.

Table 1:
Political-Economic and Political-Psychological Objectives

Political- Economical Objectives	Political – Psychological Objectives
To get at least a certain percentage of votes given by the voters (pass the threshold)	To ensure strengthening the political will in the society,
To increase the number of votes given to the political party when compared to the election held earlier ,	To change or strengthen the image and opinions about the party
Using voters as a volunteer political instrument of communication during the election period,	To increase the party loyalty,
To increase the number of party members.	To ensure acceptance of candidates by voters,
	To expand the party's area of power and responsibility,
	To explain the importance of election element.

Source: Created by compiling from (Karaçor, 2006: 87).

Social Media Use in Political Marketing

The Internet and social media offer as many opportunities for politicians as they are for businesses, and are therefore carefully monitored by politicians and political marketing professionals. Especially in the context of political communication, social media has been taken into consideration more and more by political actors, political parties and candidates every passing day. With its structure making the political communication easier than ever, social media makes it much easier for political actors to communicate their promises to voters. In addition, social media offers the cheapest way for political actors to finger on the pulse of voters on current issues while opinion surveys are costly and difficult (Gülsünler, 2014: 84-85).

With the increasing use of the Internet and social media in political communication, political actors have begun to receive feedback from voters much more quickly and effectively, and political parties have been able to communicate their messages to wider masses in a much faster and cheaper way. From the perspective of Turkey, the first election where the Internet is started to be used in the political communication is the general elections of November 3, 2002. The Internet has completely changed the rules of political communication in term of enabling the political parties to negotiate with the voters without a filter. It has become possible to communicate directly with the voters independently of time thanks to elements such as political documents, party newspaper, press reports, party presidents' speeches, meeting images (Sarıtaş, 2016: 329).

With the widespread use of the Internet since the early 2000s and the social media since the second half of 2000s, these medias have begun to be used as an important tool in the political communication process and political parties have begun to share their views, suggestions and policies professionally in social medias. In this way, they inform their target groups and try to keep relations alive. Thanks to party accounts and personal accounts of the leaders created in the social media, instant messages can be able to be given about the events on the agenda and studies on affecting the public opinion can be performed. Citizens can also convey their opinions, requests and suggestions directly to political parties or leaders. Therefore, social media has been becoming a very suitable media for both political communication and political marketing (Güven, 2017: 187).

Regarding political communication and political marketing, the Internet has been a part of campaigns since the US presidential election of 1996. In this period, however, the Internet was not used to interact with voters, but only to transfer offline materials of campaigns to online media. The first and most important example between Twitter and political communication is the presidential elections held in the United States in 2008. Barack Obama's campaign strategy during the presidential elections of 2008 has quickly incorporated social media into the field of political communication. Using social media in his campaign, Obama has managed to reach his target group with a method that has never been seen before in political campaigns (Druckman, Kifer, & Parkin, 2007: 425).

When the influence of the Internet is examined in performance of election campaigns, it is seen that the candidate Web sites were used in 1996. In 1998, e-mail (Jesse Ventura's campaign), in 2000, online money collection (John McCain's campaign), in 2003 and 2004, blogs (Howard Dean's campaign), in 2004, home parties organized through the Internet (Bush-Cheney campaign) and in 2006, social networks and video share websites such as YouTube and MySpace influenced the election campaigns. Unprecedented events such as partnership of Google and YouTube with

CNN to sponsor first presidential debates on July 23, 2007, and in January 2008, the announcement of MySpace and Youtube about that they would host online informal public meeting on the presidency, address that a new era has begun in the use of the Internet in political campaigns (Akar, 2009:5).

Obama's success in the US Presidential Election in 2008 has convinced many candidates from other countries to believe that they can also be successful through social networks. In 2016, the US Presidential Election once again showed the social media's role in electoral campaigns. According to a research, candidates for the 2016 elections used social media even more than candidates for the 2012 Presidential Election. What's more, Trump's public-specific interest on Twitter is distinct from other the 2016 candidates, as well as different and intense from past presidential campaigns. According to the research, 44 percent of US adults received information from the social media about the 2016 Presidential Election. This percentage is more than the one specified for local or national printed newspapers or for candidate websites and emails. In addition, 24 percent of the respondents indicated that they received news and information from Donald Trump's and Hillary Clinton's social media posts (Oliphant & Smith, 2016).

In Turkey, it is seen that YouTube was intensely used for political purposes before the elections of July 22, 2007. Because of the prohibition of election propaganda on television by the Supreme Electoral Council until July 15, 2007, the election propaganda that could not be made was moved to YouTube, the video sharing site. The number of videos with propaganda content added to YouTube and watched millions of times after May 3, when the election date was set, is almost 10 thousand. In these videos, there are generally party leaders' speeches on public places, specially-crafted cubes, election songs, promises and images criticising competitors and their leaders (Akar, 2009: 6).

According to the information available on the website Twiplomacy, which fingers on the pulse of political actors' social media usage worldwide, the "KingSalman" account of the King of Saudi Arabia comes to the top of the list of the most effective leaders on Twitter in the world with an average of 154 thousand RTs. Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's personal account "RT_Erdogan" is ranked 6th with an average of 5 thousand RT's. Table 2 lists the most effective leaders on Twitter.

Table 2:
Ranking of the Most Effective Political Accounts on Twitter

	Account	Country	Average number of RT's
	@KingSalman	Saudi Arabia	154K
	@realDonaldTrump	USA	20K
	@Pontifex	Vatican	12K
	@moonriver365	South Korea	6K
	@AbeShinzo	Japan	6K
	@RT_Erdogan	Turkey	5K
	@SecPompeo	USA	4K
	@TamimBinHamad	Qatar	4K
	@POTUS	USA	4K
0	@jokowi	Indonesia	3K

According to information on the same site, when the number of followers is examined, it is seen that the political leader having the most followers is the US President Donald Trump with 52 million followers. The President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is in 7th place with 12 million followers.

Table 3:
Most Followed Political Accounts on Twitter

	Account	Country	Number of Followers
	@realDonaldTrump	USA	52M
	@Pontifex	Vatican	47M
	@narendramodi	India	42M
	@PMOIndia	India	26M
	@POTUS	USA	23M
	@WhiteHouse	USA	17M
	@RT_Erdogan	Turkey	12M
	@SushmaSwaraj	India	11M
	@QueenRania	Jordan	10M
0	@jokowi	Indonesia	10M

The social media, which is known as the digital public space where the politicians show up, has been increasing its importance in the communication of politics more and more every day. Prof. Dr. Aslı Tunç says that the social media has taken the young to the ballot box and emphasizes the importance of social media in political communication by saying "Social media is now taking the voter to a platform showing images rather than classic electoral campaigns based on slogans. At this point, the greatest aim is to evoke the young voter." Instructor İsmail Hakkı Polat, on the other hand, states that the infollution should be mostly paid attention in social media. Polat states how the infollution in social media will affect politics by saying "The most important thing to pay attention to in the new media is the infollution. The young generation quickly adopted the new media and turned it into their own living space. There are good things in this living space, like bad things like lie, rumours. The only difference is that these interactions are among the few in the real life;, but, in digital media, these interactions reach thousands, even millions of people. An environment that can be easily dragged into manipulation and chaos. My advice to voters is that they should boil over without confirming the contents and follow a path in the light of experience and conscience while voting in a conscious way" (Sabah, 2014:14) about social media & politics meeting.

The most important reasons for using social media in political marketing are compiled under seven headings (Tütüncü, 2018:36):

The contents of messages have changed: Messages that pay regard to social dynamics, are designed and address current issues are given in the social media.

Developments in the technique and content of communication channels: The communication channels used by political actors are influenced by technological developments. These developments change the content of messages communicated by through tools used.

Increasing effectiveness of the media in political communication: Political parties' need to reach wider masses has increased face-to-face communications as well as the communication of messages via mass media. Therefore, some of the communication tools in the media are used together to reach the masses.

Media - Political Power Relationships Have Changed: The need of political actors to the media has led them to control the media or indirectly possess the media. Especially in countries where democracy has not developed yet, this is becoming more visible.

Social Media is An important Tool of Political Communication: The Internet, which has increased its influence in the society, has enabled political actors to turn their attention to target groups that are not much cared previously and comprising of the young, in their political communication. Medias such as Twitter, Facebook – YouTube, used in Obama's political campaign have also awakened other political actors' interest. Based on Web 2.0 based communication technologies based on the Internet, this virtual communication style has brought new dimensions to classical communication methods and techniques. Political actors, open to technology, have started to use these new methods and techniques rapidly.

Y-Generation has emerged as a new group of political actors: Young people, who are actively using social media, have created networks among themselves. This mass without any organization, has attracted the attention of political actors and in a short time, turned into a mass that political actors want to reach and influence.

Social media users have become controllers of political actor discourses: Rapid development in communication technologies has required political actors to revise their discourses. What political actors do and what they say have become more examined. Political actors no longer have the luxury of saying, "I did not mean this."

Academic Researches in Turkey Related to Use of Social Media in Political Marketing

Bayraktutan et al. (2012) carried out a study examining the general elections of 2011 on the social media in Turkey. In the study, walls of Facebook accounts used by political parties and leaders and their Twitter posts during the general elections of 2011 are examined. As a result of the research, it is determined that politicians and political parties use social media to share what they are doing by the moment, to interpret the agenda, to address to a certain person or public, to interpret media contents, to spread their political opinion and to make their political activity visible. The target group of the examined posts and tweets are both their supporters and competing party's supporters, party members and delegates, close environment, international opinion and organizations and those to whom they speak particularly.

Karlı and Değirmenciöđlu (2011) examine the political parties' benefiting from the Internet media in terms of political communication, by comparing AKP, the period's ruling party in Turkey, and CHP, the main opposition party. In the research, webpages of the parties are evaluated in terms of 'ease of use', 'visual appeal', 'being informative', 'being entertaining and interesting' and 'up-to-date' dimensions. According to the findings, both parties keep up-to-date with news published in the mainstream media about themselves and publish them simultaneously on their sites. However, in terms of political communication, it can be said that they benefited from the technology that is necessary for the fulfilment of necessary applications for ensuring interaction with the public and voter. The fact that the parties include their communication links as well as comment pages for the site users is the sign that these sites are 'interactive'.

Ünal, Gökçe and Türk (2015) examine the use of corporate websites as a means of promotion in the political marketing, over its informative function. According to research results, it is determined that in terms of providing information, all political parties have contents above the average, except for HDP representing the Kurdish society in Turkey; however, each party has deficiencies. It is advised them to complete the deficient components required by websites' informative function and make contents and designs of websites prepared not only by technical website design experts, but also by multi-discipline teams also involving marketing specialists, with the consciousness that websites are important promotional tools. For this reason, parties should adopt a philosophical harmony or at least a professional approach as the goal congruence in the selection of the persons or institutions from whom the service will be got.

In a research (Sarıtaş, 2016) carried out on the 26th term (November 17, 2015 - June 24, 2018) parliamentarians in TBMM (Grand National Assembly of Turkey), it is examined that whether the parliamentarians, regarded as political products in the context of political marketing, have methods for direct communication with their voters and how effectively they use these methods. According to this research, the 26th term MPs have their resumes, contact information, up-to-date information and photo gallery on their own personal pages and social media tools on the Internet. In addition, party logos are frequently used. So, political actors frequently use web sites and social media accounts for political communication.

Şengün (2006) examines his/her research on determination of the effect of political marketing tools on voters' behaviours in the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Dicle University. 240 of 1590 students were included in the research. According to findings from the research, the factors effecting respondents' political preferences are visual and printed media and similar factors, promotions and symbols and party meetings. In addition, these factors have a statistically significant correlation with each other. However, it is hard to say that political marketing activities have a significant effect on voters' voting preferences, since nearly half of the respondents indicate that their voting preferences are already known before the election.

A similar research is carried out by Sarıtaş and Bütün (2016). They carried out their study, in which they focused on the importance of political marketing activities in terms of voters' behaviours, by having interviews with respondents who are parliamentary candidates from the province of Burdur in Turkey in the elections of June 7, 2015. According to the findings from the research, it is observed that voters are sensitive to the political marketing activities carried out in Burdur. Especially, the opinion that the advertisements of new generation Internet media are more effective on the election than the old classical advertisements. It is understood that in the political competition environment, there is a need to address the floating voters with visual and realistic advertisements. The most important one of the findings from the research is that the priority agenda of political parties that want to influence the floating voters must be the economy, but they should not neglect other issues. In addition, another result of political marketing activities is that it is effective in the participation in the election, rather than the subject that which party will be supported by voters.

Akıncı and Akın (2013) carry out their studies with a total of 509 students at Aksaray University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences with the aim of determining the factors affecting the voting preference of the university students and examining these factors on the basis of politics demonstration and leader phenomenon over political marketing. Accordingly, the factors affecting the voting preferences are political communication directed by the party, the political leader figure, party program, policies and activities, political communication that could not be directed by the party, reference groups, leader's appearance, religious discourse and political loyalty. Also, the effects

of factors affecting the voting preferences on the party program, policies and activities are also investigated and it is seen that political communication directed by the party, the political leader figure, political communication that could not be directed by the party and political loyalty affected the party program. Therefore, it is revealed that the political communication that is and is not directed by the party have influenced the party policies. In other words, political marketing and political communication activities are reflected in the policies and programs of the parties.

Silsüpür (2016) researches the use of Twitter as a political communication media in the general elections of June 7, 2015 in Turkey. In the study, it is examined that how, for which purpose and between which hours the political leaders use Twitter for political purposes, and content of their tweets, with whom they interact, how they persuade voters to vote and their promises. According to this, it is seen that AKP leader Ahmet Davutođlu (of the period) shares his party's activities on his tweets, Kemal Kılıçdarođlu shares mostly his promises, and Devlet Bahçeli shares messages such as talking one after the other and does not use visual elements in his posts. It is also seen that Devlet Bahçeli has the least number of followers among the leaders but the leader tweeting most. It is determined that Ahmet Davutođlu and Kemal Kılıçdarođlu share their messages in all time period of the day within 24-hour time zone and Devlet Bahçeli tweets only between 18.00-23.59 in the evening. In tweets shared by political leaders in weekdays and weekends, it is seen that Ahmet Davutođlu and Kemal Kılıçdarođlu share messages all the time, while Devlet Bahçeli share just in weekdays.

Arklan (2016) examines the political use of social media over use habits of network generation. According to results of the research, it is thought that social media can be used effectively for political purposes, issues on social media are effective on political attitudes and political identities are reflected in this media, whereas social media is not seen much reliable in political issues. Use of social media for political purposes is gathered under four headings, political development and interaction, political publicity, political agenda follow-up and non-political benefit and there are interactions among these purposes at different levels. Political contents are not shared or followed very often in the social media; however, as political contents, political humour (cartoon, anecdote, etc.), historical political figures and political agenda are shared and followed up at most, while political parties and political leaders at least. The main factors hindering political shares are the thoughts that the place of politics is not the social media, imposition of legal sanctions, being perceived as an extremely political person, being disclosed with a political opinion, avoiding of distortions of posts and wishing to be at an equal distance to everyone.

Aydın and Gülsoy (2017) examine the importance of political party leaders' use of social media for young voters, specific to students of Süleyman Demirel University. The findings from the research show that the social media use by political party leaders using social media has no significant effect on young voters. This does not differ according to the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents.

Andaç and Akbıyık (2016) examine the use of social media in terms of political marketing, specific to Isparta province of Turkey. When the political party's parliamentary candidates' use of Facebook, a tool of propaganda enabling them to reach wider masses quickly and efficiently is examined under this study, it is seen that Isparta parliamentary candidates do not give the necessary importance to Facebook. It is seen that Turkish politicians prefer traditional media rather than social media as a tool of political marketing. Moreover, use of the Internet has increased rapidly in recent years; voters can now follow the meetings held by the political party's parliamentary candidates by checking the candidates' posts on their Facebook accounts. In this context, if it is wished to make a successful political marketing on social media, first they need to have an account in many social network sites. Through which, they need to submit their videos, news and advertisements to their voters for their propaganda. They also need to open all posts to comment to ensure transparency and communication with voters.

Yalçınkaya (2018) examines his/her research on the use of digital marketing channels by the political parties in Turkey, specific to the largest 3 parties with a group in the parliament. The findings from the research show that the political parties in Turkey use digital marketing channels. It can be said that the examined political parties are active in the use of websites and social media. In all political parties, statements, speeches and advises on current events and phenomena are published, and important statements of party officials in various places are presented to voters as a whole. Mobile applications are used by AKP and CHP. MHP does not have an application. AKP has also brought its "leader", the most important element of its political product package, into the forefront in the mobile platform as a separate application.

In the research titled "examination of social media in terms of political communication applications", carried out by TUBITAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey), usage forms of Facebook and Twitter by political leaders in general elections held in 2011 in Turkey are examined. According to findings of the research completed between November 1, 2011 and April 15, 2013, it is seen that the group that uses Twitter intensively is mostly independent political candidates and CHP uses this social media at the lowest level. In the analysis performed based on the parties, it is determined that the party with the most visibility on Twitter is AK Party. In the general elections held in 2011, Selahattin Demirtaş's account has been the most active account in personal use applications. According to the research, 6.5 percent of tweets of AK Party, 38.56 percent of tweets of CHP and 51.92 percent of tweets of independent candidates consist of tweets about the user's own parties. The number of tweets tweeted related

to the world agenda is so few all parties (Digitalage, 2015: 48). As can be seen in this research, political parties and leaders used Twitter only for election propaganda during this election period.

In 2014, 57 million voters went to polls in Turkey for Turkey's twelfth Presidential elections. In the 91-year history of the Republic of Turkey, the President was elected by the people for the first time. Two other candidates were Ekmeleddin İhsanođlu and HDP Co-President Selahattin Demirtaş, who competed in the elections resulting in the victory of AK Party Chairman and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. When the social media use habits of the leaders in those elections are examined, it is seen that there was a big difference between Erdoğan and his competitors. For example, at that period, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan had 4.4 million Twitter followers, while Demirtaş had 370 thousand and İhsanođlu had 329 thousand followers. When the frequency of Twitter usage of all three candidates, İhsanođlu ranked first with an average of 8.02 shares per day, whereas Erdoğan's daily tweet share was 3.38 and Demirtaş's share was 0.86. The most important point in the analysis conducted by the Somera Research Company is the high correlation between the recognizability of candidates in the competition of candidanship and speeches of social media users about recognizing the candidates (Yücel, 2014: 73).

Ođuzođlu and Öztay (2016) examine comparatively the social media use of CHP and MHP candidates who were candidates for the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Mayorship in Local Elections of March 30, 2014. According to findings from the research, it is seen that both parties and candidates conducted their social media studies with professional methods. The clearest indication of this situation is that both candidates established a special social media team. Both candidates tried to close his deficiencies in traditional media through social media.

In his/her study on examination of social media by political parties in Turkey, Darı (2018) determines that both the political parties and chairpeople of political parties use several social media tools effectively. In the study, Darı states that the three largest parties (AKP, CHP and MHP) with a group in the parliament, actively use popular social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube with their corporate identities as well as personal accounts of their leaders. For example, AKP and CHP's corporate social media accounts have about 10 million followers, while the leader's individual social media accounts have over 30 million followers. On YouTube, the total number of visits is around 78 million. Therefore, the domain of social media on the use of political marketing is even higher than the population of the country. However, in the social media accounts, information purposes are in the forefront. One-way communication is preferred rather than an interaction.

The Aim and the Method of the Research

67 percent of the approximately 82-million population in Turkey are Internet users. According to data of the first half of 2018, a total of 54 million 330 thousand Internet users is available in Turkey. While ninety percent of these internet users are mobile, Turkish people spend an average of seven hours and nine minutes a day on mobile internet usage. Turkey ranks seventh in the world mobile internet usage with this feature. When social media users in Turkey are analysed, it is seen that 51 million social media users are available in the country. This corresponds to 63 percent of the total population. In the ranking of world, this data carry Turkey to 23rd rank. In 2018, there is a 6 percent increase in the number of new social media users in Turkey. Again, according to data of 2018, social media users in Turkey spend their approximately 2 hours and 24 minutes on social media platforms every day (Yalçın, 2018:62). The Presidential Elections of June 24 held in such an atmosphere increased the importance of unity of social media & political communication. The Presidential Elections held on June 24, 2018, has been a historical election for passing to the presidential system from the parliamentary system in Turkey. One pole which has wanted to change the parliamentary system and two poles that have not wanted to change the parliamentary system entered a vehement struggle and used social media in this struggle very intensely. The purpose of this research is to perform a descriptive research according to usage forms of social media channel Twitter by six political actors being candidates in the Presidential Elections held on June 24, 2018. For this purpose, a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the Twitter accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - Muharrem İnce - Meral Akşener - Selahattin Demirtaş - Temel Karamollaođlu and Dođu Perinçek, who participated in the elections, is performed. The research covers 54 days of promotion and propaganda period from May 1, 2018 until the election day June 24, 2018, Sunday. The main reason for selection of this period is that the promotion and propaganda period for the Presidential Elections started on May 1, 2018 and continued until the election day June 24, 2018, Sunday. In this context, the research covers Twitter and Facebook shares from 1 May 2018 00:00 to 24 June 2018 00:00. Six presidential candidates' usage of social media platforms Twitter and Facebook as a means of political communication and marketing during this time period is examined and the findings are analysed.

In the presidential elections held on June 24, 2018, the rate of votes got by six political actors is as follows:

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: 52.59%

Muharrem İnce: 30.64%

Selahattin Demirtaş: 8.40%

Meral Akşener: 7.29%

Temel Karamollaođlu: 0.89%

Dođu Perinçek: 0.20%



Figure 3: Turkey's Presidential Election Results Held on June 24, 2018

When results of the presidential election held on 24 June 2018 are examined on the basis of province, it is seen that only three of the six names were first in some provinces. This indication of these provinces on the map of Turkey are in Figure 2.

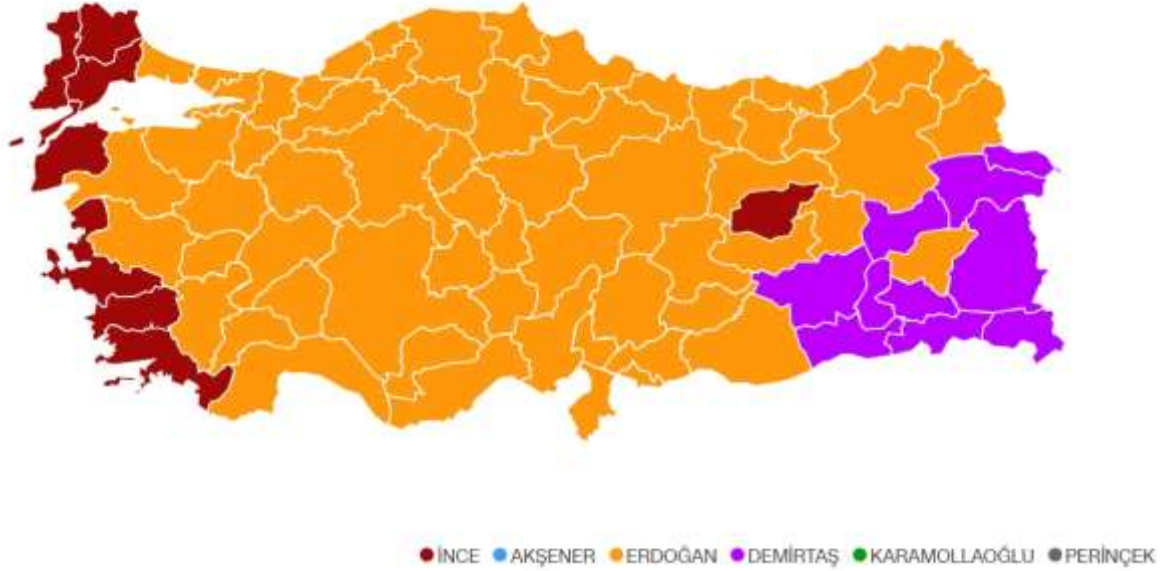


Figure 4: Reflections of Presidential Elections of June 24, 2018 on Map of Turkey

In the research, the question that whether there is a link between the results of these elections and the use of Twitter by the candidates is asked and the relationship between social media activity and election results is examined.

6.1 Findings of The Research: This part of the study includes findings obtained as a result of examining Twitter and Facebook social media accounts of the six politicians being candidates on the Presidential elections in Turkey. In the first part, findings of the analyses performed for Twitter accounts of the candidates between May 1, 2018 and June 24, 2018 and in the second part, for Facebook accounts.

6.1.1 Twitter Analysis

6.1.1.1. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: In the research, President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's official Twitter account https://twitter.com/RT_Erdogan is examined.



Figure 5: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Twitter Account

During the research period, Erdoğan posted 191 messages on Twitter. During this period, he gained 217 thousand 578 followers, corresponding to an average daily increase of 3.956 followers. Links are used in tweets mostly. The rate of use of links in messages was 36.3 percent, while 34.2 percent of the messages included photographs and 24.4 percent texts. Erdoğan's tweets posted during the election period received 4 million 521 thousand 318 likes and 1 million 153 thousand 920 retweets.

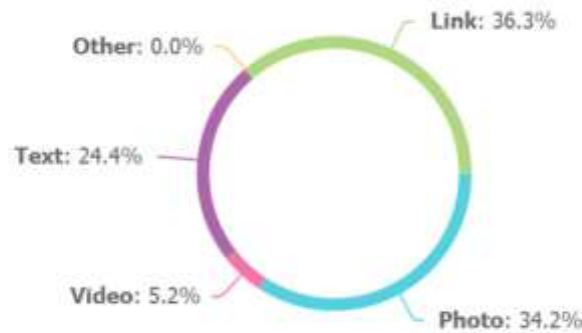


Figure 6: Contents of Messages Used in Twitter

The most interacted tweet, Erdoğan posted on June 18, 2018, "Now reach forth, let's begin the most powerful era, let's wing the #phoenix for Turkey" received a total of 119 thousand 604 interactions with 87 thousand 341 retweets and 32 thousand 263 likes.



Figure 3: The Most Interacted Tweet

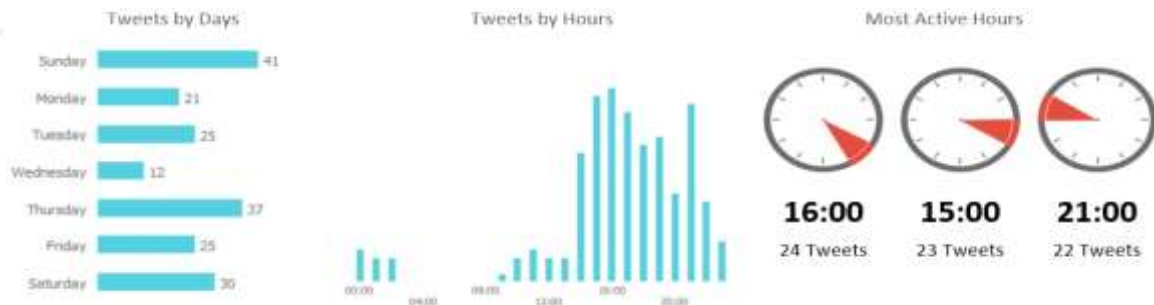


Figure 7: Time Distribution of Erdoğan's Tweets He Posted During The Election Period

During the research period of 01 May - 24 June 2018, he tweeted most on Sundays. Sunday is followed by Thursday with 37 messages and Saturday with 30 messages. Erdoğan, who preferred to post the messages most afternoon, posted most tweets between 16:00 - 17:00. It is observed that the intensity of Tweets is high between 15:00 and 22:00.



Figure 8: Muharrem İnce's Twitter Account

6.1.1.2. Muharrem İnce: In the research, Muharrem İnce's official Twitter account <https://twitter.com/vekilince> is examined.

Muharrem İnce, the second candidate who took the most votes in the Presidential Elections of 2018, posted 422 tweets throughout the campaign. During this period, İnce has increased the number of his followers by 894 thousand 809 and this increase corresponds to average of 16 thousand 267 people per day. İnce received 15 million 897 thousand 562 likes and 2 million 537 thousand 961 retweets. Unlike Erdoğan, İnce generally preferred to use photos on Twitter. 44.7 percent of his tweets included photos, 22.7 percent included links, and 19.6 percent included texts.

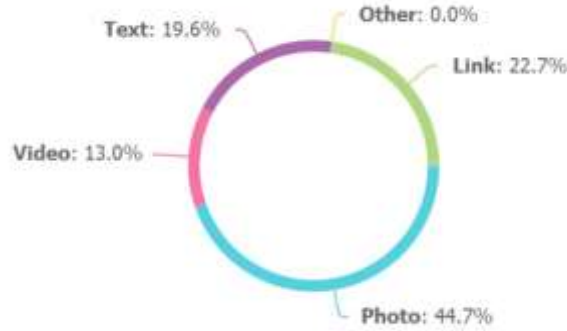


Figure 9: Contents of Messages Used on Twitter

The most interacted tweet of İnce during the election campaign is the message he posted on June 21, 2018. In his tweet criticizing Turkey's state television TRT, "You TRT officials, you broadcast live all meetings of RTE but not broadcast live our meeting in İzmir with participation of 3 million people, may you get no benefit from money you get from taxes of these people! Shame on you! You shameless!", İnce received a total of 297 thousand 141 interactions with 242 thousand 133 likes and 55 thousand 008 retweets.



Figure 10: The Most Interacted Tweet

İnce tweeted most on Sundays during the election period. İnce, who posted a total of 76 tweets on Sundays, posted 76 tweets on Fridays and 64 on Saturdays. When the time distribution of the tweets posted by İnce is examined, it is seen that messages start to increase at 12:00 and get the highest point between 15:00 - 17:00.

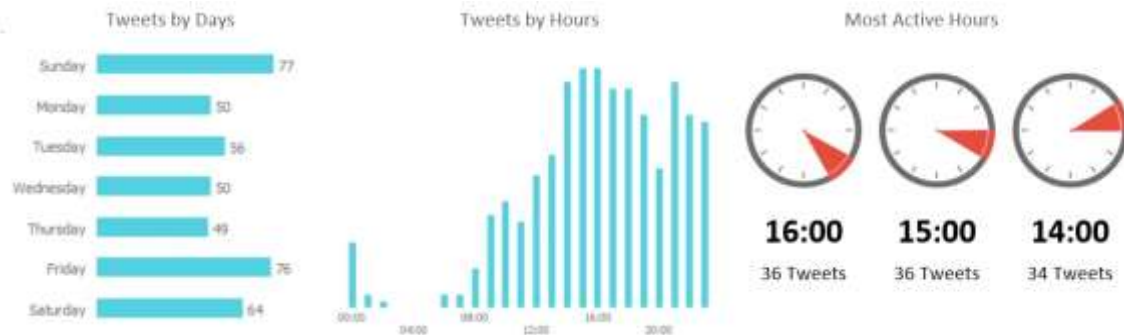


Figure 11: Time Distribution of İnce's Tweets He Posted During The Election Period

6.1.1.3. Selahattin Demirtaş: In the research, Selahattin Demirtaş's official Twitter account <https://twitter.com/hdpdemirtas> is examined.

Since Selahattin Demirtaş was in prison at the Presidential elections unlike the other five presidential candidates, his team administrated his Twitter account on his name.



Figure 12: Selahattin Demirtaş's Twitter Account

Demirtaş's team has posted 449 tweets during the election period. During this period, the account gained 114,166 followers, corresponding to an average of 2 thousand 74 followers per day. 449 tweets posted received a total of 3 million 894 thousand 471 likes and 896 thousand 693 retweets.

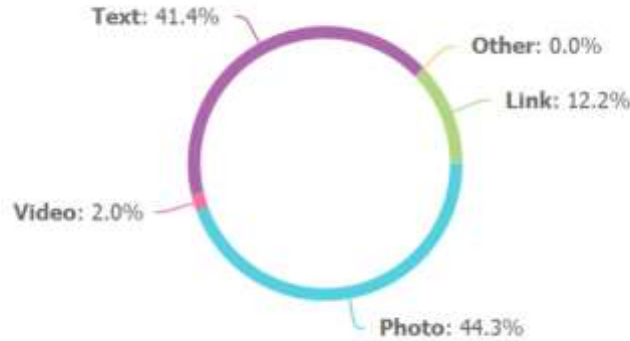


Figure 13: Contents of Messages Used on Twitter

In Demirtaş's Twitter account, just like Ince's account, photos are used mostly in tweets. In 44.3% of the messages, photos are used, in 41.4% the texts and 12.2% the links.

Demirtaş's most interacted tweet during the election period is the tweet he posted on May 18, 2018. The tweet, posted by Selahattin Demirtaş ironically, who was in prison during the election period for being imprisoned for his charges of terrorism, "While the other Presidential candidates are getting tired due to rushing from one square to another, my existence here is a great injustice. While I'm just sitting here and sipping my tea, they suffer there. I feel so sorry for them all! Because of this injustice..." received a total of 59 thousand 936 interactions with 48 thousand 726 likes and 11 thousand 210 retweets.



Figure 14: The Most Interacted Tweet

During Demirtaş's election campaign, a great number of tweets posted from his Twitter account are written on Fridays. 263 of 449 tweets are posted on Fridays. When looking at the timing of the tweets, it is seen that time intervals of tweets are at two different time spans. Most tweets are posted between 10:00-13:00 and between 20:00-24:00. Demirtaş's team used his Twitter account day and night evenly.

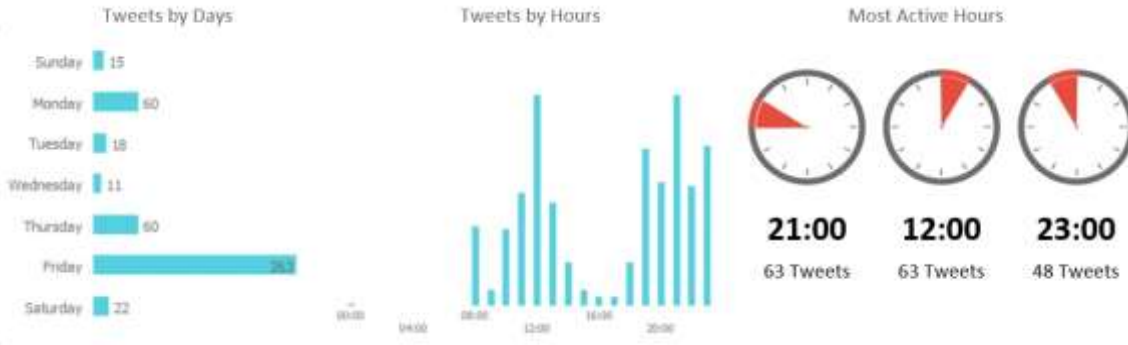


Figure 15: Time Distribution of Demirtaş's Tweets During the Selection Era

6.1.1.4. Meral Akşener: In the research, Meral Akşener's official Twitter account https://twitter.com/meral_aksener is examined.



Figure 16: Meral Akşener's Twitter Account

Meral Akşener, who ranked fourth among six candidates as a result of votes she took in the Presidential elections, posted 635 tweets during the election period. In this period, the number of her followers increased by 299 thousand 986, corresponding to an average increase of 5 thousand 454 people per day. During the campaign, Akşener's tweets received a total of 4 million 201 thousand 956 likes and 903 thousand 740 retweets.

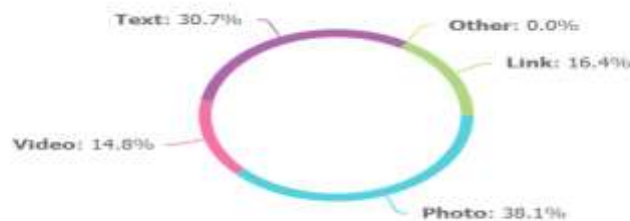


Figure 17: Contents of Messages Used on Twitter

Akşener mostly used photos in her tweets. Akşener, who posted photo-tweets at the rate of 38.1 percent, posted text-content tweets at 30.7 percent and link-content at 16.4 percent.

Meral Akşener's most interacted tweet during the election period is the tweet she posted in response to President Erdoğan's question to his audiences in his meeting, "Enough or Keep Going?". Erdoğan qualifies his re-election as the President as "Keep Going", while his oppositions responds him with "enough". In the use of the slogan, one of the most important slogans of the election campaign, "Enough or Keep Going?", all five other presidential candidates opposed to Erdoğan said "Enough". At this scope, Akşener posted a tweet on May 8, 2018, "There is an enough that comes from the skies". This tweet has been the most interacted tweet of Akşener during the election period. It received a total of 189 thousand 431 interactions with 155 thousand 682 likes and 33 thousand 749 retweets.

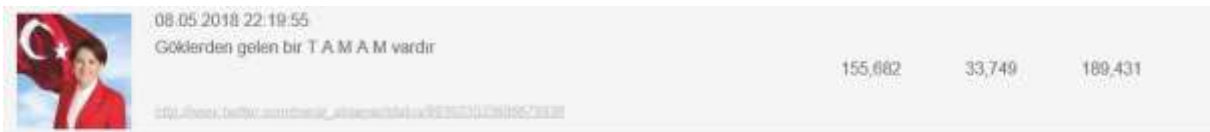


Figure 18: The Most Interacted Tweet

During the election period, Akşener tweeted mostly on Wednesdays. Akşener posted a total of 136 tweets on Wednesdays, 129 on Mondays and 98 tweets on Fridays. When looking at the timing of the tweets, it is seen that tweets start in the mornings, get the maximum numbers afternoons and decrease in the evenings. According to this, Akşener posted her tweets most between 13:00 - 15:00 and preferred to use her daytime as a communication tool when compared to her competitors.

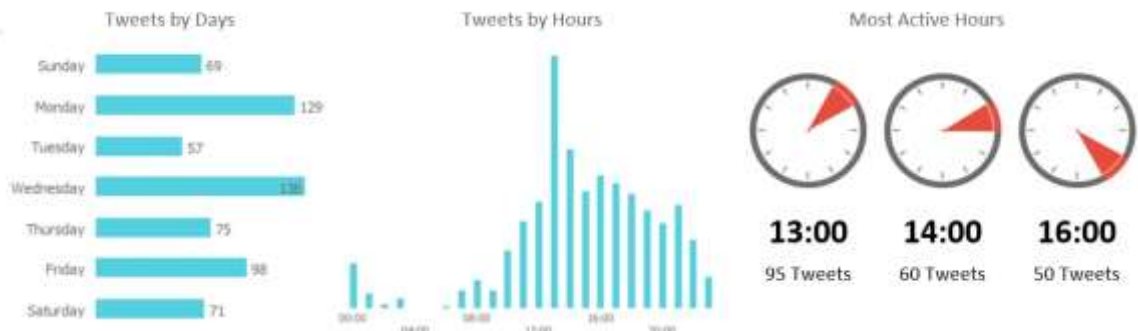


Figure 19: Time Distribution of Tweets Posted by Akşener During The Election Period

6.1.1.5. Temel Karamollağlu: In the research, Temel Karamollağlu's official Twitter account https://twitter.com/T_Karamollaoglu is examined.



Figure 20: Temel Karamollağlu's Twitter Account

Temel Karamollaoğlu, who came in fifth in the Presidential elections, posted 270 tweets from his Twitter account during the campaign period. During this period, Karamollaoğlu gained 122 thousand 452 followers, corresponding to 2,226 followers per day. During the election period, he posted 270 tweets and received 1 million 638 thousand 149 likes, 360 thousand 560 retweets.

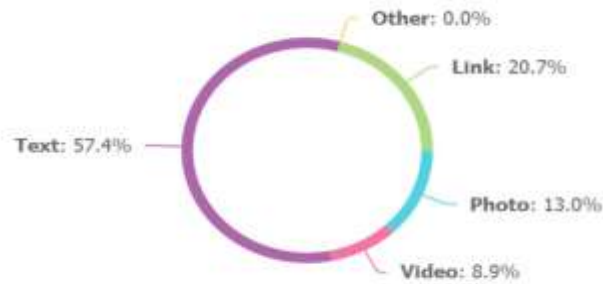


Figure 21: Contents of Messages Used on Twitter

Temel Karamollaoğlu generally preferred to use texts in his tweets. 57.4 percent of his tweets are text-based tweets. 20.7 percent of his tweets include links and 13.0 percent of his tweets include photos. When analysed from this aspect, it is seen that Karamollaoğlu's Twitter usage differs from to his competitors.

When Karamollaoğlu's most interacted tweet is analysed, it is seen that his tweet "Enough" gets the most interaction like Akşener. His tweet "God willing, it will be enough!", posted on 8 May 2018, received a total of 104 thousand 755 interactions with 85 thousand 237 likes and 19 thousand 518 retweets.

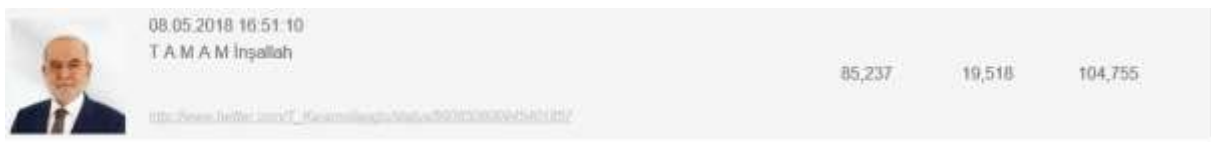


Figure 22: The Most Interacted Tweet

Karamollaoğlu posted most tweets on Saturday with 48 tweets during the election period. Saturday is followed by Sunday with 45 tweets and Thursday and Thursday with 42 tweets each. When timing of tweets are analysed, it is seen that Karamollaoğlu starts to post his tweets at 12:00, reaches maximum between 13:00 - 14:00 and continued up to 23:00 - 24: 00 at night.

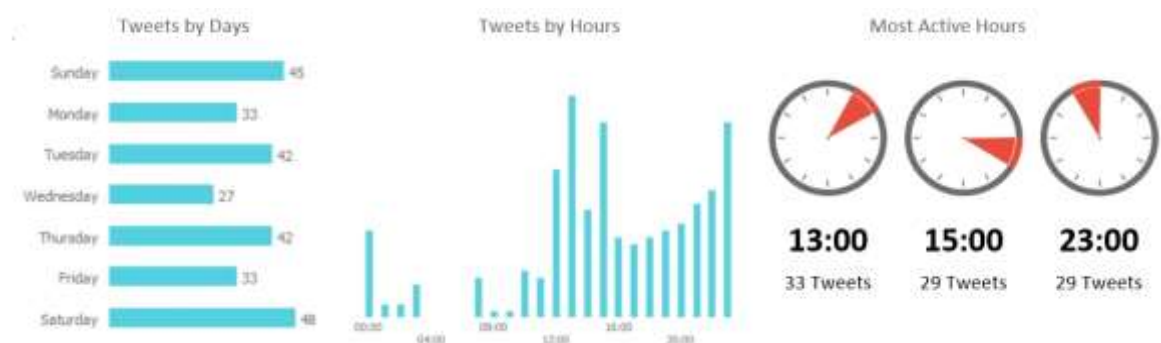


Figure 23: Time Distribution of Tweets by Karamollaoğlu During the Election

6.1.1.6. Doğu Perinçek: In the research, it is determined that Doğu Perinçek has two official Twitter accounts, one in Turkish and one in English. In the research, Perinçek's official Turkish account https://twitter.com/Dogu_Perincek is examined.



Figure 24: Doğu Perinçek's Twitter Account

Doğu Perinçek, who received the least votes in the Presidential elections and completed the elections in sixth place, posted 156 tweets during the election period. In this period, the number of followers increased by 8 thousand 207, corresponding to an increase of 149 followers per day. In these messages, Perinçek received 77 thousand 705 likes and 36 thousand 669 retweets.

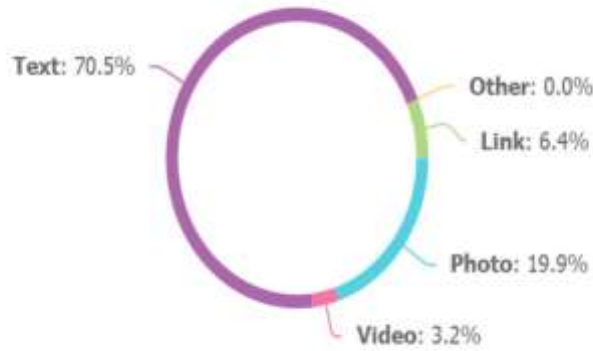


Figure 25: Contents of Messages Used on Twitter

Doğu Perinçek generally used texts in his tweets. 70.5% of his tweets include texts, 19.9% include photos. It is seen that Doğu Perinçek, who is older than his other competitors, uses a more traditional method of using Twitter and generally posts text-based tweets instead of multimedia-based tweets. The similar situation is also seen in Temel Karamollaoğlu, who is older than his other competitors. He also uses Twitter in a more passive and traditional way.



Figure 26: The Most Interacted Tweet

Doğu Perinçek's most interacted tweet is his comment against an explanation of Muharrem İnce, one of his opponents in the elections, in his meeting. Perinçek replied İnce with the tweet "Muharrem İnce is shooting Metin Temel, who is a brave commander of Turkish Army, from PKK's emplacements by saying 'I'm going to take his epaulets off'" and this tweet has been the most interactive tweet during the election period. The tweet received a total of 7,373 interactions with 5 THOUSAND 426 likes and 1,747 retweets.

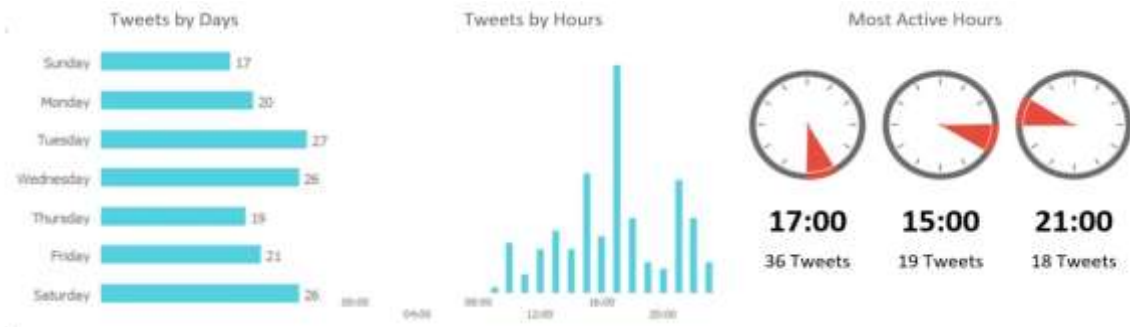


Figure 27: Time Distribution of Perinçek's Tweets Posted During the Election Period

During the election campaign, Doğu Perinçek posted most tweets on Tuesdays. Perinçek, who posted a total of 27 tweets on Tuesdays, posted 26 tweets on Wednesdays and Saturdays each. He posted the least number of tweets on Sundays. When time distribution of his tweets is examined, Perinçek, who posted tweets with decreasing and increasing intervals from 11:00 to 23:00, posted the most tweets between 17:00 - 18:00. Perinçek, who posted 36 tweets in this time zone, and the second most tweeted time zone is between 15:00 - 16:00 with 19 tweets.

When the data obtained in the above findings are tabled, the politicians who posted the most tweets on Twitter and gained the most followers in the presidential election are as in Table 4.

Table 4:

Comparison of Votes Taken by Presidential Candidates in Elections and Their Twitter Performance

Candidate	Percentage of Votes Taken (%)	Number of Followers	Number of Tweets	Follower Increase	Total Interaction	Most Used Tweet Type
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	52.59	13.128.845	191	217.578	5.675.238	Tweets with Links
Muharrem İnce	30.64	4.536.190	422	894.709	18.435.523	Tweet with Photos
Selahattin Demirtaş	8.40	1.692.244	449	114.066	4.791.164	Tweet with Photos
Meral Akşener	7.29	2.738.163	635	299.986	5.005.696	Tweet with Photos
Temel Karamollaoğlu	0.89	284.624	270	122.452	1.998.709	Tweet with Texts
Doğu Perinçek	0.20	206.603	156	8.207	119.574	Tweet with Texts

6.1.2 Facebook Analysis

6.1.2.1. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: In the research, President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's official Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/RecepTayyipErdoğan/> is examined.



Figure 28: Facebook Account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

During the election campaign, Erdoğan's Facebook account increased by 160 thousand 868 people. Erdoğan, who wrote 168 messages, engaged 50 percent of the videos. Erdoğan, who shared photos at 44.6 percent, used multimedia content in 94.6 percent of the messages.

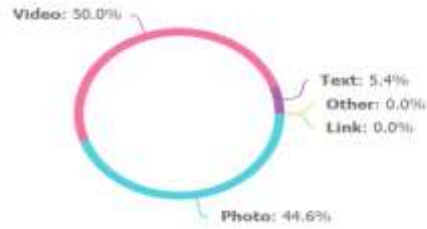


Figure 29: Types of Messages Erdoğan Shared in his Facebook Account



Figure 30: Interaction of Erdoğan's Facebook Messages

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's the most interacted message among the messages he wrote during the election campaign is "We are ready for a great change again in the new system and rearing up, Turkey" has been. This message has received a total of 311 thousand 764 interactions



Figure 31: Erdoğan's The Most Interactive Facebook Message

Erdoğan used his Facebook account almost every day. The day we wrote the most messages was Friday with 28 messages, the second was Wednesdays with 27 messages and the third was Saturdays and Sundays with 26 messages each. The most popular time zone on Facebook is between 21:00 – 22:00 with 22 messages and between 17:00 – 18:00 with 21 messages.

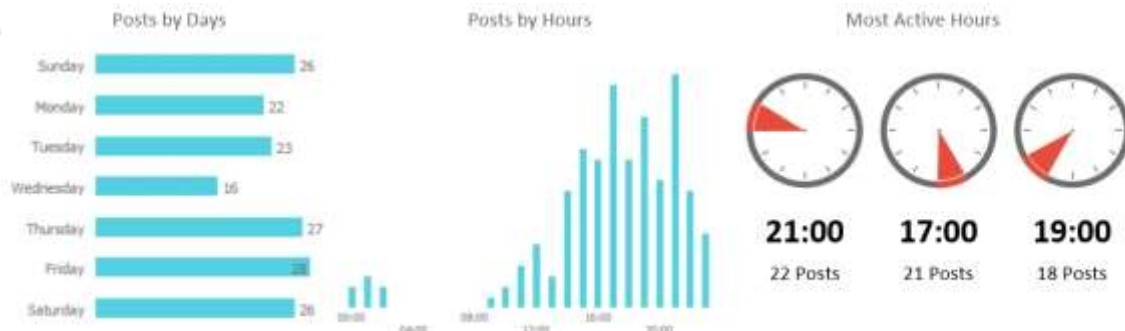


Figure 32: Erdoğan's Facebook Usage Days and Times

6.1.2.2. Muharrem İnce: In the research, Muharrem İnce's official Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/muharrem.ince77/> is examined.



Figure 33: Muharrem İnce's Facebook Account

During the election period, Muharrem İnce gained 558 thousand 697 Facebook followers. İnce, who wrote 440 messages during the campaign period, used photos at 55.0% and videos at 37.0% in the messages. İnce's multimedia usage rate in Facebook messages was 92.0 percent.

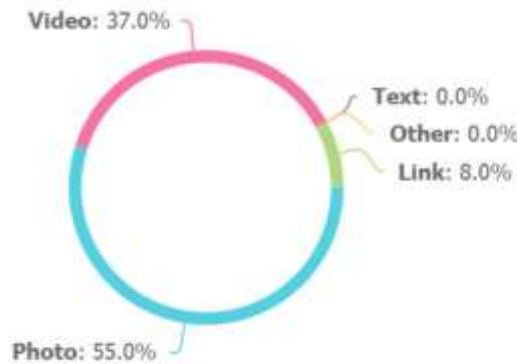


Figure 34: Types of Messages Erdoğan Shared in his Facebook Account



Figure 35: Interaction of İnce's Facebook Messages

İnce's most interactive message among 440 messages he wrote during the election campaign is his "We are in İstanbul.." message, he wrote on 23 June 2018 and addressing the İstanbul meeting. This message received 435 thousand 850 interactions.

	Like	Comment	Share	Total Engagement
23.06.2018 13:47:50 İstanbuldayız http://www.facebook.com/muharrem.ince77/posts/10156468976706703	187,427	161,664	87,759	436,850

Figure 36: İnce's Most Interactive Facebook Message

During the election period, İnce used his Facebook account mostly at weekends. He wrote most messages on Sundays with 80 messages and on Saturdays with 75 messages. When looking at the time distribution of the messages within the day, it is seen that the number of messages started to increase at 12:00 and reached maximum between 14:00 - 15:00 and 21:00 - 22:00.



Figure 37: İnce's Facebook Usage Days and Times

6.1.2.3. Selahattin Demirtaş: In the research, Selahattin Demirtaş's official Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/HDPdemirtas/> is examined.



Figure 38: Selahattin Demirtaş's Facebook Account

Facebook account administrators of Selahattin Demirtaş, who was in prison during the presidential election period, wrote 228 messages. Demirtaş' Facebook account lost 2 thousand 64 followers during the election period. 62.3 percent of the shared messages included photos, 31.6 percent videos, 6.1 percent texts. The rate of multimedia usage in the account was 93.9 percent.



Figure 39: Interaction of Demirtaş's Facebook Messages

The most interacted message among Demirtaş's message during the election period is "FellowCitizenFriendDemirtaş New Photos". The message received a total of 47,590 interactions.



Figure 40: Demirtaş's Most Interactive Message on Facebook

It is seen that administrators of Demirtaş's Facebook account is more passive and different than the other candidates. Passivity causes the account to lose followers, while the difference is also seen in sharing hours of messages. The maximum number of messages was shared between 08:00 - 09:00 with 37 messages. This is one of Facebook's least used time periods.

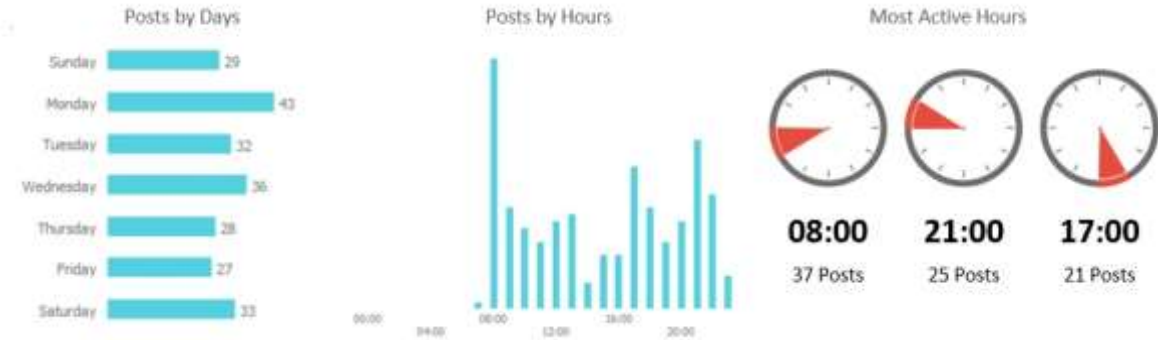


Figure 41: Demirtaş's Facebook Usage Days and Times

6.1.2.4. Meral Akşener: In the research, Meral Akşener's official Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/meral.aksener.9/> is examined.



Figure 42: Meral Akşener's Facebook Account

Meral Akşener wrote 445 Facebook messages during the election period. Facebook account has gained 92 thousand 995 followers. 53.0 percent of the messages include photos, 41.6 percent videos, 4.9 percent texts, 0.4 percent links. Meral Akşener, who uses links in her messages as an alternative to Erdoğan and İnce, used multimedia messages at 94.6 percent in her Facebook account.



Figure 43: Interaction of Meral Akşener's Facebook Messages

Akşener's most interactive Facebook message she wrote on June 21, 2018 at 15:03 is "There are two elections on the 24th. One is that you will elect our parliamentary candidates for parliamentary. The other is the presidential election. For this election, I am seeking your votes." The message received a total of 97 thousand 226 interactions.



Figure 44: Akşener's Most Interactive Facebook Message

The distribution of days Akşener wrote messages on her Facebook account was almost equal. The day she shared the most messages was on Friday with 76 messages. Friday was followed by Saturday with 68 messages and Saturday was followed by Sunday with 67 messages. When looking at the time of sharing of messages, we can see that the messages started in the morning, increased in the afternoon and decreased in the evening. Most messages were written between 14:00 – 15:00 with 44 messages.

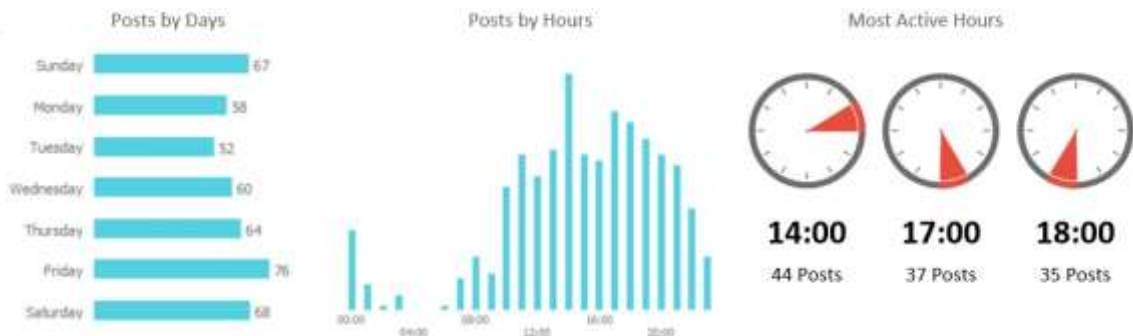


Figure 45: Akşener's Facebook Usage Days and Times

6.1.2.5. Temel Karamollağlı: In the research, Temel Karamollağlı's official Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/TKaramollaoglu/> is examined.



Figure 46: Temel Karamollaoğlu's Facebook Account

Temel Karamollaoğlu wrote 169 Facebook messages during the election period and gained 19,515 followers in this period. Videos, photographs and texts were used in 40.2%, 34.9% and 24.9% of the messages, respectively. The percentage of multimedia usage was 75.1.

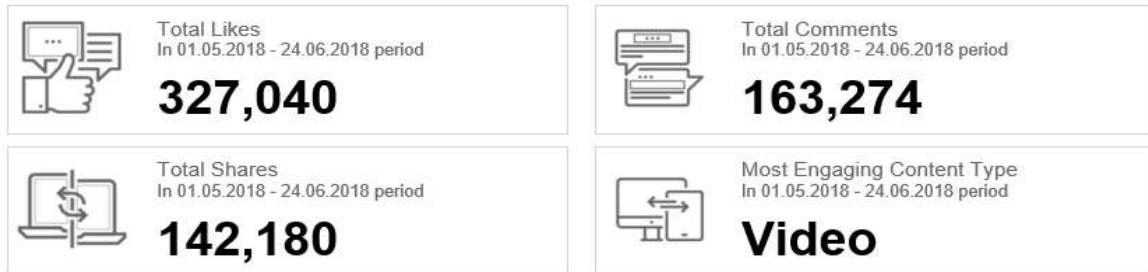


Figure 47: Interaction of Temel Karamollaoğlu's Facebook Messages

Karamollaoğlu's most interactive Facebook message among 169 messages is the one he wrote on May 9, 2018 at 10:59 and he used the word “change”, which is the slogan of election campaign. “CHANGE for good times” message received 23 thousand 46 interactions.

	Like	Comment	Share	Total Engagement
09.05.2018 10:59:38 Güzel günler için DEĞİŞTİR	19,436	1,231	2,379	23,046

Figure 48: Karamollaoğlu's Most Interactive Facebook Message

Karamollaoğlu wrote Facebook messages mostly on Sundays. While he wrote 34 messages on Sundays, he wrote 28 messages on Thursdays and 23 messages on Tuesdays. When Karamollaoğlu's posting hours are examined, it is seen that the politician started using Facebook at noon and wrote messages till the evening. Most messages were written between 13:00 – 14:00 and between 15:00 - 16:00 with 17 messages.



Figure 49: Karamollağlu's Facebook Usage Days and Times

6.1.2.6. **Doğu Perinçek:** In the research, Doğu Perinçek's official Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/TKaramollaoglu/> is examined.



Figure 50: Doğu Perinçek's Facebook Account

Doğu Perinçek wrote 245 messages in the presidential elections. During this period, his Facebook account has gained 345 followers. Perinçek, who mostly used photos in his messages, used photos at 41.2 percent, videos at 33.7 percent, links at 23.9 percent and texts at 1.2 percent. Perinçek is the candidate using most links in Facebook account among the other presidential candidates. During the election period, Perinçek used multimedia in his messages at 74.9 percent. This ratio is the lowest rate of multimedia use among all presidential candidates.



Figure 51: Interaction of Doğu Perinçek's Facebook Messages

Doğu Perinçek's most interactive Facebook message among his 245 messages is the one he wrote on June 3, 2018 at 23:13. In this message, he mentioned of a Habertürk TV's program "Teke Tek (*One-on-one*) where he is a guest. In the message, he said "I am in the live broadcast of program Teke Tek, presented by Fatih Altaylı on Habertürk TV", and received a total of 1.559 interactions in this message.

	Like	Comment	Share	Total Engagement
03.06.2018 23:13:53 Habertürk TV'de Fatih Altaylı'nın sunduğu Teke Tek programı canlı yayınındayım #DoğuPerinçekHaberTürkte http://www.facebook.com/DoğuPerinçek/posts/10156405423798399	253	697	609	1,559

Figure 52: Doğu Perinçek's Most Interactive Facebook Message

Doğu Perinçek wrote most of the messages on Facebook on Tuesdays with 53 messages. Tuesday was followed by Wednesday with 51 messages. When timing of Perinçek's Facebook messages is looked at, it is observed that he shared messages at regular intervals from 08:00 to 23:00. Most messages were shared between 15:00 - 16:00 afternoon. While 29 messages were shared in this time period, 25 messages were shared between 18:00 - 19:00.

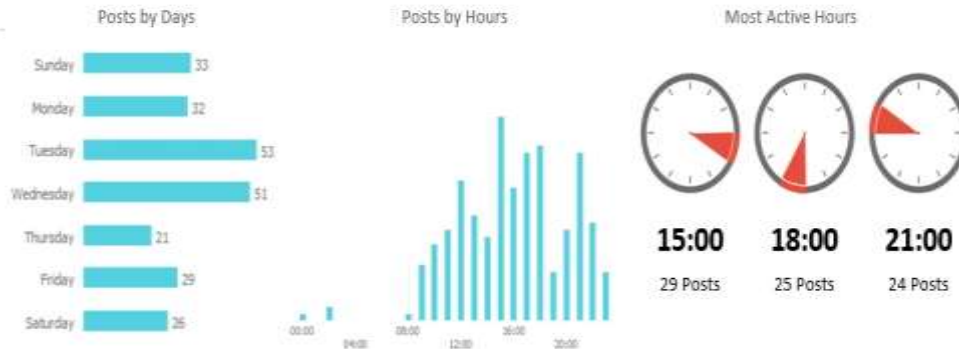


Figure 53: Doğu Perinçek's Facebook Usage Days and Times

Table 5:

Comparison of Votes Taken by Presidential Candidates in Elections and Their Facebook Performance

Candidate	Percentage of Votes Taken (%)	Number of Followers	Number of Messages	Follower Increase	Total Interaction	Most Used Message Type
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	52.59	9,078,789	168	27.672	1.468.251	Video
Muharrem İnce	30.64	1,883,174	440	558.697	1.857.970	Photo
Selahattin Demirtaş	8.40	2,078,240	228	2,064 (Decrease)	222.183	Photo
Meral Akşener	7.29	1,085,116	445	92.995	624.266	Photo
Temel Karamollaoğlu	0.89	54.949	169	19.515	59.207	Video
Doğu Perinçek	0.20	29.278	245	345	1.806	Photo

Table 6:

Comparison of Votes Taken by Presidential Candidates in Elections and Multimedia-content Messages in Their Facebook Messages

Candidate	Percentage of Votes Taken (%)	Multimedia Rate in Messages (%)
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	52.59	94.6
Muharrem İnce	30.64	92.0
Selahattin Demirtaş	8.40	93.9
Meral Akşener	7.29	94.6
Temel Karamollaoğlu	0.89	75.1
Doğu Perinçek	0.20	74.9

Conclusion

Along with the widespread use of the Internet in 2000s, political marketing activities have begun to be shifted towards the Internet. From the second half of 2000s, with the widespread of use of social media as a phenomenon that totally changes our purpose of using the Internet, political marketing activities have begun to change once again.

Political marketing activities, which is thought to have started with coming together of two presidential candidates in the United States in an open session on television traditionally in the 1960s, have now moved to the Internet and social media.

The Internet and social media enable political actors to approach voters as never before. In this way, political actors have started to make their advertisement within the scope of political marketing activities at a much lower cost, have started to directly finger on the pulse of voters and to learn voters' wishes and desires directly from voters. With this feature, social media has now become one of the indispensable elements of political marketing.

In this study, it is found out that as it has been reported in the previous academic studies, a substantial increase has been experienced in the use of the Internet and social media within the scope of political marketing activities every year. The discussion whether political leaders should use social media marketing in political marketing has become unnecessary. What is important has become the issue that which politicians use social media in which way. In this context, in this research, an analysis is conducted on the use of social media of six candidates competing in the presidential elections held in Turkey on June 24, 2018 Sunday for their political marketing activities. Twitter and Facebook accounts of six presidential candidates are examined in the research. In the examination, the number of followers, followers increase, types of messages and the use of multimedia in their messages are examined. Their Twitter and Facebook accounts and rates of votes that presidential candidates took in the June 24th elections are compared.

In the research, it is seen that the number followers of presidential candidates on Twitter accounts and the rate of votes they took on June 24 is directly proportional. Erdoğan, who has the most number of followers, came out first in the elections and the second candidate İnce with the most number of followers ranked second in the elections. Two candidates with at least followers were Karamollaoğlu and Perinçek. Karamollaoğlu was in fifth place with his followers on Twitter and Perinçek is in sixth place. In the election results, Karamollaoğlu ranked fifth and Perinçek ranked sixth. These data show that the performance data of the presidential candidates before the election and until the election period on Twitter and the election results are the same. During the election period, the most active candidate on Twitter was Muharrem İnce. İnce is the owner of the account that receives the most interaction in the posts he posted on Twitter and the most followers increase. İnce received more feedback during the election period and was more active on Twitter when compared to other candidates, making him the first of Twitter in social media.

Looking at the Facebook accounts of Presidential candidates, the number of followers the candidates have on their Facebook accounts is in line with the votes taken in the election. According to the number of followers on Facebook, Erdoğan ranked first, Demirtaş ranked second, İnce ranked third, Akşener ranked fourth, Karamollaoğlu ranked fifth, and Perinçek ranked sixth. When the election results are examined, the ranking is almost the same. According to the voting rate, Erdoğan ranked first, İnce ranked second, Demirtaş ranked third, Akşener ranked fourth, Karamollaoğlu ranked fifth, and Perinçek ranked sixth. Therefore, the rate of feedback received by the long-term and constantly active candidates on Facebook is parallel to the votes they take in the election. In the research, it is seen that during the election period, the only one who lost followers in his social media accounts is Demirtaş. Demirtaş's Facebook account lost almost 2 thousand followers at the end of the campaign.

During the promotion and propaganda period in the presidential elections, Meral Akşener and Muharrem İnce wrote most messages on Facebook. Most follower increase has been on Facebook accounts of Muharrem İnce and Meral Akşener. The least follower increase has been in the Facebook account of Selahattin Demirtaş. However, when looking at votes from the polls in the elections, it is seen that these two candidates could not attain the same success in the elections, despite being the first in social media. İnce ranked second in the elections and Akşener ranked fourth. These data also respond the question of the study, "Are winners of social media also win in the elections?" with two different perspectives. It suggests that the long-term and continuous use of social media and preparing a strategic marketing and promotional campaign have a positive effect on election results. Erdoğan has consistently used his social media accounts on a regular basis for many years and as a result, he has made a stable social media marketing. On the other hand, it shows that candidates who were active in social media and received higher feedbacks and interactions during the campaign period could not get a hundred percent effect since their performances are temporary. İnce, the first of the social media, could not succeed to rank first in the presidential elections.

The research also examines the relationship between presidential candidates' multimedia usage in social media and the number of votes they took. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the candidate who uses the most multimedia content in his social media messages. The candidate who shares at least multimedia messages is Doğu Perinçek. Erdoğan, who wrote messages with the most multimedia, ranked first in the election, while Perinçek who wrote messages with the least multimedia, ranked last. With these data, it is necessary to once again highlight the importance of multimedia, the most important communication function of social media. It can be said that it is an obsolete method to use social media only with text-based messages like traditional media and its effect will be lower.

Based on the research results, it is emphasized that the existence of a stable and continuous marketing plan in social media marketing, just like in traditional media marketing, will provide more productive results in the long run.

In addition, the main question of the research "Is the winner candidate in social media (most interactive) also win in the elections?", can be answered as that ranking first in social media is not a guarantee of ranking first in real life. The social media achievements obtained in the short term are not particularly effective in political communication in changing the established beliefs as a result of long periods. It should also be noted that social media is used by a particular target group, while everyone is voting in the elections. The highness of interaction rate received in the social media shows only the sample of a particular target group. It is possible to say that its effect to the entire universe cannot be complete in countries as Turkey, where the Internet usage is on the rise, but yet not reach the saturation point.

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