

QUESTIONING PERCEPTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS ABOUT VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN: THE CASE OF WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES OF
POLITICAL PARTIES IN GNAT IN 2021

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POLITICAL PARTIES IN GNAT IN 2021**

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ABSTRACT

QUESTIONING PERCEPTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: THE CASE OF WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN GNAT IN 2021

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Since violence against women (VAW) is reflected as one of the crucial social issues in Turkey, this study aims to investigate the perceptions of woman members of political parties which are represented in Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) towards VAW. By examining women's discourses, the study will demonstrate the similarities and differences between female politicians in Justice and Development Party (JDP), Nationalist Movement Party (NMP), IYI Party, Republican People's Party (RPP), and People's Democratic Party (PDP) regarding the VAW perceptions. This study will examine VAW concept under three subtypes as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide in relation to specific conceptualizations and actions taken by those political parties. The reason behind these three specifications is to present how different types of violence are perceived by women in different political parties. In addition, it will investigate the proposed recommendations of female politicians' considering those three types of violence as possible ways to emphasize, reduce, and stop violence against women. Hence, there will be a comparison between female politicians in those five political parties based on proposed policies and the recommendation regarding lacking or ameliorative implementations of current

policies on VAW. As a result, this study reveals that while JDP and NMP show similar trend in terms of defining, understanding, and recommending solutions to inhibit VAW, RPP, PDP, and IYI Party are close to each other based on female politicians' discourses.

Keywords: female politicians, violence against women, domestic violence, sexual harassment, femicide.

ÖZ

KADINA YÖNELİK ŞİDDET ALGI VE ÖNERİLERİNİN SORGULANMASI:
2021'DE TBMM'DE TEMSİL EDİLEN PARTİLERE ÜYE KADINLAR ÖRNEĞİ

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Türkiye’de kadına yönelik şiddet en önemli toplumsal sorunlardan biri olduğu için bu çalışma, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi’nde (TBMM) temsil edilen siyasi partilerdeki kadın üyelerin kadına yönelik şiddet algılarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, kadın siyasilerin söylemlerini inceleyerek, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP), Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP), İYİ Parti, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP) ve Halkların Demokratik Partisi (HDP)’de yer alan kadınların kadına yönelik şiddet algılarındaki benzerlik ve farklılıkları analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmada, genel olarak ele alınan kadına yönelik şiddet kavramının yanı sıra, siyasi partilerin belirli kavramsallaştırmaları ve eylemleriyle ilişkili olarak ev içi şiddet, cinsel taciz ve kadın cinayeti olmak üzere üç alt tip incelenecektir. Bu üçlü ayrımın nedeni, farklı şiddet türlerinin kadın siyasiler tarafından nasıl algılandığını ortaya koymaktır. Buna ek olarak, kadın politikacıların bu üç şiddet türünü dikkate alarak kadına yönelik şiddeti vurgulamanın, azaltmanın ve durdurmanın olası yolları olarak sundukları önerilerini araştırmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu beş siyasi partideki kadın politikacılar arasında önerilen politikalar ile kadına yönelik şiddetle ilgili mevcut uygulamaların eksik veya iyileştirilebilir taraflarına ilişkin görüşleri de ele alınarak karşılaştırma yapılmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, AKP ve MHP kadına yönelik şiddeti tanımlama, anlama

ve önlemeye yönelik önerileri konusunda benzer bir eğilim gösterirken, CHP, HDP ve İYİ Parti'nin bu konularda birbirine yakın olduğunu kadın siyasilerin söylemleri üzerinden ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kadın siyasiler, kadına yönelik şiddet, ev içi şiddet, cinsel taciz, kadın cinayeti.

To my family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The seeds of the idea to create a master's thesis on violence against women (VAW) in relation to female politicians were spread during my internship. In 2017, When I started my undergraduate summer internship in Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT), I realized that besides low number of women working as an expert, there was a highly masculinist language that blame and harass women by claiming that they do not fully complete their duties. Instead of understanding the mechanisms that put female experts in such positions, they only accept women as irresponsible to exist in politics. One of the conversations between male expert and me was very catchy to rethink the systems that run the politics and its reflections on the representation of women's concerns. He argued that female experts do not wear proper clothes when they have their turn to participate in congress at late hours of the day and those women say that "I forgot that today I will attend the congress". He claimed that it is nothing to do with forgetting, they find an escape route from their responsibility with such an excuse. I remember to have some discussion with him whether he recognizes the responsibilities that social structures put on those women's shoulders. I claimed that without revealing hidden patriarchal mechanisms that directs women to act like this way, males who do not feel that pressure could not blame women. However, the conversation went to dead-end where male expert does not find a claim of a third-year university female student relevant. There was also a chance for me to have a one-to-one contact with many experts in different offices since I was the only intern at that time. I realized that gendered thoughts were not particular to that male expert but also diffused to all segments of the GNAT. Although they had a respectable dialogue between male and female experts, conversations between male experts behind women were gendered. That masculinist atmosphere interpenetrated to the GNAT where women were seen as inadequate individuals to fulfill their mission in such a critical and important environment that must belong to males. This experience led me to feel

male-dominated structure of the politics deeply even I learned about it previously from lectures, parliamentary sessions, and discourses of politicians. That's why as a woman who acknowledged and experienced the existence of the gendered environment in politics, feminist standpoint theory is adopted where researcher's experiences are the starting point of the research. I decided to handle VAW from the eyes of female politicians, since I was disturbed by the existence of masculinity that ignores the existence of women and their voices. My own position in GNAT whose thoughts are not listened and valued like men's, I started to question the ongoing process that undermines the gender equality. Hence, standpoint theory contributed to my study by accentuating the experiences, perceptions and recommendations of female politicians who are in this gendered environment.

With that experience, I started to think about the emphasis on women's interests in politics in a more serious way. During that internship, I was charged to sort out parliamentary questions where I discovered the lack of attention to women's concerns. Specifically, there are some reasons why I started to pay attention to those three violence types which are domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide. As it is mentioned previously, women must be located within certain categories to be acknowledged as normal since they are not seen as the individuals who can participate in public life. In that understanding, to be a normal woman, females must follow the traditional family norms where they are the reproductive machines of the nation. This view hiddenly legitimizes domestic violence when she does not follow the orders that are prewritten by the masculinist ideology of the state, and it is reawakened by the politics. By realizing this relation, I wanted to include this violence type into my research where I could see the relation between political parties' female members in relation to domestic violence perceptions.

Secondly, since violence against women cases started to be seen in media more often with the influence of global #MeToo movement, I wanted to find out how violence against women concerns are handled in the parliament and in women's wings of political parties. Although #MeToo gained importance in the 2017 with the celebrities' testimonies on sexual assault that they faced in workplace, this movement started from

the beginnings of the 2000s. In the 2000s, the younger generation uses the social media to express their experiences of sexual harassment. MacKinnon and Mitra argue that “It is not an elite movement. It never has been. And keeping it continuing as a broad-based movement will make a big difference” (2019, p. 1042). Even its popularity came after the celebrities’ use of this hashtag, it is not particular to one group of women. It does not only embrace women in a high status in the society, rather it is accessible to women worldwide. In that sense, this movement has grown in a considerable amount by touching many women’s lives. It can be clearly seen that many women use the power of social media to challenge the sexual harassment towards them, it has a domino effect where it creates a great impact on the visibility of women’s sexual harassment problem. As a bigger movement, #MeToo compromises considerable amount of people who make their voices heard in terms of sexual violence. In addition, one of the consequences of the #MeToo is its power on society that the laws could not (MacKinnon & Mitra, 2019, p. 1031). In that sense, it is possible to claim that this movement gives women more confidence than the laws. Women in that movement feel the support of other women when they share their experiences. In that sense, they see the visible support behind them and could communicate with other women easily. Without being stuck to official procedures of complaint about sexual harassment that they faced. It becomes a more efficient way to make their voices heard and take an action to change the whole structure of the society. As a result, it gives a more trust to women than applying official institutions. My apprehension was to catch political actions to approach sexual harassment. Although there was a growing women’s movement to draw attention to violence against women, it was not possible to see its reflection on politics in general. Only some political parties and some women within that parties focus on that issue to investigate this concern, have an effective policy change, and make every institution accountable for the appropriate implementation of the rules.

Lastly, I already focused on femicides in my course assignment starting from Özgecan Aslan and Hande Şeker and their reflections in politics. In Turkey context, there are different perceptions regarding characteristics of women in femicides. For instance, Özgecan was mentioned as an innocent university student girl who was killed by

murderer. In that sense, being a university student and having innocence was categorized as the women who must not be blamed of femicide. On the other hand, Hande Şeker femicide who is a transwoman was considered as expected. In that sense, Hande Şeker femicide did not create the similar pattern where she was located in the criminal position of her femicide. Unfortunately, this division is seen in the masculinist political environment which defines the accepted woman identity to have decent characteristics in the society considering patriarchal terms which led me to include femicides into my research inquiry.

This study handles one of the most important social issue in Turkey. VAW is one of the prioritized calls for a research association TUBITAK. Hence, it is needed to be studied through female politicians' lens who can reveal the gendered aspects of politics based on VAW issue since feminist standpoint theory claims that women's life-experiences uncover the unequal treatments and implementations as they are the oppressed group where male-domination hold the power. When all these are considered, this study aims to find out the perceptions of female politicians in JDP, NMP, RPP, IYI Party and PDP on VAW with a focus on three subtypes as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide. In addition, it tries to discover the proposed policies to raise awareness on VAW, reduce and stop the occurrence of these cases.

1.1. The Research Questions

The research questions of this study are created as follows:

- What are the perceptions, discourses, and proposed policies of women members in political parties who are represented in the GNAT towards violence against women?
- What are the similarities and differences between female politicians in different political parties in terms of VAW perceptions?

- What are the similarities and differences between female politicians in different political parties considering recommendations to inhibit VAW?

1.2. Assumptions of the study

It is said that it is not possible for political parties to take a common stance regarding women's concerns since they have different interests. As political parties define themselves with different ideological positions, it is possible to say that female politicians follow the path of their political parties to make sense of the issues even these are directly related to their lives. Hence, the first assumption of this study is that political parties who identify themselves as more rightist remain more distant to gender equality compared to the ones that sees themselves as having the leftist roots. Secondly, politics is a gendered environment, so that female politicians must develop coping mechanisms to struggle with challenges. Thirdly, this study also assumes that leftist parties try to develop mechanisms to enhance women's political representation in qualitative sense to reveal their concerns openly.

1.3. Arguments of the study

This study argues although IYI Party has a rightist background, it demonstrates similar trend with political parties that define themselves as leftist due to the alliance it is in. This study also argues that on the contrary to other two political parties, RPP, IYI Party, and PDP demonstrate a similar trend to make sense of the existence of violence where they see patriarchy as a main ground to legitimize the occurrence of them. This thesis argues that there are more direct and conscious new recommendations and ameliorate the implementation of existing regulations given by these three political parties' female members since they have a consciousness about the reasons that lie behind VAW and its devastating results on women. Thirdly, since domestic violence has a clearer conceptualization in the society and the politics, all political parties name and explain it in a similar manner. Through the observations of the researcher, this study argues that both main cadre and women's branches of JDP and NMP do not have

an awareness about the consent and women's declaration for sexual harassment and the use of femicide rather than murder.

1.4. Significance of this study

This study focuses on one of the most important social issues in Turkey. The cases of VAW are rising continuously which needs an urgent attention to create solutions. Hence, it is essential for researchers to handle this issue where they can reveal the statistics, perceptions, and possible recommendations to inhibit VAW. In addition, many studies do not use the in-depth interviewing with female politicians. Those studies focus on discourse analysis through the content of politicians' public speeches, social media sharing, and written documents of political parties. In this thesis, I tried to understand the similar and different approaches of political parties and their women's units where I itemized the recommendations they provided. As there are not enough sources that directly highlights the female politicians' perceptions of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide, my study will be a brick to fill the gap in the literature.

In addition, based on qualitative analysis, face to face in-depth interviews with female politicians were conducted to understand their thoughts on VAW. In feminist standpoint theory, it is thought that we must give a priority to females' experiences since the reality is revealed through those experiences with a direct communication to them. Although there are not adequate qualitative studies with female politicians, I believe that it is beneficial and necessary to adapt in-depth interview method for every problem that women face. With this way, I will make comparison of female politicians' perceptions and recommendations regarding VAW. To understand how female experiences reveals the real social relations based on VAW, we need to see how this relation is concealed by the male experience. Hence, female experience coming out of the in-depth interviews will demonstrate the disclosing capability of their experiences compared to males.

This study is important for the ones who are working with the issue of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide specifically. Since it has a capacity to make a bridge between the standpoint theory and the perceptions of women politicians about VAW, it will be a source to understand the similarities and differences between women in political parties based on domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide discourses. In addition, this research is important for women since their experiences are seen as privilege to reflect the real social relations that are hidden by the male norms and perceptions. In that manner, women will understand how important their lives are for the creation of real social relations which will influence the policy making and the change in the implication of existing laws and policies.

As a result, this study will have an importance by demonstrating various policy recommendations coming from representatives of different political parties. If there will be differences of perceptions between women members in political parties which means that some do not acknowledge cases as VAW even they are defined under this category in literature. Hence, it creates an opportunity to gain awareness on the conceptualization of VAW. In that sense, this study will lead to the larger issue of gender equality in societal level. In addition, there could be similar recommendations to solve and diminish VAW coming from all those parties' female members in assembly which can lead to the elimination of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide that gives women in the country safe environment where they will not have the fear of being abused and live a free and equal life as men have.

As current literature is handled, it can be said that this study tries to contribute to the existing literature by bringing diverse perceptions of five political parties' female members through the unique voices of women in the political field.

1.5. Literature Review

To understand how gender influences the functioning of patriarchy in political arena, it is necessary to locate what gender means and how it affects social relations. Different from biological perception of sex, gender provides more open ground to make sense

of society and the interactions between different individuals. It is a socially constructed concept that involves not steady and single way of representing identities that are characterized by different levels of masculinities and femininities. Besides it finds a ground in political understanding, it leads to different functioning of establishments towards females and males that represent the gendered dynamics of social relations (Beckwith, 2005). These diverse gendered attitudes towards females and males within society is the product of roles that are attributed to women and men (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). The reason behind such attributes is the physical diversities that women and men have where men are associated with physical strength while women are seen as the creatures that have the duty of reproduction. Hence, men could find themselves a place in a public realm since women carry the household responsibilities in the private sphere. Men's position that is gained through participating in public life led them to declare their superiority over women as they have access to more resources and relations in the society (Wood & Eagley, 2012). Although women started to participate in labor force, these gender roles do not stop following women where occupations are defined considering gender identities where mind is owned by men and compassion is embodied by women. As such different imputations are determined for genders, it shapes the functioning of politics, and creates hierarchies between genders that lead to the occurrence of gender inequalities in every sphere of life (Wood & Eagley, 2002).

Considering gendered definitions of public space and occupations, politics has always been the arena that belongs to males who are the representers of power and strength. Although national and international level campaigns of women for voting rights and to be represented in politics became successful, the challenges and obstacles that lead women stay behind the male politicians to exist in political arena. To focus on women's denial from political realms, many studies started to demonstrate the levels of women's underrepresentation in a descriptive basis (Lovenduski & Hills, 1981). To locate the initial step of women concerns to be represented in politics, descriptive representation has the fundamental role for women to be visible in politics where they can express their interests as women. In that sense, descriptive representation refers to "numeric similarity between legislative bodies and the electorate they represent in

terms of gender, race, ethnicity, or other demographic characteristics; women achieving high percentages of representation in legislatures” (Paxton et al 2007: 265). It is essential to figure out the reasons behind women’s inadequate and unequal levels of participation to politics to understand the gendered dynamics that run the political and social spheres. It is said that women do not have necessary time to show up in political environment where they undertake the responsibilities in household such as caretaking, cooking, cleaning to inhibit women to allocate time to exist with any kind of political role (Corrin, 1992). It is argued that the adoption of gender quota laws is necessary step for a state to bring more women into politics (Dahlerup & Friedenvall, 2005). In addition, women’s descriptive political representation is also related to electoral systems within country in terms of the votes turn into seat in the parliament (Rule & Zimmerman, 1994).

In literature, there are several understandings whether women’s increased numerical representation will result in women’s concerns existing in public agenda. Due to the existence of women in politics, issues such as workplace discrimination, domestic violence, sexual violence, abortion, rights in marriage, inheritance the occurrence gendered institutions are mentioned in Mexico (Piscopo, 2014). The Brazil shows similar trend where women in political parties reveal women’s concerns as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and equal political representation (Htun & Power, 2006). It is argued that women in politics get together to create establishment where women’s interests will be revealed and discussed. In South Africa, female politicians and women’s organizations lead to the sexual violence issue bringing to the light. Although there are exceptional cases, it is more likely to realize the representation of women’s concerns by left-wing political parties compared to the conservative ones. This perception highlights the idea that women’s existence does not create women-friendly policies since these women could not raise issues that contradicts with party interests (Htun & Power, 2006; Bandelli & Porcelli, 2016).

The conceptualization of violence against women in literature must be clarified to prepare the ground of this study for locating female politicians’ ideas. Every kind of attack to women regardless of their age is where these violations of rights demonstrate

variety of types from sexual harassment to honor killings. Hence, the specific violence types to culture are also included within this concept which does not need a universalistic approach to the acknowledgement of every type in every part of the world. In terms of the closeness of person who use violence to the women, it can be said that there is not a direct reference to say that it is only these individuals who perpetuate. In most of the cases, as violence against women is practiced by men, besides gender inequalities, the continuation of gendered power relations is the ultimate motivation behind this action. Violence against women is seen as a tool to dominate women where men try make them obey their rules forcibly (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002, p. 1232). Hence, it is possible to claim that domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide as the concerns of this research are the result of patriarchal structures that try to passivize and control women.

1.6. Research Design

For the design of this study, feminist standpoint theory is adopted since it gives priority to qualitative inquiry to locate how female politicians of different political parties perceive VAW, what kind of differences they have by considering three different types of violence as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide, what the recommendations are to approach this issue in Turkey. Qualitative research methods are essential in feminist approach as it gives voice to women's experiences to bring gendered dimensions of relations between individuals and institutions to reveal gendered structures and create effective recommendations for women's concerns. The beneficial way of data collection was decided to be the in-depth interviewing in regard of the aim of the study. For this reason, data of this study is collected through conducting in-depth interviews. The instrument that is consist of open-ended questions are prepared that is fed by VAW literature and feminist standpoint theory. After the in-depth interview questions were became appropriate, they were sent to the Middle East Technical University Human Subject Ethics Committee. After their evaluation, the permission to collect data was given between the dates of February 1st, 2021, and June 25th, 2021. Female politicians of five different political parties that are represented in Grand National Assembly of Turkey was targeted as the respondents of

in-depth interviewing. At total 24 interviews were conducted with female politicians of different political parties. 5 interviews were conducted in each political parties that are JDP, IYI Party, RPP and PDP. Although considerable effort was given, 4 in-depth interviews were conducted in NMP side since a member postponed and then cancelled it during the late days of data collection process. For the analysis of collected data, key concepts were found and located under the list that was consist of themes as the possible headings and subheadings of the data analysis chapters. After this, quotations that include such concepts are highlighted and located under the theme list. As a result, the discussion of findings was carried considering this analysis based on themes.

1.7. Limitations of the study

Both the period of COVID-19 and the respondents being politicians created the limitations of the study to get an appointment from them who work on the issue of VAW. As a student with limited network in political arena, it becomes difficult to interact with politicians directly to explain the aim of the study and its relevance to their position and perceptions. Since it was difficult to find out participants who would like to be in this study, it becomes impossible to conduct in-depth interview with some of the preferred politicians whose area of interest coincide with VAW. Besides this, communicating through online platforms give difficulty to have smooth access which gives enough time to explain themselves in a deeper way. In addition, as they would like to conduct interviews at late times due to their daytime works and being busy, the tiredness reverberates to the interaction where some respondents keep asking the number of questions that was left. In addition, since this thesis consist of the 24 members in 5 different political parties, this thesis does not reflect the generalization to represent the idea of that political party. Lasty, since there are current debates existing in Turkey conjuncture that is not aimed at this study like Istanbul Convention, this study only mentions this discussion based on female politicians' discourses without a deeper understanding.

1.8. The Structure of the Thesis

This chapter represented the aim of this study as the investigation of VAW perceptions, and recommendations of female politicians. In addition, the research questions, study's assumptions and argument, significance, literature review considering the ground of this study, and methodological concerns are highlighted. Besides this, how this study is ordered and structured is given in this chapter.

The second chapter gives theoretical background of women's quantitative representation in political spheres where the implementation of gender quota laws and its enhancement with appropriate electoral systems are mentioned as mechanisms that increase women's representation. In addition, different political, social, and economic environments and political ideology are represented as other factors that have an influence on women's positions and levels of representation in politics. Besides these, the existence of internal and external women's organizations to political parties are handled in terms of understanding their role in both quantitative and substantive political representation in regard of women's concerns in policy agenda. Moreover, theoretical conceptualization of VAW, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide are given to understand female politicians' perspectives related to these concepts. Lastly, the history of VAW in Turkey is mentioned with reference to women's movements and changes in legal frameworks internationally and locally.

The third chapter gives details about the methodological concerns of this study that is adopted. In that chapter, the design of the study is explained in a detailed manner which includes ethical considerations, procedures regarding data collection and sampling, and the ways that the data analysis is conducted.

The fourth chapter starts with the perceptions of female politicians regarding women's political participation in Turkey which consists of their political stance, gender equality within their political party, women's political participation, women's coping mechanisms with gendered dynamics related to existing in politics, functions of women's wings, and other women's organizations within political parties.

The fifth chapter starts its demonstration with the VAW, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide perceptions of female politicians. Then, it explains the political actions and works that are carried by different political parties to inhibit and stop the occurrence of VAW. Lastly, the policy recommendations of female politicians to approach VAW clarified under four categories as education, women related suggestions, legal frameworks, and the debates regarding Istanbul Convention.

The last chapter of this study gives a reader an overall understanding of the aim, methods of conducting field research, and the discussions coming out of the findings. Hence, female politicians' perspectives on VAW, their policy recommendations are given in a summarized way at the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This study tries to find out the VAW perceptions of female politicians whose parties are represented in the GNAT. By extracting their understanding on domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide, it investigates proposed policy solutions of these women to highlight, decrease, and stop VAW. To reflect their thoughts in a decisive manner, women need to be visible in political realms. In that manner, this section provides theoretical discussions where some mechanisms and factors influence women's descriptive political representation. This discussion is followed by theoretical framework that analyzes the role of women's wings to bring more women in political sphere to create enhanced quantitative representation and their efficacy to make women's concerns visible. In this section, theoretical debates of the conceptualization of VAW as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide is another essential element to locate female politicians' thought in it. Lastly, I would like to mention the history of VAW discussions in global debates and achievements and its reflections on Turkey's legal framework starting from establishment of Turkish Republic and last debates within female deputies in Turkish parliament.

2.1. Women's Quantitative Representation in Politics

It is believed that focusing on women's concerns is directly associated with women's increased representation in politics. Hence, it is essential to highlight the elements that lead to the occurrence of enhanced numerical participation of women in politics. There are four main debates in the literature about the factors that influence the degree of women's descriptive representation in political institutions as gender quota law, electoral systems within political parties and parliamentary elections, political ideologies, and the role of external organizations. Initially, gender quota debate is the widely known issue in political spheres and academia to understand whether certain

quota law could enhance women's political participation. If the certain quota limits are adopted for any gender, it becomes more likely for women to be located both in political party structure and government offices (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005; Tripp & Kang, 2008). Besides this, it is essential for this thesis to focus on another argument that focuses on the ineffectiveness of quota law without establishment of supportive systems. Appropriate electoral systems could provide an impressive assistance to gender quota laws where political parties could not find an escape route to nominate women in electable positions for the realization of quota policy (Lovenduski & Hills, 1981; Norris, 1985; Reynolds, 1999; Paxton et al., 2006). Apart from these interconnected discussions, the ideology of political parties has a crucial stone to bring increased number of women who are in political parties and legislative bodies. Parties with left-wing orientation promote the necessity of women's equal representation in political arena so that they adopt policies to bring more women into their organization (Duverger, 1955; Rule, 1987). The last debate for women's political representation that is essential for this study is about the effect of external organization as they pressure political parties and governments to take a responsibility for equal political participation for women and men. It is not only the efforts of political parties or government authorities to draw attention to deprivation of lack of women's equal political participation rather external organizations have a considerable exertion to remark the necessity of women's increased descriptive representation for a progressive emphasize on women's interests (Lovenduski, 2005).

2.1.1. Efficiency of Gender Quota Law and Electoral Systems

Gender quota debate for women's political representation is the one that run the main concern of women who wants to participate in political arena in an equal sense. Is it really possible to see more women when certain quota limits are applied for any gender? Can we argue that women immediately reach to the level of whatever that quota is after the adoption of this law? Or is there a need to any other factors or systems to be established for provide a support to quota law? I would like to emphasize different countries attitudes towards gender quota law for women to have an enhanced political representation. In Sweden, the existence of the council to the Prime Minister

on Equality between Men and Women and the Advisory Council were key factors to bring more women into political sphere between 1985 and 1987 with a focus on gender quota first which was alleviated as demonstrating that they will include more women into electable seats (Sainsbury, 2004, p. 76). This thought is also acknowledged by Latin American countries where are considerable quota debates in various parts of it. The most powerful solution that enhance the rates of women in different branches of politics is seen as the adoption of quota system which is defined as “statutory mechanisms—typically laws or constitutional amendments—requiring that women make up a certain percentage of candidates postulated by political parties in popular elections” (Htun et al., 2015, p. 36). However, there are some problems in different countries that women candidates face even gender quota is adopted. In addition to electoral systems, effective quota law is about locating women in an electable position in lists. When the law does not mention that women must be placed in elections to the places they can be elected, parties could move the yardstick by putting women’s names as alternates (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). In addition, in South Africa, Namibia was the one that gender quota law passed by the parliament where all parties must follow this trend starting from 1992. However, there are many oppositions to gender quota system by claiming that it contradicts as the principle of the equality of opportunity is damaged through it. Besides a supportive electoral system, the shift in political party ideologies on behalf of women’s needs must be sustained where they should not see quota law as a damage to equal opportunity. Rather they must follow positive discrimination until the equality is gained in all senses (Basu, 2005, p. 25). From these debates and results, it is possible to assume that standing of quota law alone does not create direct shift towards women’s equal descriptive representation since there needs to be other pressures to political parties for the appropriate application of this law.

2.1.2. The Relationship between Political Ideology and Political, Social, and Economic Circumstances

Political ideology of parties and its relationship with political, social, and economic atmosphere within the country are seen as fundamental debates in literature for women to be in politics. In Sweden, women started to demand enhanced level of political

participation in 1968 where political parties and their women's wings emphasized this in their party programme and codes. The loudest and strong argument for equality in political representation came from the Left Party Communists (VPK) as it mentions women's inadequate participation like labor. There are two features that helped the reinforcement of women's coming together as a group and influence all political parties to have sayings in that manner as the demand for equal representation due to having citizenship rights and the violation of the idea of democracy (Sainsbury, 2004, p. 72). However, it is not the case in countries where political atmosphere does not allow left-wing parties to practice gender equality. To understand the influence of these factors, I would like to look at the circumstances and situations that women encountered in relation to their political representation of South Asia. In Sri Lanka, during elections, women almost share equal seats as men to be candidates in elections and two of them gained presidency. However, in terms of representation in political offices as legislation and execution, women did not realize the high level of representation to influence policy making for women's interests. One of the reasons behind women's underrepresentation is the war since it becomes possible for the state to raise the women's issue to have a gender equality in a country in the period of independence (Basu, 2005, p. 12). It is important to mention pink tide period on gender equality which is emphasized by left wing parties in Latin America to increase the number of women who participate in politics. It is mentioned that women's representation in politics had been enhanced from the below 10% to almost 27% between the years of 2000 and 2007 in Latin America and there are several countries where women were elected as presidents. With pink tide period, left governments risen in Latin America where scholars tried to find out whether there is a correlation between left ideologies and the enhancement of women's political representation. However, they could not realize any considerable difference between left and right parties to support gender quotas and women's increased participation to politics. Rather they found out that there are other factors behind the levels of women's representation in Latin America as environmental effects of economy and trust to governments (Funk et al., 2017, p. 400). This is also another supporting example where existing atmosphere of the country must be available to the application of gender equality systems.

2.1.3. The Role of External Women's Organizations

It is essential to rise a question of how to avoid the problems of women's existence in politics that is not equal to men. Is it only possible with the combination of political parties, gender quotas, election systems, and countries' atmosphere? How these elements come together for a change in the number of women in politics? External women's organizations and women's movements within country is a beneficial force to create the establishment of equal representation. With the help of UN's Decade for Women, Zia ul Huq in Pakistan supported NGOs to take an action which aims to reach out women and increase the number of seats that are allocated for them from 15 to 30 which means from 5 % to 10% in general elections (Basu, 2005, p. 25). The period was different in African countries. In terms of African women and their political participation, it is highlighted that corporate kinship model allowed them to enjoy public life and practice politics in pre-colonial period. However, colonialism brought ideology of attributed gender roles into African countries where separation of private and public realm of West was applied. Women in both urban and rural areas started revolt against novel and patriarchal organization of life which did not recognize their previous rights on public sphere as they were able to control production processes. To raise awareness on gender equality and bring their rights into the policy making structure, the Women's Lobby Group established for political representation and changes on women's social and economic situations. 1992 election in Kenya was attracted by that organization to gain nearly 35% of the seats in parliament for women candidates (Geisler, 2004, p. 30). Hence, it is possible to argue that pressures from women in different organizations resulted in the rise of women's representation in politics in those countries. However, the establishment of women's organization external to political parties did not bring any change in Mexico since they did not establish any powerful control and voice over politics. To focus on women's interests, there was an establishment of Unitary Front for Women's Rights which aimed to influence policymaking on behalf of women's needs, nevertheless, it was impossible for them to have an active role in governmental offices (Craske, 2005, p. 125). It can be stated that pressures coming from external women's organizations is not a solution

to women's lack of representation all the time. Hence, they need to be powerful enough to influence the main structure.

2.2. Women's Wings

There are two essential debates that shape one of the fundamental sections of this study that explains the functioning of women's wings to raise issues related to women. Since this thesis tries to analyze the female politicians' perception on particular women's concern, it is necessary to highlight the debate whether the existence of women's wings make any difference to have a policy change on such issues. Some believe that the introduction of women friendly policies depends on the enhancement of women's political representation with the help of women's units. Since there are not remarkable shifts in political parties' emphasis on diverse women's interest and public policies direction, it is accepted as relevant to claim that women's units do not hold strength and independence to voice women's problems louder. On the other hand, there are some cases where women's interests could be taken into consideration by political parties after the establishment of women's units. The main discussion focuses on whether women units of political parties really lead to the introduction of more women into the organization of political parties and government offices. Although women's unit's benefit for political representation is recognized in some cases (Htun, 2005; Kittleson, 2011), the idea of insufficiency of women's wings to bring women for the election cycles are harshly reflected where those institutions could not have a power over main body of the political party to make women more visible in politics and its higher positions (Roza, 2010). The solution for these contradictions and ineffective implementation of women's concerns in public agenda could be the women's political parties which are independent entities to set their own politics (Cowell-Meyers, 2016).

2.2.1. Women's Wings and Substantive Representation

The existence of women's units in political parties can be seen as the ultimate ground that gives place to women's concerns to raise awareness on this issue and make changes in legal frameworks. Thus, the debate of whether women's branches could

reveal women's interests in a decisive way and the real-life reflections of it must be highlighted. It is believed that when women's wings lead to increase in political representation, they will be able to revive women's interest that is supported with the examples from Chile and Morocco. In the case of Chile, women participated in politics in the early years of 20th century without having the right to vote where women's wings established under Socialist Party and Radical Party in 1930s and Conservative Party followed the same pattern within 10 years. Although women are represented in political environment with the creation of women's wings, it did not go further to draw necessary attention to women's concerns. The weakness of women's wings is seen as its inability to run for elections so that they could not take an active role in decision making processes to make changes in policy structure (Cowell-Meyers & Patrick, 2017). Even the existence of women's wings did not create an environment to have a women-friendly policy change as they were not powerful enough to affect elections for higher representation. After Morocco gained its independence in 1957, women's organizations remained in social forms in terms of helping others. Political parties decided to establish women's wings starting from Socialist Union of Popular Force (USFP). That effort did not make any changes neither on legal and equal rights for women nor on their political representation. The most powerful reaction to underrepresentation of women in politics was in 1996 where feminists tried to persuade political parties to have a national gender quota. It was not an easy process to bring the results of political women's struggle since the acquisition of gender quota demand was realized in 2002 with 20% voluntarily accepted quota. In 2007, Moroccan regime allowed women to sustain 30 seats in parliamentary of lower house where the total number of seats was 325. There had been a slight increase in the rate of quota that is applied to women parliamentarians (Cowell-Meyers & Patrick, 2017). It is argued that if there will be strong women's unit that can increase the women's political participation which will eventually raise the women's interests in front of the public eyes.

2.2.2. The Role of Women's Wings to Increase Women's Quantitative Representation

Another fundamental debate on women's representation is that women's wings' inability to enhance their capacity to participate in politics. Cowell-Meyers and Patrick conducted a study all over the world to demonstrate the conditions which influence political parties to have women's units. One of the ultimate and vital findings is that it is possible to see the existence of women's wings in countries where feminist movements are highly powerful to influence politics (2017). In terms of quantitative representation, it can be claimed that parties with women's wings could have higher political representation in national executive committee, parliamentary delegation, and candidate lists of elections. By looking at South Africa, this idea could be strengthened. It is an essential case which was ranked 9th in 2017 that have one of the highest representation of women in parliament which is 42%. In addition, there were 15 women ministers out of 36 in 2017. This considerable political representation depended on the feminist debates and struggles in African National Congress (ANC). Although women gained the rights to run in elections to be part of politics, it did not go in a way they desired since they face many organizational problems that limit their participation. The African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL) was established to emphasize and solve challenges that women face for political participation and the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) was constituted to affect any organization for the creation of equal rights for all women. Although there was the period of prohibition of the ANCWL's existence, both national and international influences lead ANC to remove this ban which was resulted in the achievements of women organizations within ANC. To increase gender equality in politics, ANC acknowledged the necessity of 50% national elections quota in 2009 which was ended up having 49.2% of elected women in National Assembly (Geisler, 2004). However, Cowell and Meyers bring the opposite situation where the existence of women's wings do not make any progress for women's political participation. Japan demonstrated lower trends in women's parliamentary representation which was fed by Imperial past and cultural and traditional norms. Under Imperialism, women could not participate in politics since their representation was strictly forbidden which was

continued until 1945 when the U.S. invasion. Women's access to political realm has not been rapid process since it is not an easy task to expel traditional gender roles that has been internalized by women and the society in general. Gender equality agenda's revealing by political parties can be associated with the government change where coalition of eight party won the election in 1993. This effort to focus on women's interests are not reflected in the political party structures since they did not adopt any particular seats within major parties with women's wings that are allocated to women. The Japan New Party (JNP) was the ultimate one that acknowledged 20% quota for important positions within party which was increased to 40% in 2000. Even this application of the JNP did not result in the considerable change about neither women's representation all over the nation nor clear emphasis on women's concerns. Women's wing of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) also did not have any power to highlight and set their own agenda considering gender equality, rather it served as a campaign tool to support, spread, and party's economic demands and interests (Cowell-Meyers & Patrick, 2017).

2.2.3. Independent Women's Parties

Occurrence of women's political parties is seen as the recipe to avoid all these barriers that limit women's political participation and hinder the effort of bringing their concerns forward. According to Cowell-Meyers, the establishment of women's political parties depends on the failure of political parties where their demands are seen as insignificant to highlight women's interest and take action to reduce the gender gap in politics and all other institutions and relations of the society (2016, p. 2). "Women's parties are autonomous organizations of or for women that run candidates for elected office. What makes them women's parties is the explicit agenda to advance the volume and range of women's voices in politics" (Cowell-Meyers, 2016, p. 3). With the ability to create their own agenda, they could decide what kind of concerns they prioritize independently without pushing their limits to have changes on political parties with little attention to women question. Northern Ireland Women's Coalition and Lithuanian Women's Party are the examples that express themselves as a threat to other political parties to demonstrate women's strength and the need to change the

laws on behalf of women to sustain gender equality in the state. Cowell-Meyers' study examines the years between 1987 and 2007 considering 30 women's parties in 20 states of the Europe. However, they did not have electoral power since the proportion of votes they got could not pass over 3% where their existence lasted between 8 to 12 years (Cowell-Meyers, 2016). From these statistics, it is possible to conclude that women's political parties face with the same challenges that women's wings have even they are independent entities.

2.3. Women's Interests in Political Parties

2.3.1. Political Parties' Perceptions of Women's Concerns

One of the essential debates considering women's quantitative representation is whether it will end up changing political decision making to enforce gender equality. The enhancement of women's numerical representation in politics resulted in the possibility of women's interests coming into public policy agenda which can be the indicator of the development of women's substantive representation. However, it is not the case all the time as Morgan and Hinojosa (2018) mention, women's representation in numbers do not bring environment for women to make their voices heard. The reasons behind this are women's attempt to locate their concerns within party's interest and incompatibility of concerns with women in different political parties and ideologies. Another view claims that women's descriptive representation cannot be narrowed down by numbers rather it could lead to the action-oriented awareness gaining process and policy change both in political parties' agendas and state policies in general.

Specifically, in Mexico, with the increased level of women parliamentarians, it becomes possible for them to raise the women's concerns and rights in state politics. With their existence in politics, female legislators unveil women's unequal situations in every institution of the society by mentioning the necessity of policies on inequality and oppression in workplace, domestic violence, and effacement of gendered bias in all spheres (Piscopo, 2014, p. 92). According to Piscopo, substantive representation of

women in Mexican politics related to bills they offer are divided under three sub issues as including women's rights development consistent with feminist agenda, children's status in all aspects, and non-feminist demands considering "heart and home" (2014:96). In Latin America, with female legislators' efforts, feminist agendas are put into the politics such as women's reproductive rights, protection from sexual violence, rights to participate in labour force, and politics (Piscopo, 2014, p. 92). When the bills are examined between the years of 1997 and 2009, 75% of women's interest ones include feminist demands as "...contraception and abortion; efforts to combat sexual violence and sex trafficking; expansions of social assistance to impoverished or widowed women; and generalized women's rights measures" (Piscopo, 2014, p. 100). Nearly 4% of the proposals include and support non-feminist agenda that wants to maintain women's traditional gender roles to create traditional families where women belong to the private space without access to public life and rights (Piscopo, 2014). The case of Mexico and Argentina demonstrate an opposing trend which can be supported with the arguments in previous sections as they claim ineffectiveness of women in politics to bring their concerns into table. When Brazil is considered, it can be comprehended that existence of various political parties' women legislators with the support of women's movements interacted with each other and created caucuses to raise awareness on domestic violence, rape, and effectively applied gender quotas for elections. However, those foundations could not mention women's rights under the category of abortion and discrimination in workplace not to be excluded by main body of their political parties (Htun & Power, 2006). To have a specific understanding about the major concerns of women in politics, the contraception and abortion framework in Mexico and Argentina must be handled. Even within different regions of Latin America, it is possible to realize variations in terms of women's reproductive rights. Although these two countries demonstrate a common pattern in terms of the acknowledgement of abortion, there is a clear divergence about the discussion of contraception issue. Some Latin America countries including these do not give permission to abortion which is criminal act guaranteed by the laws. In Argentina, there could be the practice of abortion if it is dangerous for a woman and a baby to continue pregnancy and if pregnancy is occurred because of rape (Lopreite, 2014, p. 393). Different than Argentina, the power to decide on abortion rights and laws

depends on the sub-national parts which lead to the differences within Mexico. This tendency has changed with the women's descriptive representation in politics after 2000s of effectively applied gender quota. However, not all women with different political ideologies supported women's reproductive rights with similar path. Women members of the leftist PRD promote the ideas that women's abortion rights must acquire currency and altered on behalf of women. On the other hand, women in conservative PAN directly oppose this change on abortion rights at the hands of women (Lopreite, 2014, p. 397). Without a consolidated perception on these feminist agendas among women in different political parties, it is not possible to make these issue visible enough to take an action for.

2.3.2. Gender Differences on Highlighting Women's Concerns

Besides the representation of these women's interests in political spheres, there are different emphasizes on the issue of violence against women considering the gender of the politicians. When Piscopo's division of substantive representation of female politicians is considered, bills related to feminist demands must be handle in regard of ending violence against women cases. It is possible to refer that almost three fourths of the bills concerning women's needs and interests are related to progressive understanding that tries to enhance women's position in the society as equal individuals. Within 270 feminist proposals out of 360 women's interest ones, there was a direct focus on struggle against sexual violence and sex trafficking (2014, p. 100). It is underlined that the positive influence of women's quantitative representation on their substantive representation is related to the divergence between female and male politicians on the introduction of proposals related to women's problems. In Mexico, although male politicians draw more attention to children's problems and interests than women's issue, female legislators even the one in conservative party emphasizes works to stop sexual violence and femicide (Piscopo, 2014, p. 101). When Latin America, specifically Brazil is handled, female legislators in political parties lead to the establishment of caucuses where they could distinctively lay stress on domestic violence and rape. It is believed that with this way, they could have a more powerful position within party organization to create policies on behalf of women's interests.

Combining with international conventions, women's caucuses brought domestic violence laws where the ones who faced with such violence will be in the protection and support of government to continue their lives. In addition, with the power of female legislators, some of the Latin American countries have an essential change in legal framework on the issue of rape under VAW. The rape was shifted from private realm matter to public issue where marital rape started to be considered under criminal codes and marriage with the rapist effaced (Htun & Power, 2006, p. 86). Chile is another example that demonstrate the necessity of higher number of women in politics and being in top ranked positions to draw attention to different types of gender-based violence and inhibit its occurrence in the society. First female president Michelle Bachelet aimed at legal changes where the ones who encounter any type of domestic violence will be helped by the state. In addition to policy changes on domestic violence, the acknowledgement of femicide was made during her presidency where it is understood that males commit a crime and murder against women because of their gender identity (Cowell-Meyers & Patrick, 2017, p. 17). For the case of South Africa, the similar situation with the Latin America occurs. The existence of women in politics and women's organization both external and internal to political parties have the ultimate impact on revealing gender-based violence (Cowell-Meyers & Patrick, 2017, p. 27).

2.3.3. Perception of Women's Concerns through Ideological Differences

Although it is seen that women's descriptive representation induces the introduction of violence against women issues to have a change in legal frameworks as substantive representation, there are still hindrances for female politicians to bring these issues into public policy agenda as the ideology of the political parties. In Mexico case, it becomes difficult for female legislators to highlight women's interests that contradict with the party ones. Even there are women's caucuses created as a part of political parties in Latin America, they could not support the issues like inhibiting domestic violence when the party agenda acknowledges it as a threat to party politics (Htun & Power, 2006). Besides being female and following political party agenda, ideological differences can be explained as a key feature to have progressive gender policy

proposals. Even there are some conservative parties that hold gender equality perspective, it is more likely for leftist parties to mention women's interests in a more radical sense. According to Bandelli and Porcelli, the cause behind the increase in femicide cases and the difficulty of abolishment is the conservative feature of the government in Italy. If the Centre- Left takes the dominant power at its hand, it will result in the increased number of women in the parliament which will eventually guarantees the possibility of VAW cases handled in politics (2016, p. 18).

2.4. Conceptualization of Violence Against Women

It is essential to lay stress on the theoretical debates on the conceptualization of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide which are handled as the subcategories of VAW in this study. Without focusing on how scholars identify and locate these violence types, it could not be appropriate in a theoretical manner to analyze the perception of female politicians clearly.

To make sense of women politicians' perceptions on gendered violence, the representation of the domestic violence within the field of sociology must be handled. There is vague understanding to locate action as domestic violence in terms of the intimacy degree of preparator. In addition, domestic violence can be defined as non in some circumstance when it is called as a "relational problem" (Poelmans et al., 2011, p. 3124). To avoid all complexities and ambiguities, Dempsey gives three fundamental factors that lead to the occurrence of domestic violence which are violence, domesticity, and structural inequality. There are several accounts that give different meanings on violence in terms of degree of illegitimacy and type of violence. Domesticity is about the location and the relationship of parties which must include intimacy, family ties, and sharing of the same household (2005). According to the definition of Walby that is adopted by Home Office, domestic violence is seen between current or ex partners where intimate interaction is seen without looking at the time and location of the violent. This violence can have various shapes as physical, sexual, psychological, economic, and so on (2004). Besides all various conceptualization, through feminist lens, it can be defined as "Physical violence is often accompanied by

mental or emotional abuse, which includes insults and verbal threats of physical violence towards the victim, the self or others, including children” (Poelmans et al., 2011, p. 3117). It can be comprehended that, in the situations where physical violence is seen, the researchers or the authorized people must look at the traces of any other possible violence type that damage women and the ones around them.

I would like to mention why I prefer the concept of sexual harassment rather than sexual assault or rape considering their conceptual understanding in literature. The considerable focus is given to the conceptualization of sexual harassment since it is accepted as a vaguer understanding which could not locate in certain categories. It can be argued that one of the tools that males’ use of power towards women is the sexual harassment in a patriarchy. Considering this, we need to look at the origins of the sexual harassment that lead to the emergence of this new concept. Still, there are several concepts that are used as a reference to sexual harassment in the literature. Those concepts that could be included under the title of sexual harassment are sexual violence, sexual assault, and rape. Besides the society’s perception, they are also used interchangeably in the literature. There are several reasons that it is not relevant for the academics and researchers to adopt sexual violence, sexual assault, and rape in their studies. In that manner, I will explain why those concepts cannot be substituted with sexual harassment. When the sexual assault is handled, Ullman supports the idea that there needs to be the existence of non-consent and physical violence to call an activity as sexual assault. To look for the existence of two criteria demonstrates the straightforward identification of an action as a sexual assault. It is the “nonconsensual sexual penetration of an adolescent or adult obtained by physical force; threat of bodily harm; or at such a time when the victim is incapable of giving consent by virtue of mental illness, mental retardation, or intoxication” (2010, p. 7). This definition is a clear indicator why it is not possible to adopt this term as a reference to sexual harassment since there is only two condition to look for the occurrence of sexual assault. Hence, the problem is related to these two requirements. We should consider the cases that what happens when the one of them is missing or manipulated. If a consent is got using threat, can we argue that this activity is not named as a sexual assault since one of the components of it non-exist. Mac Gregor mentions that it is a

problematic definition to have the two requirements since lack of one can result in the misread of activity as a willing one (2005, p. 61). In that manner, it can be comprehended that survivors of the sexual harassment find it difficult to speak up their experiences as it becomes unclear to name it. If women could not locate the behavior coming to them as a dangerous or the innocent one, they could not find a way to take an action against it. Hence, we should not use the concept of sexual assault in literature to give more options for individuals who face with any kind of sexual and oppressive action, behavior, or discourse to locate them.

On the other hand, when the concept of rape is investigated, there are different perceptions of the society from one situation to another. These variations of perceptions are clearly illustrated in the book *Attitudes toward Rape* by Ward. In that text, there are two fiction scenarios of women who were raped. In the first case, after a party, she was drunk and arrived her home with her boyfriend where she was raped by acquaintance. On contrary, the second woman was raped by a stranger after she worshipped in the church. Ward highlights that it is more likely for a society to call the second case as a rape. In the first instance, since woman was drunk and at home with her boyfriend, it was not acknowledged as an unwilling activity (1995, p. 67). The society argues that the first woman somehow gives a consent to him by inviting him to her house. In that sense, she does not have a right to complain about the forced sexual activity towards her. On contrary to the first woman, the second woman is seen as a moral person by the society. She left the church, and she did not act a fomenter. It was not her fault to be sexually harassed. Another indicator of her innocence is the being raped by the person who is a stranger to her. Considering these two examples of Ward, it is clearly reflected that society's perception that changes according to different situations, has a direct influence of the naming the activities. The acceptance of the concept of rape creates misunderstanding on society's mind. In that sense, there needs to be a broader concept to cover all oppressive sexual behavior, discourse and so on for the sake of women who were faced with such problems. Hence, these two concepts as sexual assault and rape demonstrate their limitations for not locating and not understanding of an action in terms of any kind of sexual abuse category.

When these two concepts are thought of, it is possible to claim that they do not include any sexist comments, body languages and so on. Hence, this ignorance makes sexual assault and rape useless for the feminist theories for the women question. In that sense, feminists must give up using those concepts and adopt sexual harassment to have an inclusive conceptualization. According to Thomas & Kitzinger, sexual harassment is “women’s renaming of the world, reflecting and constructing women’s experience and labelling a form of behavior newly recognized as something which women need not passively endure, but can actively protest and resist” (1997, p. 5). From this statement, it can be comprehended that the inclusive meaning of sexual harassment gives women power to stand against the unwilling sexual activity towards them. Thus, the weakness of the categories of sexual assault and rape is not seen in the concept of sexual harassment. This concept has a great importance on the women’s awareness to be able to locate the actions or discourses towards them. It gives women a capability to understand the action and discourse towards them and react against it. To clarify this concept, we must look at the emergence of the concept of sexual harassment in the literature. I could say that this attempt was a beneficial novelty that has a capacity not to miss any sexual comments, body languages, sexual attack that are unwanted.

It is very difficult to address what the sexual harassment is since it includes many attitudes and behaviors that could be counted. To have a clearer understanding on the sexual harassment, I will focus on the radical feminist approach on violence. Initially, what must be realized from sexual harassment have to be clarified. Since the main feature of the radical feminism is its focus on the power relations among gender, the issue of sexual harassment is explained through the domination and subordination relation. According to Wise and Stanley, sexual harassment is the “‘works’ by treating women as powerless objects to men’s powerless subjects” (Wilson & Thompson, 2001, p. 71). Power is used as a tool to degrade women in male-dominated structure. Thus, it can be said that it is the patriarchy’s attempt to use sexual harassment as a mechanism to control and dominate women through power politics. It is possible to realize in many sexual harassment cases that the abusers want to show their power over the survivor. Through this way, they prove the powerless feature of the women compared to men. In that sense, it is relevant to use the radical feminist perspective

while investigating sexual harassment. To understand the radical feminist view on sexual harassment, we must find out the origin of this term. There was a group in North America that was Working Women that considers the problems that women faced in work environment. This term was brought into literature by this group in 1970s. Their purpose was related to “include the full continuum of male abuses of power against women” (Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997, p. 2). This attempt reached its aim by giving the widest definition of any sexual attack towards women which leads to the development of an understanding on women to locate any kind of sexual harassment coming to them.

Out of the three concepts, the most close-ended one is femicide. However, there is a problem of the use of homicide instead of the women who were killed. To mention importance of the acknowledgement of murdered women that diverge from the homicide, Diana Russell bringing the word femicide into the academic field in 1976. The new concept creates an essential step to separate violent crimes that result in women’s death from the neutral way of describing killing of any individual as homicide (Corradi et al., 2016, p. 976). Radford clarifies femicide as the death of women caused by men which is occurred due to hatred, joy of controlling women, and contempt. As a result, it should not be examined separated from the male-dominated structure of the society where women are put into inferior position (1992).

2.5. The Case of Turkey

2.5.1. Women’s Political Representation in Turkey

To locate Turkey within these debates, this section mentions its historical developments for women’s enhanced quantitative representation. In Turkey, women’s political representation goes to 1923 when the Turkish Republic was established as a path to modernized nation. With the efforts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, women’s rights have been recognized to enhance their social and economic position within society. For women, being visible in political sphere was happened with the establishment of Women’s People Party where Nezihe Muhittin was in the leadership position. Its aim

was to help the society to gain awareness on women's rights and lead to the legal changes that give women economic, social, and political rights. This attempt could not achieve its purpose on political realm since it was not possible for women candidates to run in elections as it was prohibited by electoral law of 1909. For this hindrance, organization was removed from being a political party to Turkish Women's Union. After the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code, Turkish Women's Union demanded their political rights in terms of voting and running in elections in 1927. This endeavor found a ground in 1930 Municipality Law which permits women to vote and become a candidate only in municipality elections. In terms of parliamentary achievements, women gained the right to vote and in elections for assembly in 1934. In 1935 elections, 17 elected women became MPs in Turkish Grand National Assembly out of 399 deputies (Ansari & Ahmed, 2018, p. 7). Although the rate of women in parliamentary representation was very low, it was a huge step for women to bring their interest to the light and make considerable changes. Currently, in 2021, total number of deputies in Turkish Grand National Assembly of Turkey is 583. Only 101 of them are female MPs which refers to 17,32%. These statistics demonstrate that during 66 years of time starting from the first time that women got into the parliament, equal representation for women and men could not achieved. The result shows that Turkish political system is far beyond bringing gender equality in political realm especially in legislative senses since gender quota is not applied in all political parties. Even some adopted gender quota laws, they do not set a limit to 50% for total equality rather they put 25% or 33% gender quota for all.

Table 1 Allocation of seats in Grand National Assembly of Turkey according to political parties

Political Party Names	Women		Men		Total
	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	
Justice and Development Party	54	% 18,75	234	% 81,25	288
Republican People's Party	17	% 12,5	119	% 87,5	136
People's Democratic Party	23	% 41,82	32	% 58,18	55
Nationalist Movement Party	4	% 8,33	44	% 91,67	48
IYI Party	2	% 5,56	34	% 94,44	36
Workers' Party of Turkey	0	0	3	1	3
Democrat Party	0	0	2	1	2
Great Unity Party	0	0	1	1	1
Democracy and Progress Party	0	0	1	1	1
Democratic Regions Party	1	1	0	0	1
Felicity Party	0	0	1	1	1
Innovation Party	0	0	1	1	1
Independents	0	0	10	1	10
Grand Total	101	% 17,32	482	% 82,68	583

To understand women's political representation in Turkey, the era of JDP government must be mentioned starting from 2002 until today. When the JDP was first established, it is claimed that the party will not follow previous ones who directly explains their religion origins which is Islam. Rather than known as an Islamist party, JDP demonstrated itself as the conservative one with cultural and religious features to follow moral rules (Ayata-Güneş & Tütüncü, 2008, p. 367). By introducing themselves as conservative not Islamists, they put more effort to increase women's visibility and role in the establishment and the sustainability of this party in every opportunity. After a year of establishment, to spread out JDP's political agenda, women's auxiliaries were created where women in that organization go every house to explain themselves and the works they will carry (Ayata-Güneş & Tütüncü, 2008, p. 369).

In Turkey, there are some fundamental factors that function as a barrier to women's numerical representation. Religious fundamentalism and patriarchy are the core socio-cultural elements that locate women in a secondary position in private realm so that their entrance to politics is seen as inappropriate. In addition, money and strong social and political ties are other crucial factors for an individual to be able to participate in

politics. To stand in election and have an effective electoral campaign, individuals mostly need both money and relations with powerful actors in Turkey or they must possess one of these necessities at least. Since women's economic capital is lower than men and small portion of women have strong networks, there is a major obstacle for them to participate in politics. It can be acknowledged that there are not enough women in executive sections of political parties to have an influence on decision mechanisms. As women are not accepted as independent policy makers whose ideas are unique and important, they are hesitated to be in such a strongly male-dominated environment (Ansari & Ahmed, 2018, p. 711).

2.5.2. Women's Wings in Turkey

To understand women's wings in Turkey, I would like to mention the ideas on its existence in political party. It can be reflected that the establishment of women branches in 1960s in Turkey lead to the women's interest to politics as political participation (Ayata-Güneş, 1998). However, this creates a hindrance to women's active position since they are seen as the secondary players that help the organization of male-made structures without being knowing subjects. In that sense, women branches do not have a leading role to help women to advance their stages to affect party's decision-making processes. Hence, it can be said that there are not women's branches functioning effectively. Women in these establishments adapt the discourses of the head to their attitudes and thoughts about women's interests. Hence, it is possible to say that authoritative political party structures that realizes women's units as an inferior cadre damages women's struggle to decide on the issues related to themselves. Feminist scholars give the reason behind this by mentioning public-private division within society that directly locates women into household without any right to have a voice in public spheres (Pınarcıoğlu, 2017). In that sense, women's existence in politics as one of the important public institutions is not accepted as the 'normal' way of expression themselves as they do not belong to this structure. As opposed to view that sees ineffective aspects of women branches, Tulum argues that although political party structure in Turkey excludes women in terms of organization structure, party code and discourse, women branches create a way out for women to make themselves

visible and heard in a strictly male dominated system to affect policies for a more equal life standard for themselves (2014, p. 53). Considering this debate of the functioning of women branches, three political party represented in Turkey which are NMP, IYI Party and PDP do not have a traditional women's wings structuring. On the contrary, JDP and RPP are organized under the women's wings to focus on women's concerns.

2.5.3. The History of Women's Concerns

In Turkey, there are three main movements that consider women's concerns in different ways as secularist, Islamist, and Kurdish women's movement. In Turkey, it is possible to realize that women in feminist and Islamist movements and political parties did not interact with each other although they both focus the same inequality problems that women face (Aldıkaçtı Marshall, 2005, p. 105). The ultimate concerns of the Islamist movement in late 1980s was the head covering of women. After the increase of the women with headscarves in universities, head covering was forbidden in that public space with other state institutions. This debate is explained by some secularist that head covering is the symbol of sharia law that will be replaced with the existing system. In addition, feminists tend to claim that the head covering which means to cover all their body is the indication of women as sexual objects where they could not have any right to decide on their body. On the contrary, Islamist women argue that it gave them freedom to participate in public life. They do not rely on that it is a hindrance to their visibility in public, rather it is an empowerment allowing them to go out of the household. In terms of discussion on rights in labour market, some secular feminist has the perception on work as they claim that women can empower themselves with the earnings of their own effort. In contrast to secularists, there are huge variations among Islamist women about the understanding of women's participation to public life through work. Reformist Islamist women demonstrate a similar trend with secular feminist since they believe that when women demand to participate in labour market, they must enjoy that right. They also think that women's right to work outside should not damage the household where they continue their duties and responsibilities such as cleaning, cooking, and taking care of the children and elderly where traditional gender roles are sustained. On the other hand, orthodox

Islamist women claim that women can participate in labour market in the case of necessity since the duties of work will lead to the destruction of traditional gender roles where women could not fulfill their duties for family's durability (Aldıkaçtı Marshall, 2005). In 1990s, both Islamist and Kurdish feminists raise a question whether the secular feminist do not include them with holding identity politics. Besides Islamist feminists struggle, Kurdish feminists gathered under the umbrella of their ethnic identity as women. They established the KAMER to provide assistance to women who face with violence due to the problems related to being Kurdish where their attempt spread out to violence coming from family, work, culture and so on. Their challenge to ethno-centrism and patriarchy found a place in politics where they aim to bring equal representation through quota laws where they could bring their interest more (Diner & Toktaş, 2010).

2.5.4. Violence against Women in Turkey: Reflection of Global Debates and Achievements

It can be argued that VAW has started to be discussed in 1980s where women in Turkey participated in both social life and politics through entering public life. This reaction, resist, struggle against VAW is fed and grew by the feminist movement. To understand the reflections of global feminist movement in Turkey, the very beginning of the discussions of women's issues must be handled. Poet and writer Christine De Pizan who lived between 1363-1430 in Venice is the one who first mentioned the hostility towards women where she highlights the horrible treatments and difficult living conditions by continuing her struggle against VAW (Ündücü, 2016, p. 7). The efforts of women in literature and philosophy lead to the arise of conferences and decisions that take women's issues regarding violence into consideration. Although it was difficult to bring women issues which are seen as private and intimate into international agenda, it has begun to be the transnational movement to make women's problems heard with the development of every women conference held by United Nations (UN). Initially, UN organized "First World Conference on Women" in 1975, New Mexico. This conference points out the issues regarding violence with the support of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). That year is accepted as the International

Women's Year and the years of 1975-1985 is recognized as the United Nations Decade for Women where many changes on women's human rights are held by those conferences. Although the Declaration of Mexico tried to put women into the agenda, it was not possible for women groups to locate their problems within first place (Zinsser, 2002, p. 147). To eliminate weaknesses of The Mexico City Conference, 1980 The Mid-Decade Conference for Women in Copenhagen was an essential step to bring women's issue and specifically VAW into international agenda at first place. Like Mexico, the major concern of the Copenhagen Programme of Action had given the priority to economic development. The ultimate difference of this programme was the centralization and main streaming of women rather than putting their concerns into sub goals. One of the crucial novelties of this conference is that "All women, like men, are presumed to combine work outside the home with parental obligations" (Zinsser, 2002, p. 154). It can be comprehended that women and men are located equally in both private and public spaces where they are supposed to share the responsibilities both within and outside of the household. In addition to demolish the differences and inequalities between women and men, there are also attempts to get rid of various subordinations among women such as between rural and urban and women in underprivileged position considering education, economic status and so on. The third of these conferences was the 1985 End-Of-Decade Conference in Nairobi. The reason behind all these "obstacles" to equality is named as the gender-based discrimination where stereotypical and cultural gender roles give women an inferior position in all societies. By considering all these changes in goals of three conferences, Nairobi has a drastic shift where women are at the center of the attention. Hence, male dominated ideology and aims are altered with the gender-based concerns that bring women's subordinated position into the light. "Equal participation begins within the household (including decisions on the size of the family and the spacing of births) and reaches to "all aspects of international organizations and activities" (Zinsser, 2002, p. 160). It also focuses on the power structures that are run by the male ideologies.

The major reference point of The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 was the recognition of women's rights as the "women's human rights" where any violation should be recognized and evaluated under this category. This

contribution gets its reference from the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, 1993 where women's rights are accepted as human rights within UN agenda. These rights are debated by referring right to education, equal citizenship in all aspects, right to access health services, freedom, and violence free environment (Bunch & Fried, 1996, p. 200). When the other three conferences are handled, it is obvious to realize that although women's rights were at the stake, they were not recognized under the human rights category which attenuated and undermined women's struggles. On the contrary to them, The Platform for Action in Beijing focus on twelve areas that are interrelated as women's human rights. These trends in the implementation of the Platform for Action are as follows women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, women and the environment, and the girl child (UN Women, 2015, p. 5). In the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993 is the first convention that defines the VAW in an internationally accepted form. Since this study focuses on the VAW, this section of the summary report of The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Turns 20 must specifically be highlighted. The report demonstrates that globally all regions have high rates of violence that is encountered by women as discriminatory norms and traditional gender roles are seen as the ultimate reason that inhibit organization to end VAW. For future implementations, it is suggested that there needs to be an urgent powerful and inclusive legal infrastructures that involves all types of violence performed due to somebody's gender identity. In addition, those policy frameworks must not be limited to policies regarding violence, it must be addressed in every related policy such as education, freedom, and health (UN Women, 2015, p. 22). It can be concluded that legal frameworks both nationally and internationally must emphasize the power structures in all social and political structures so that relevant and direct attempt can be realized. In 2000, Beijing +5 Special Session of the General Assembly of the UN enlarged the conceptualization of VAW by adding other types as crimes of honor, dowry-related violence, violence against widows and indigenous women, racially motivated violence, marital rape and forced and early marriages. Furthermore, it is clarified that state's inefficacy to assist women who encounter with

violence is acknowledged as the violation of human rights. With this effort, women's human rights have gained broader understanding including wide range of types of violence against women performed due to their gender identity (UN Women, 2015).

After the coup in 1980s, feminist movement gained strength to stand against the patriarchal rule that governs all society. It is possible to say that feminist movement started as a rebellion to VAW in Turkey case. CEDAW was signed by Turkey before UN the Fourth World Conference on Women in Nairobi, 1985. The first broad campaign created by feminists was the petition to de facto implication of CEDAW in 1986. Since it was the period right after the 1980 coup in Turkey, it was difficult for small group of feminists to gather signatures from women to support CEDAW's appropriate application in Turkish policy making structures. At the total, there were 6,000 signatures gotten through the considerable effort of feminists (Altnay & Arat, 2008, p. 30). It does not mean that every woman who signed for the campaign read and knew every detail of the convention, however, it was essential for them to be able to speak for their rights by bringing their interests into public policy agenda. In 1987, judge in Çankırı dismissed the divorce case of a pregnant woman who got beat up by her husband as a reference to Turkish proverb of "You should beat a woman all the time, and always keep her pregnant". Women filed a lawsuit for mental anguish against this judge which triggered feminist struggle in Turkey that has been continuing its revolt towards gender-based violence considering today's feminist needs (Altnay & Arat, 2008, p. 17). That was followed by the Campaign against Beating in 1987 which was strengthened by the March "Women in Solidarity Against Beating" on May 17th at the same year. The placards and slogans of the march has similar concerns with the aim itself. Fundamental slogans that are represented in the campaign are as followed "we do not want the battering that is coming out of the heaven", "there is not any justified battering", and "battering comes from the family" (Balsoy, 2021, p. 52).

Bodied are ours, say no to sexual harassment ("Bedenimiz bizimdir, cinsel tacize hayır") which is known as the Purple Needle Campaign has started in Ankara and moved to the Istanbul in 1989. In the Istanbul case, women distributed purple needle on the ferry of Kadıkoy-Karakoy in 1989. The slogans that fed this campaign were

emerged out of the sexual harassment understanding which can be demonstrated as my cloth does not invite sexual harassment, and women also have a right to spend time at nights and in streets. The text in this campaign has a striking question to women to make their voices heard about the sexual harassment that they face all the time in all different places coming from males with different intimacy or non-intimacy levels. The question that was raised is that “Are you tired of being shouldered, pinched, touched by men you know or do not know, like or dislike, on the street, in a restaurant, on a ferry, on a bus, at work?”. Hence, the purple needle was the representation of novel product to inhibit sexual harassment of males (Balsoy, 2021, p. 55). The acknowledgement of sexual harassment concept in the campaign was one of the biggest achievements so that women could locate unwanted sexual attitudes and attracts in a wider category. During the campaign, feminists started to have the discussions of honor and chastity while they were visiting “kahvehane” (coffeehouse where only males exist) and tavern since those places are seen as inappropriate for decent women. While such debates were at the stake, Official Gazette published the Constitutional Court Decision about Code 438 of Turkish Criminal Law. In this decision, remission was applied in the rape cases where women are sex workers. As Constitutional Court did not declare it as the violation of the equality principle, women started to rebel against this ideology where they refuse to divide women as virtuous and loose woman. The Purple Needle campaign has continued with a new focus as “No to 438”. This campaign was resulted with the abolishment of that decision on November 21st, 1990 (Altınay & Arat, 2008, p. 27). Hence, with the power of women’s movement and struggle, the article that explains remission possible for so called loose woman when they face with rape was dissolved.

As it can be seen, the struggle against violence in streets started to be institutionalized where centers were established, and comprehensive laws were introduced to assist women’s need. Minister of Labour and Social Policies İmren Aykut attended UN Nairobi World Conference on Women in 1985 and with this information, Directorate on Women’s Status and Problems was established in 1990 (Altınay & Arat, 2008, p. 25). This organization has an important role to raise awareness about the VAW and gender equality where they aim to interact with state institutions. In addition, With the

influence of global debates on women's rights and VAW and the effort of women's struggle in Turkey resulted in the establishment of law that aims to approach violence issue. In 1998, The Law no. 4320 (the law on the protection of family) was enacted. Since there are the ambiguities about the definition of violence and the ones who face with violence was limited to women, it did not create a considerable change to inhibit the occurrence of VAW (Canikoğlu, 2015, p. 361).

Through 2006 Circular of Prime Ministry, notable and wide range of proposed preventions in many aspects that could help the growth of gender-based violence considering various institutions in Turkey were created. The protective and preventive measures include getting rid of economic inequality between women and men, better lightening of streets and parks, increase the number of phone box for women to reach out quickly in case of emergency, creation of public service announcement about VAW, and so on (Uygur, 2011). It is highlighted that after this circular, more active implementation of proposed prevention strategies was seen regarding ending the gendered violence cases.

To understand institutionalized and legal framework to inhibit VAW in Turkey, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence which is known as Istanbul Convention must be explained. It was opened for signature on 11st of May 2011 and came into force on 1st of August 2014. It is the first convention that specifically emphasizes VAW and domestic violence as a Europe agreement which was signed by 20 countries including Turkey. It can be argued that most important feature of Istanbul Convention is creating standards to prevent domestic violence regardless of biological and legal family bindings and every type of violence against women which bounds European countries legally (Bakırcı, 2015, p. 134). It is essential to mention that the convention mentions all kinds of gender-based violence that are performed both in private and public spaces. It encompasses and forbids domestic violence including married or unmarried partners, parents, or children and gender-based violence in public space such as in workplaces, schools, jails, and so on which gives wider ground for people who face with violence to make their voices heard. When the content of the convention is

handled, it is seen that the reason that leads to the occurrence of violence cases is defined as the gender inequality in society and its structures. The convention has four-dimensional approach as prevention of the occurrence of violence, protection when the violence happened, prosecution, and creation of policies that will support individuals when a violent case is seen (Morođlu, 2012). Besides these significances that the convention brings, there are some inaccurate and missing parts in the translation of the text to Turkish. Although the original title of the convention is the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, it was translated as the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Family Violence. By referring family rather than domesticity, subsumes of the convention gets narrowed down where for instance, the ones who exposed to violence by their boyfriends and it could become controversial to count and protect them under this agreement. Although Istanbul Convention restrains violence between partners regardless of being married or not, Turkish translation aims to defines the boundaries by forbidding violence between married couples (Canikođlu, 2015, p. 366). However, it is possible to understand the content of the convention which includes every individual without specification to one particular group of individuals. The ongoing discussion is about that President Erdoğan decided to abolish this agreement in July 2021 that led women to struggle against this decision. There were many marches and campaigns coming from different women's groups and association to raise awareness about convention's necessity to inhibit VAW. Although it was promulgated, the debates and struggles still exist to implement the Istanbul Convention.

The Law no. 6284 (the law on protection of family and prevention of violence against women) is essential since it fills the gaps that creates inequalities in the Law no. 4320. This law aims to protect the individuals' right to live, to cooperate with state institution to inhibit femicide, and rehabilitate the ones who use or potentially can use violence (Öztürk, 2017, p. 5). It can be seen that the new law was created with the efforts of women's organizations which work in an integrity with state institutions to dissolve the deficiencies of the previous one. It can be separated from the Law no. 4320 through the implementation of both protective and preventive measures (Özbilen & Soygüt,

2012, p. 379). When the extent of the law is handled, it is not only the women, but also every individual without considering their gender identity takes place in the scope of the law in terms of getting benefit from the measures. One of the beneficial results that came out of the Law no. 6284 is the establishment of Center for Violence Prevention and Monitoring (ŞÖNİM) in 2016. It provides service to individuals who encounter with violence in terms of legal, social, and psychological manners (Reçber, 2018).

While there are such developments in legal frameworks to handle VAW and try to find proper solutions to inhibit its existence, the violence cases do not show a falling tendency. It is reflected that among married women, 36% of women faced with physical violence while 12% of women are exposed to sexual one in Turkey (HÜNE Enstitüsü, 2014, p. 83). When the perpetrators of violence against women other than their partners is investigated, it is demonstrated that 43% of women said that violence comes from fathers, and 18% claimed that brothers are the ones who use violence (HÜNE Enstitüsü, 2014, p. 111). The results demonstrate that violence is not in a fading tradition and males are the ones who use this violence against women. It is possible to see that male domination does not want to give up the power that helps to control women's lives through violence. In addition, it is essential to look at the number of femicide in Turkey within 10 years to understand the results of violence that threatens the lives of women. In 2011, there were 130 women who were killed just because they are women which was risen to 410 in 2020 according to statistics of Anıtsayaç (Monument counter). Within 10 years, femicide was not inhibited where women could not live in a safe environment and felt the pressure on them. Today, in Turkey, women start to think that whether I will be killed by a man that I know or a stranger. Hence, to stop femicide and give women a comfortable zone where they will not feel any danger for their lives, there needs to be an urgent focus and changes that will create a direct solution to VAW.

There are many efforts of women's organizations to highlight the severity of femicide in Turkey. They want that the murderers must get the penalty that they deserve and must not be released in short periods of time. They struggle against violence in all types and want to see just decisions given by judges. It is reflected that 300 women

were killed and there are 171 suspicious women deaths in 2020 which needs to be clarified. Hence, women organize campaigns and do not live women alone when they face with violence. They try to grow together by helping each other and standing together in courts, schools, and workplaces as it is in Şule Çet case whose murder was tried to be clarified (We Will End Femicide Platform, 2021).

One of the turning points in Turkey can be given as the case of Nahide Opuz. Nahide and her mother faced with violence coming from their husband. While they apply to competent authority, they drew back the application for complaint due to the fear as their husbands were released. In addition, they encountered with public officers that tried to persuade them not to complain about their husbands. The following issues were started when Nahide's husband killed her mother, and he was freed. Finally, Nahide applied to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) by claiming that authorities did not take their case mindfully. Hence, the court decided that Turkey was unsuccessful to protect women from violence in 2009. In addition, since gendered violence was accepted as discrimination, it becomes essential to define VAW as a problem of the social system that give rise to patriarchy (Düğmeci & Gürsel, 2019; Sönmez, 2020). As a result, this decision is a milestone to underline the systematic functioning of male domination in all institutions and social relations strengthened through VAW where solutions can be created in regard of diffusing them to every aspect of the society.

To understand the current efforts of women politicians in the parliament, their social media use and parliamentary studies must be highlighted. One study investigates the 26th legislature year female MPs social media use in terms of VAW sharing. JDP, RPP, PDP, NMP, independent MPs were examined which have 33, 20, 22, 3, and 1 female deputies in order in GNAT. In terms of the sharing, although there are some contents including women's interests in general, almost none of the sharing has a content of VAW. At total there are 4 sharing coming from RPP, PDP, and independent MPs. There are more accounts considering twitter, 25 JDP, 14 RPP, 17 PDP, and 1 independent MPs have their pages in that social media page. It is also important to mention that not all the women share twits including women's interests. The same

trend is also seen in twitter case where only 4 sharing at total highlights VAW out of 128 shares of women's concerns (Akyazı & Akyazı, 2017). It shows that regardless of the political ideology of female deputies who have social media accounts, they did not give enough consideration to VAW as it became important to use social media to reach out individuals and contribute their awareness level in identifying violence toward them.

How women in political parties perceive the VAW specifically domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide can be realized by focusing on bill of law and parliamentary question that women MPs gave. When the 27th as last legislation period is handled, only Candan Yüceer in RPP gave bills of law considering sexual harassment crimes. This proposal aims not to apply the regulation that sets back the expression of regulation as letting the criminal out will result in the psychological threat and stress to women to face with same situation again. When it is searched as femicide on the website of GNAT as femicide, it is not possible to find out bill of law during 27th legislature year (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, 2021a).

There are also important efforts related to these three violence types through parliamentary questions. All women who gave parliamentary question regarding sexual harassment are constituted from PDP's deputies. It asks questions to Minister of Justice Abdulhamit Gül about sexual harassment investigation that 15 years old child face in Batman. She went to the hospital with stomachache where it was found out that she is pregnant, and two suspects were arrested relying on her statement. There were also other sexual crime chains including other women that were committed by many men. Female MPs from PDP posed questions whether investigation process was managed effectively, why not all suspects were not included in files, whether two women and a child's security will be sustained, and so on. There are also two different parliamentary questions coming from PDP female deputies regarding sexual harassment cases in Turkey. In terms of domestic violence, two parliamentary questions given by Fatma Kurtulan and Pero Dundar from PDP where they try to acknowledge the domestic violence cases that are risen through pandemic as people stayed at home for a long time. They want to figure out the effectiveness of immediate

call centers, restraining order and women's shelter by asking related questions to Minister of Family, Labor and Social Services Zehra Zümür Selçuk. When femicide related parliamentary questions are handled, it is seen that only two female deputies from RPP and many of the PDP's female deputies take part in this reaction. For instance, Gamze Taşcıer poses questions regarding femicide of Sevtap Şahin where she was killed by a man who is married with her. The questions include that why she was not protected although she made a complaint about violence to public officials, why restraining order was not applied well, and are there adequate education given to law enforcers based on the law no. 6284 and Istanbul Convention. She also gave another question about the severity of femicide cases to emphasize whether the rate of this issue and necessary information about it will be counted and shared. In terms of PDP, female MPs have a commonality where they specifically mention one city to find out the occurrence femicide cases, the rate of complaints, the attempts that legitimizes femicides, and effectivity of assistance given to women's children in femicides. When all these proposals and parliamentary questions are investigated in 27th parliamentary year, it is clear to acknowledge that mostly PDP and RPP generate all the concerns for the recognition, decrease, and inhibition of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, 2021c).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this study, VAW discourses of women members of political parties in Turkey is investigated. To clarify and elaborate on the issue of violence, the research problematizes violence with three subtypes as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide. Although I thought that there will be a common stance regarding domestic violence in all political parties' members, sexual harassment and femicide are included to since I realized that these two types are more touchy ones where society take different positions. Through discourses, the study tries to understand similarities and differences between perceptions. In addition, proposed policies, legislation, and the change in the implementation of existent policy is questioned to locate the closeness between female politicians. Following chapters emphasize the VAW perceptions and recommendations of female politicians in different political parties compared to each other.

3.1. Design and Method

As it is mentioned, the idea to write on this issue came from the very personal experience and observations of the researcher. During internship in GNAT, the gendered relations were acknowledged that led to create this research based on women who are the members of that environment. How to start a feminist study is directly that the researcher must open a ground for own experiences to locate research interest within it. In that manner, by locating her own experience as an initial stone to study, researcher has the purpose to shed a light to experiences of women which is the female politicians in this study. Coming from observations in internship period, it is thought that VAW which is a crucial issue in Turkey that must be studied through the eyes of female politicians who can demonstrate the decision-making process that is male dominated. Hence, this study was prepared by applying feminist methodology which

tries to create knowledge based on gender relations that must be justified within particular social context (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 10). Since politics is a highly masculinist structured space, it is important to emphasize the gendered interrelations that female politicians face during their presence in politics. Considering ontological and epistemological features of feminist methodology, it is highlighted that feeding from the feminist thought is its unique part since feminist thought problematizes the intersection of politics, ethics, and women's experiences (Ecevit, 2019, p. 39). Hence, it is not only the female experiences that this study looks for, but also its interrelation with politics of gender, and ethics.

There are four fundamental criteria that help the existence of feminist methodology in research as focus on gendered social relations, value of experience, non-hierarchy between researcher and the respondent, and aim of emancipation (Hammersley, 1992). As it is mentioned above, the experiences of female politicians are the ultimate source of the study where their experiences are essential to reveal gendered dimensions in politics. Hartsock explains feminist standpoint theory as “it posits a duality of levels of reality, of which the deeper level or essence both includes and explains the “surface” or appearance and indicates the logic by means of which the appearance inverts and distorts the deeper reality” (2019, p. 108). In that sense, it is necessary to start with women's experiences that lights the hidden mechanisms behind male-dominated social structures that conceals the real relations behind VAW. Female politicians are the subjects here who can speak about the unequal treatment towards women related to violence and what can reflect their solutions to that problem in a masculine sphere. In addition, non-hierarchical relation during in-depth interviews is necessary to call the study as feminist where this research tried to create this kind of setting where interaction rather than having a superior and literature knowing person was put away to grow and fed together.

As a design of the study, the qualitative inquiry as in-depth interviewing is the most proper way to gather information considering background and the aim of the research. The research inquiry in terms of data collection of this study is based on feminist standpoint theory. As it is possible to associate this theory with the purpose, data

collection, and analysis of the study, it is relevant to adopt it. Dorothy Smith's emphasis on women's experiences as the ultimate point for research to understand the social reality is the key point that is followed in this study. Smith highlights that "We explored *our experiences as women* with other women- not that we necessarily agreed or shared our experiences" (1992, p. 89). Even all women do not have a common perception on their rights, or they do not share similar experiences, Smith focuses on the unique aspects of passing them to the other women. The roots of this revealing of experiences are explained by giving example from consciousness-raising groups of women and many other ways of explaining their lives in an interchanging way to grow together. This interaction of experiences led women to understand the basic commonality they have as the male domination. Although women's inferior position and the challenges they face show diversity, they somehow feel the male pressure coming from domestic violence, sexual harassment, economic independence, or reproductive rights. The shared ground for women to perceive the patriarchal norms that does not relinquish power and control over women so that women could find themselves being stuck in such functioning of the society. In that sense, it is necessary to give voice to them where "the standpoint of women situates inquiry in the actualities of people's living, beginning with their experience of living, and understands that inquiry and its product are in and of the same actuality" (Smith, 1992, p. 90). By demonstrating the real-life practices and experiences of women, what is concealed in the dominant masculine discourses becomes uncovered. Since this study's data is constituted by female politicians' experiences and perceptions considering VAW, it is not possible to distinguish its theoretical discussions from feminist standpoint theory. Starting from the researcher's own questioning of her position in GNAT, it will be beneficial to give voice to female politicians' perceptions and recommendations who are located in an inferior position compared to male politicians in the assembly. Existing in different political parties are the proof of the variety of understanding they hold when they give meaning to women's position in the society and the concepts of VAW. Although there are differences, it is essential to figure out how and why they locate women and the violence they encounter in those ways to reveal the male domination and control that surrounds all social relations and institutions. The defining and understanding VAW is not seen similar in the public speeches of female and male

politicians since patriarchy tries to control women through using violence as a mechanism. In that sense, it is expected that male politicians ignore the real functioning of the society as it is experienced during the internship in a highly masculine area, politics. Since every woman somehow face with different types of violence and acknowledge the gendered thoughts of men in politics, it is necessary to emphasize the thoughts of female politicians to conduct a study based on feminist standpoint theory.

3.2. Ethical Considerations

To start data collection, it is necessary to get an approval from Middle East Technical University Human Research Ethics Committee. In that manner, application form was filled and send to this committee which is consist of the title of the research, its aim and research questions, where to gather data, research design of the study, sample, how to reach out the respondents, whether there will be voice recording, and the possible contributions of the study to the relevant literature. Besides this forms, form of voluntary participation to the study and the in-depth interview questions are attached to the previously mentioned application form for professors to evaluate them. When they evaluate the documents, they send an e-mail to the advisor and me stating that they give permission to initiate field research where the researcher supposed to gather data between 01.02.2021 and 25.06.2021. One of the ethical considerations of this study is based on the revealment of participant's names in the thesis. In that manner, voluntary participation form states that the names will not be included in the thesis unless the respondents demand it. The reason of leaving this as a preference is that the respondents are politicians, and they express similar concerns open to public where they could not find it necessary to hide their names. In addition, it is optional to have voice recording during in-depth interviewing when the respondents do not want it, the process continues as note taking. In addition, it is also highlighted in the voluntary participation form that they can leave the study any time they wanted.

3.3. Research Procedures/ Access to Respondents and Conduct of Interviews

Theoretical framework with the combination of research questions lead to the use of qualitative methods as the relevant design for this study. Since feminist standpoint theory gives value to women's experiences speak for themselves, it is essential to apply a way that could realize this aim (Braidotti, 2003, p. 200). The method that will be used is the in-depth interviews. In feminist standpoint theory, it is argued that the researcher must directly interact with women to reveal their experiences which will lead to clarification of the functioning of institutions that encompass the society (Travers, 2001, p. 137). Through this method, I will expect to find more detailed information about similarities and differences between women in various political parties. In that sense, in-depth interviews were conducted to reflect women's experiences with their own voices.

Since this study aims to reach out female politicians who are in higher positions possible, I needed to have some networks who could help me to explain my research to those women. In that sense, I followed different patterns to make a connection with those female politicians. In the case of JDP, I asked our family friend who knows individuals in the main body of that political party to express my aim to potential respondents to get their consent for this study. Only one female deputy of that party contacted me with a positive respond where I ask her whether she could provide me other in-depth interviews within that political party. The same pattern is followed for NMP and IYI Party where each previously known individual help to make the initial contact that turned into snowball sampling. Since I could not find any individual that could help me to reach out female politicians in RPP and PDP, I tried to call deputies offices and women's wings to explain my research aim and my demand of interview. Similarly, I remind female politicians that I conducted interview that I do not know other women in that party if they could provide me communication with others. When we consider the sampling size, I conducted 24 interviews with 5 females in 4 political parties represented in the parliament which are JDP, RPP, and PDP and IYI Party and 4 females in NMP due to cancelling of the interview by one of the NMP members. Those women will be in the varied hierarchical positions, educations, and occupations.

For the analysis of the in-depth interviews, I will mention to the feminist standpoint's one of the assumptions as "If life is structured in opposing ways, one can expect similar oppositions in the vision of different groups" (Hartsock, 2019, p. 236). As this understanding is adopted, this study expects to find the divergence in the perceptions of women in different political parties in the Turkish parliament as a reference to their political affiliation based on their world view. Hence, although it is expected that all female politicians face with different types of violence and gendered attitudes in their lives, their perceptions and recommendations can show variety.

The in-depth interview questions are subsumed under three main category as political life, VAW, and policy recommendations to inhibit VAW. In the first part, the organizational structure of the political party, their political affiliation in relation to their life experiences, women branch within their political party, and being a woman in politics will be examined. In the second section, their perception on VAW will be investigated through party's approach on VAW, specifically domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide, the action that party and that woman take to stop it. The last part of the interview aims to understand proposed coping mechanisms and policy recommendations they could provide for each of three violence type mentioned and the role of women in politics to solve this issue. Since the field research is conducted during COVID-19 Pandemic, the interviews are conducted in GNAT, political parties' central offices or provincial offices, and through online platforms. When we met with the interviewees in face, I gave them the informed consent form to read themselves. When interviews are conducted through online, I send them the informed consent form to be read before the meeting. All the interviewees read and signed that consent form which indicates that they participate the study voluntarily. They also checked the boxes related to recording whether they give consent it. In the case of non-consenting recording, I took notes during our meeting. The informed consent form mentions that in the case of their demand, their name will be revealed in the study and at the end of the interview I reminded them whether they would like to be mentioned with their name or not. In terms of their responds, some interviewees said that their names can be given while others who did not want to be revealed. However, to have a neutral

position towards all political parties, the real names of the female politicians' will not be mentioned in this thesis.

3.4. Key Characteristics of Respondents

The target group of this study was female politicians with a different hierarchical duties and positions in Turkey. I tried to reach out female politicians who are in the highest positions in politics as much as possible. Hence, the respondents of this study are MPs, vice presidents of women policies of political parties, territory executives of women policies of political parties, officials in political parties' women's wings and presidents of political parties' women's wings. As it can be seen, all female politicians are coming from diverse positions of that five political parties.

Table 2 Summary of interviewee profiles of Nationalist Movement Party

	Age	Marriage Status	Number of Children	Education	Occupation
NMP 1	53	Married	2 children (22 and 29 years old)	Master's Degree	Psychological counselor
NMP 2	44	Married	1 child (8 years old)	Bachelor's Degree	Financial advisor
NMP 3	57	Married	2 children (26 and 32 years old)	Master's Degree	Pharmaceutics
NMP 4	51	Married	2 children (22 and 24 years old)	PhD	Family Business

Table 3 Summary of interviewee profiles of Justice and Development Party

	Age	Marriage Status	Number of Children	Education	Occupation
JDP1	38	Married	2 children (4 and 11 years old)	Master's degree	Had a company related to food industry
JDP2	52	Single	1 child (23 years old)	Bachelor's Degree	Self- employment
JDP3	62	Married	2 children (40 and 42 years old)	Bachelor's Degree	Retired teacher
JDP4	54	Married	2 children (26 and 29 years old)	Master's degree	Pharmaceutics
JDP5	48	Married	2 children (20 and 26 years old)	Bachelor's Degree	Historian

Table 4 Summary of interviewee profiles of IYI Party

	Age	Marriage Status	Number of Children	Education	Occupation
IYI PARTY 1	29	Married	1 child (3 years old)	Bachelor's degree	Lawyer
IYI PARTY 2	30	Married	1 child (6 years old)	Bachelor's Degree	Insurer
IYI PARTY 3	60	Single	2 children (40 and 42 years old)	Bachelor's Degree	Retired teacher
IYI PARTY 4	49	Married	1 child (35 years old)	Bachelor's degree	Lawyer
IYI PARTY 5	47	Married	2 children (20 and 26 years old)	High school	Security Sector

Table 5 Summary of interviewee profiles of Republican People’s Party

	Age	Marriage Status	Number of Children	Education	Occupation
RPP1	38	Married	2 children (2,5 and 4,4 years old)	Bachelor’s Degree	Pharmaceutics
RPP2	59	Married	2 children (35 and 37 years old)	PhD	Previously Academic/ Communication Science
RPP3	58	Married	-	Bachelor’s Degree (Student-Master’s Degree)	Financial advisor
RPP4	55	Single	-	Bachelor’s Degree	Lawyer
RPP5	51	Married	2 children (28years old, the other is decedent)	Highschool (student-Bachelor’s Degree)	Was working with financial advisor

Table 6 Summary of interviewee profiles of People’s Democratic Party

	Age	Marriage Status	Number of Children	Education	Occupation
PDP1	60	Single	3 Children (the smallest is 30 years old)	Primary school	Journalist
PDP2	50	Married	-	Bachelor’s Degree	Lawyer
PDP3	57	Married	-	Bachelor’s Degree	Engineer
PDP4	51	Single	-	Bachelor’s Degree	Lawyer
PDP5	39	Single	-	Bachelor’s Degree	Sociologist

3.5. Data Analysis

When all the interviews were transcribed, I read and analyzed them in a mindful way. I took notes to find out common words and themes coming from different answers. Then I created file of themes as possible headings and subheadings of data analysis section of this study. After this process, I created tables for each political party including key words coming out of in-depth interview questions and their responses where I located quotations of each participant to see what they said regarding each theme. The reason behind this process was to categorize answers under the concepts that are relevant in the theoretical framework that was highlighted before. As the last step for data analysis, the located quotations are highlighted and located under the themes list as possible headings to establish the overall structure of the thesis and discussions regarding the theoretical framework. As a result, discussions are held by

focusing on this theme list as the main source of this thematic data analysis. To demonstrate a clear understanding on the results and findings of this study, direct quotations and references to their answers are given.

3.6. Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study was the data collection period that was conducted during COVID-19 Pandemic and having the respondents as politicians. Normally, it is difficult to reach out politicians to get an appointment which becomes harder when it is related to the master's thesis of a student. When it is combined with pandemic period, it becomes harder and harder to make interactions with preferred politicians who work on this issue via phone whether they would like to participate in the study and find a time to meet with me. Since it is the pandemic was going on, generally, it was decided to have an online meeting, however, due to the internet connection problems, the meetings were postponed which eventually turned out to cancellation. During my phone calls to female politicians' offices, I generally got the answer of that they are so busy because of the current agendas such as International Women's Day, debates on Istanbul Convention, or their duties in general where secretaries told me even half an hour is too much for them to give my research. This attitude was generally come from the MPs of JDP and NMP. There was an interesting conversation between one of the female MPs' male consultants and me while trying to find out a time for meeting. He said that she would like to participate in the research, however, it is not possible for them to allocate a time where he offered me to answer the questions by stating that he has a master's degree, and he knows this process to help me even I already explained that I only conduct interviews with female politicians.

Another limitation also comes from the respondents being politicians, since they claim that there is not too much time to spend with my study, some interviews took almost half an hour where they asked how many questions are left at the middle of the interview. Besides this, some interviews took nearly two hours where they give considerably detailed information to each question.

In addition, the data analysis of this study consists of four women's thoughts from NMP and five women's views from other four political parties. As another limitation this study does not represent the perception of these five political parties, it is only the ideas that are expressed by these 24 women from five different political parties. Although this thesis does not have a representative approach, it gives a crucial inside about the functioning of political parties in regard of women's political representation and women's concerns coming into policy agenda.

Last limitation is that there are debates in Turkey's agenda that are not considered in the aim of this study specifically. From the responses, the debates regarding Istanbul Convention are mentioned through opposed campaigns. Rather than handling the Istanbul Convention as a technical issue and approach in this respect, it is seen as ideological where political parties start to clash. It can be understood that there are external factors that lie behind it. Since this thesis does not have a deeper investigation and analysis considering Istanbul Convention, the debates are extended over female politicians' discourses.

CHAPTER 4

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

To make sense of female politicians' perceptions of VAW, it is essential to consider their political world view, gender equality conditions and descriptive representation in political parties, and the role of women's wings. Since this research analyzes five different political parties, women's political stances demonstrate the proximity of political parties to each other in regard of detecting social issues. Related with this study's aim to capture their works and proposals on VAW, whether gender equality and equal descriptive representation is sustained in political parties is necessary to understand. With this emphasis, it is possible to go behind the responses how their position in the political party will lead to the conditions of substantive representation of women in terms of women's concerns bringing into policy agenda. Lastly, women's wings, its purposes, the perceptions about its existence are critical to locate how women are positioned within political parties compared to men.

The responses of female politicians reflect their own perceptions and recommendations which do not represent the ideology of the political parties they are in. There can be gaps and similarities between the thoughts of respondents and their political parties when they mention the explanation of their political stance, VAW, domestic violence, sexual harassment, femicide and their recommendation in the next section. These gaps can be smaller in some political parties while it could create a wider gap in other political parties. Even female politicians and their political parties' perceptions can demonstrate a total harmony in some cases. Hence, it is not possible to claim that all female politicians in this study completely agree with the party ideology since there can be different thoughts between those politicians and their political parties in certain issues. The important point that needs to be highlighted in this thesis is that it does not aim to reveal the party discourses rather it tries to find out

what the perceptions and recommendations of these female politicians are compared to each other.

4.1. Political Stance

To make sense of female politicians' perceptions of VAW, their political identity and the reason why they would like to be in that political party must be reflected. As it is expected, there are diverse patterns between political parties considering essential features of them, female politicians' own political stance, and why they prefer to participate in politics in that political party while similarities are examined in individual thoughts within the same political party. Despite variations, some political parties demonstrate similar trends in terms of their main focus.

In JDP, interviewees highlight that it prioritizes human being where human rights and their freedom is cared. When the NMP is handled, nationalism and idealism (ülküçülük) are the defined fundamental characteristics in terms of living in that nation in a unity. Although the words that define their political parties are not identical, their aim somehow coincide at the end which gives weight to government and public interrelatedly.

The most important feature of the JDP is that it is a party that puts people in the center, and it is a party that determines all its policies with the slogan "Let people live so that the state can live". A party that cares about human rights and freedoms. (JDP 1)

Being national, being local, coming from the people. (JDP 2)

Having a nationalist perspective, working for the unity and solidarity of the homeland, and being at the forefront when it comes to the continuation of the Republic of Turkey. (RPP 3)

In that sense, they give value to individuals to help the reinforcement of the nation where they would like to work for its sustainability. In addition, these two parties' female members highlight the importance and value given to women by their leaders as a fundamental feature.

There are overlapping specialties when the respondents mention about their political parties considering democracy, and women centered understanding. In RPP side, democracy is the initial emphasis where Atatürk's principles and reforms are cherished as it was established with the same time of the Republic. This democracy view is seen in the PDP members with a focus on all differences that many diverse groups have in Turkey which must be valued and live in a harmonious democratic way together. Female politicians in PDP argues that it embraces all differences and people who are oppressed. In addition, it is democratic and gives ultimate place to women's interests.

For example, woman is indispensable in a co-presidential system just as a woman is indispensable next to a man. Let's say that if one of the co-presidents is Kurdish, then the other one needs to be non-Kurdish, or if one of them is Turkish, the other one needs to be a non-Turkish identity. Similarly, if one of them is a Muslim, then we have the other one from a different faith or sect. (PDP 1)

Besides these, in terms of IYI Party, the only commonality among respondents is political party's leader. Having a female leader means that women's concerns are valued and taken into consideration carefully. Even respondents from these parties are uncompanionable from each other in political debates, it is possible to realize that they have the allied attitude towards women's concerns including violence due to the focus on democracy, importance of differences, and centralization of women's interests in main body of their political parties.

These responses are the direct mirrors of the differences and commonalities that political parties have by claiming their aim and focus of policies they wanted to create. These can be understood as clues that will shape the perceptions regarding women's status in the society and their efforts on the issue of VAW. The study also asks what their own political view are to compare it with political parties that they are in. JDP's member explains this as conservative democrat as it is mentioned in theoretical framework. In the beginning JDP identified itself with those concepts by cutting bonds with religious past. It is also the same for every respondent in NMP, they sustain the parties' ideological position by defining themselves as idealist and nationalist which demand to work for the continuation of Turkish republic as a sacred responsibility and duty. RPP members' political stance is generally a democrat with following Atatürk

principles that are combined under six fundamentals as Republicanism, Populism, Reformism, Secularism, Statism, and Nationalism. Although other parties' members focus on one or some of these, it is vital for female politicians of RPP to trace these six arrows of founding ideology in unity. There are slight conceptual differences under the same political identity when PDP members expressed themselves as feminist, socialist, humanist, leftist, and democrat where some combine two stance when they explain themselves. They claim that these defended valuations are necessary to transform and create a livable world order. On the other hand, IYI Party members have more diverse political stance compared to other parties as Ataturkist, laiciest, leftist, centering human, nationalist, and conservative. As it can be seen there are members from both leftist and rightist ideology as two oppositional stances their commonality comes from parties focus on women's concerns where they could explain themselves better than any other political party.

As it can be acknowledged, there are many distinctive classifications considering their own political identity. The important questions that must be raised here are How these variations established? What are the life experiences that lead female politicians to define themselves with such conceptualizations? Except IYI Party and PDP's female politicians, other three political parties' members claim that their family background somehow led them to follow these principles under that party. In RPP's case, one of the RPP deputy claims that she grew up in such a family where the principles of RPP is internalized. She is the daughter of two Republican children who embraces its ideal to the bond which is seen in other participant from that party. Besides this, female members of JDP argues that her family has a conservative root with a combination of tradition of national vision as this feature influenced her to act on behalf of JDP. One of the members of NMP mentions her family's being Balkan migrants which gives her a sensitive perspective on state and to have the role of protecting it. Another member of the same party also mentions that she comes from an idealist family which advised to become a high qualified Turk embracing Islamic culture and morals with an Turan Nation ideal to combine all Turk nations. As it can be seen, family background is significant to create an effect that shapes the political ideas of individuals. In addition,

IYI party members generally claim that due to Turkey's current conditions and they have a concern for future, they prefer this party to create an equal state for all citizens.

Alongside these, there are several striking personal life experiences that female politicians highlight which help the construction of their political identity. In terms of PDP, every respondent gives detailed life stories towards their stance and perceptions to the social issues. Living in an environment where unequal treatments and challenges are imposed on women, Kurds, and people with low income, these individuals start to develop an awareness about this hierarchical social structure to make a total change in the system.

It had inadvertently created an awareness of women's struggle from an early. (PDP 2)

We really grew up in very difficult conditions, we grew up in conditions where our livelihoods were very limited. For example, I would have rebelled against that when I was a child thinking why we are poor while some people can live comfortably, why are some people poor while others not like that, why there is this inequality... In fact, you can clearly see how hard people are oppressed and their labor was exploited as a whole when you go through such a process in your own life. (PDP 2)

In fact, you start to feel these at primary school age because I grew up in the countryside. It was a Kurdish village, everyone was Kurdish, but I was not aware of it until the teacher came. I didn't know what Kurdish, or any other identity means or what difference does it make to be from an identity. But of course, some practices there inevitably cause you to learn this differentiation. (PPD 5)

PDP member 2 says that she is a feminist first, then a socialist, from her statements, experiences that led to the establishment of such political stance can be justified. The path towards feminism begins in childhood ages where different attitudes towards woman and man are felt. Gender roles interpenetrates the society through imposing its power to individuals at very early ages. However, PDP 2 recognizes this power structure even she did not have the women consciousness that stands against gendered relations which oppress women and put her in a secondary position. Her being socialist was also shaped by her childhood background where she felt economic depravity in a harsher way and start to question the reasons that cause such a severe unequal

condition among different individuals among society. Acknowledging these gaps comes after experiencing this in her very individual life. Another member mentions how she understood the identity of being Kurdish with the initial interaction with Turkish teacher that leads to the different attitudes towards them where she developed awareness and struggle against discrimination towards different identities like the ethnic one. On the contrary, one of the members claims that she does not believe that there is a complete socialist agenda in PDP. Still, it is the only political party that she could exist within due to its principles that are close to the socialist agenda.

For example, as a socialist, I cannot find everything that a socialist program requires in PDP but it is very close to being one and pave the way for it with some of the principles of socialist struggle such as defending equality, being against exploitation, defending gender equality, advocating a democratic peaceful solution to the Kurdish problem. There is much in common between my thoughts and the practices in here. (PDP 3)

It is needed to underline this criticism to understand the position of women in PDP. Since she could freely express her thoughts on party's stance, it is argued that women are independent members of political party who can share their opinions and criticize party program without being restricted.

As a conclusion, ideological characteristics of political parties and women's own political stance in that world is defined with different concepts. Although it seems like these ideas cannot come side by side, what they try to be refer when they use these words could lead to similarities among political parties. With this commonality, it becomes possible to understand political parties considering the distance from each other in terms of world view and the value that is given to varied subjects and aims in the eyes of respondents. There are also opposite explanations between members of different political parties that give an idea to locate their possible thoughts on women's position in the society and VAW.

4.2. Gender Equality in Political Parties

All five political party members have a varied understanding on what gender equality means and how it is reflected in their political parties. It is not only the responses of

members in different political parties that diverge from each other, but there are also differences among politicians in same political arena. In this part of the thesis, discrepancies will be highlighted in terms of practice of gender equality in politics.

It is essential to understand what the perceptions and actions regarding gender equality in political parties. JDP members claim that they believe the equality in opportunity between women and men where they underscore the concept of justice that must be applied as human beings. In that sense, they state that gender does not make difference in their political party's organizations where women and men are treated in the same manner. To be represented in that political party, human's self-development, and capitals constitute the ultimate features for politicians. The reason behind women not being candidate to run in elections and participate in political activities is associated with women as sentimental individuals. Besides this, women's other roles are accentuated. In that sense, the idea that women are sentimental individuals with private sphere responsibilities lead to the justification of women's low representation in politics.

The number of female politicians is less than male politicians. Since this is a centuries-old tradition, raising female politicians is more difficult. The reason behind it is that women can get hurt, get upset and step aside more quickly because they are more emotional. (JDP 1)

Therefore, what really matters is to self-educate yourself to contribute to the organization you are in independent of being a woman or a man. (JDP 1)

I don't lean towards gender equality as a concept either. Gender justice may be a more accurate concept in my opinion. Because there is already a difference from the creation, that is defined by Allah, there are two different genders as a man and a woman. (JDP 2)

The conceptualization of gender justice rather than claiming gender equality is the clear indicator of JDP members' attitude towards women. It is said that women are not equal to men as there are creational differences. However, this contradicts with the idea that gender difference and gender equality are not same. It is obvious that genders have dissociate physical characteristics, but this does not mean that they should not be equal. If the gender justice is accepted instead of gender equality, it could lead to the understanding that they are not equal, but justice must be sustained considering the

differences where women could not get the equal human rights and their implementation in real life practices.

In terms of RPP, female politicians argue that women are luckier in this political party since they could express their thoughts freely. Women are generally disguise themselves in masculine way of practicing politics as they are surrounded by maleness in that sphere. However, RPP members claim that they could exist as women without adopting masculine traits.

I think that female politicians are more troubled in some parties, for example in the JDP. I observe that they don't have much of a say in the National Assembly, they generally behave more harmoniously in complying with the male decisions. I think we have more freedom in that regard as women in the Republican People's Party. (RPP 2)

This statement demonstrate that they put themselves in a district place where they believe that their thoughts are respected as unique ideas without looking at their gender identity. For her, unlike other parties like JDP, they must not approve every decision reproduced by males that give support to masculinist functioning. They are free to elucidate their own positions and criticize what male-minded proposals say when they contradict with women's interests. In that manner, there is not so much gendered discourses when they depict their proposals. The reason behind this is that women are seen as independent and equal individuals and citizens of Republic. With this equality discourse, companionship principle is followed as both female and male politicians work together to struggle against injustices of every type. RPP's party structure which opens ways for women to raise their voices is essential where they can express their perceptions on women's concerns independently.

In other words, they do not give us priority just because we are women, and vice versa. If the organization acknowledges our efforts and believe we deserve it, then we are trusted by them. (RPP 3)

Since these women rely on the gender equality principles in political party that are handled unreservedly, they claim that it is not that much possible to realize gendered appeals that damage their presence and activities in RPP.

As it is mentioned previous sections, having a female leader is the determinant factor for female politicians to exist in IYI Party which eventually leads to the establishment of environment that is free from gendered discourses. Although they find out that gendered hierarchies and gender inequality can be seen in that political party as in every sphere of life, they associate female leader with gender equality where female politicians are respected and valued in IYI Party. The reason for them participating in politics is also related with Meral Akşener as a female party leader who gives priority to women's concerns and their representation in politics.

Our party leader is a woman. Apart from the other political parties, our leader has already highlighted that they should show more respect to women. (IP 2)

I saw that if a woman can be the leader of the organization in IYI Party, then the women can also be part of the lower cadres of the party. I believe this is possible thanks to gender equality. (IP 4).

Besides these positive comments on gender equality within IYI Party, the effect of gender in political party considering whether being women make difference creates contrary understandings. Except one member who believes that there is not difference between women and men, generally it is argued that gender roles that are defined and applied to society starting from childhood interpenetrate to Turkey. With the internalization of these roles by the society, women's existence in politics make challenges for them since they become mothers, care givers, cleaners, and cooks which is difficult to overcome (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Diaz 2005). This inferior understanding of women results in men to demonstrate their priority and supremacy in politics.

Just as there are many handicaps in gender equality in society, the situation in political parties is an example of this and a reflection of the society. (IP 4)

There are too many responsibilities that are placed on us under the conditions in Turkey. In other words, we become mothers as women, we become cooks at home, we do the cleaning, we take care of our spouse and children. Unfortunately, there is a saying in Turkey, "Woman cleans and woman cooks." We also have different attitudes while raising male child and female child in terms of what they can and cannot do. This is a huge common mistake in Turkey unfortunately. (IP 2)

It is said that as the repercussion of the society, the impacts of gender roles that are internalized can be seen in IYI Party. Nevertheless, their separation from other parties shows up through their ability to make their voices heard about malfunctions on gender equality. Although society is reflected in their political party, with the existence of female leader, equal treatment in their party structure is seen.

Female politicians in PDP claim that it adopts women emancipatory line in its codes which is relevant for all organizations of the party. Mixed structure must obey the rules regarding this issue. Nevertheless, even this political party which applies gender equality through women parliamentary, gender quota law, and zipper system could not provide parity in relations within its functioning.

As a result, while we live in a system where there is capitalism and patriarchy, we cannot say that any oppositional structure is free from male domination. (PDP 2)

Gender equality is cared in the program of the party I am in, and we prepared it all together as the women and other members of the party. However, this does not indicate that gender equality is achieved in the party. In our party, we have problems with gender equality and political problems due to not being able to achieve gender equality as much as we want. (PDP 3)

Our party is actually a party that struggles and establishes the mechanisms for it, but our party is also a party that emerges from social reality. In other words, we are all individuals who grew up in a society dominated by patriarchy in our cultural codes. (PDP 5)

From these statements, it can be comprehended that gender equality cannot be sustained until the whole structures of the society are purified by male domination and the gender roles that help the endurance of it. There are socio-cultural norms and codes that harbors patriarchy which creates hierarchies between genders. In that sense, PDP which interiorize gender equality laws is not free from masculine language and actions. Hence, they struggle against such gendered attitudes where they try to transform ideal norms into reality.

The attitude of NMP's female members show disparate position compared to other four political parties. In terms of the perceptions towards women, female politicians

of NMP strictly claim that there is a parity in relations. Even it is argued that women are located in a superior position that is fed by Turkish culture.

I think we are a political party that tries to protect its historical values and cultural values by preserving its history as much as possible. If we take this into account, I can tell you that my own political party has found the equality of women and men completely. I don't think there is gender equality in the party I'm in, women are more in the foreground. (NMP 1)

In fact, I think that women and men are not equal physically. In other words, a woman is a different being and a man is a different being. But in terms of significance, one wants to see that the value of men and women are the same. (NMP 3)

It is underlined that women are in an equal status with men when Turkish history is analyzed. Although every gender has its own roles that are attributed to them, they are equal in worth without locating one gender in a hierarchically lower position. The similar debate of gender equality versus gender justice that is seen in JDP's respondents is also reflected in that political party. Because of their physical differences, women and men do not realize as equal individuals, but they must be treated with an equal value. In that sense, they want to be handled as individuals without mentioning their gender identity.

Consequently, it can be comprehended that the perceptions on gender equality represented in political parties demonstrate considerably diverse positions in all five. While the emphasis on gender justice is made in JDP side, their ability to make their voices heard in a gendered space is handled by RPP members. In terms of IYI Party, the significance of female leader is emphasized for an equal environment. Nevertheless, in real practices, they acknowledge the gendered attitudes coming towards them. It can be argued that PDP members highlight the gendered relations both within and outside of the political party even it is the most egalitarian party in regard of their equality codes. In terms of NMP case, the unexpected results come from the responses as they locate women in a superior position with a direct reference to history of Turkish culture.

4.3. Women's Political Participation

When discourses about political participation of women within their own political party is handled there are diverse perceptions and laws applied by political parties to increase women's visibility in politics.

Female politicians of JDP lay emphasis on the role of President Erdoğan where he encourages women to participate in politics and give more place to them in elections. Besides increased number of women who are mayors, there are 54 women as MPs out of 102 women in parliament. In addition, they underline that majority of their female MPs come from sub cadres of JDP which indicates the importance to effort and work to exist in politics. This is represented as the hallmark of acceleration of gender justice instead of focusing gender equality.

I can very clearly say that our president Tayyip Erdoğan personally cares about and protects the woman in Justice and Development Party, he strongly values women existence in politics. We recently have 53-54 female members of the Turkish parliament and 45-46 of them came from our women's branch or other party organizations. Therefore, we try to achieve this gender justice, but I also don't want positive discrimination in terms of women getting into ranks just because they are women. (JDP 2)

Especially due to the sensitive stance of our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in this sense, 54 of the 102 women in the parliament today are Justice and Development Party deputies. And today, the fact that women have been at the forefront both in bureaucracy, in academic life, and in social, political and business life with his significant contribution. In other words, our party is a pioneering party that really cares about women. (JDP 1)

As it is seen from the responses, the structure of the political party creates an essential role for female politicians to define women's political participation. Since the JDP is a leader party as Erdoğan holds the features of charismatic leader, the policies regarding women's political representation are consolidated through the discourses of him. Besides this, gender quota is not mentioned as a supportive mechanism that could help the reinforcement of the rate of women in political party and parliament. It is claimed that women are important individuals who should not be handled and

narrowed down under quota laws. In place of numbers, content and produced policies must be considered in regard of women's political representation.

Some parties, for example, say that there should be quota and zipper system favoring women. I don't think this is the correct solution for it. Women are too important not to be squeezed into quotas, it is even unfair to talk about it. We need to focus on a quality instead of focusing on quantities. (JDP 1)

This thought can be associated with the debate whether women's enhanced quantitative representation will lead to higher substantive representation on women's concerns. Although they mentioned that more than half of the female MPs come from their party, they did not calculate their rate compared to male politicians in JDP. Almost 19% of JDP MPs are female which demonstrates that the focus on that 54 number does not make any positive influence on the development of women's descriptive representation. In addition, gender roles that women hold is also highlighted as both having drawbacks and positive influences for women to exist in political arena.

Of course, it is extremely difficult to take part in the political structure as a woman especially if you are a mother. In fact, it can be discussed whether being a mother is a challenge or a political advantage when you put the two together. Because if you are a mother, it is much easier for you to understand young people. Let's not make such a distinction since it is in the nature of women and there is no need to be a mother. It is in the nature of women to love, I think they have a bigger heart, and they do less calculations in terms of getting ranks in the party. In other words, this is what I see in the party organization so far, their demands are always less, more acceptable and more tolerable. (JDP 2)

According to responses, because they are mothers and having family life, they have to balance these two spaces by making sacrifices from their personal lives. They also mention that being a mother and women give them ability to love, and not making calculations where their demands are tolerable. As respondents define the two-sided roles of women where being a mother is celebrated, it is possible to see how that party sees women's responsibilities and locate women in social positions.

The understanding that women bring sincerity to fields where they meet with voters due to their natural characteristics is seen in NMP members with a focus on gender roles that are attributed to women. This intimacy is sustained through women's

motherhood, the feeling of love coming from it, and the duty of being wife. In addition, it is highlighted that due to these responsibilities that women have, they need to balance the personal life and the political one. Like in JDP's female politicians, they also claim that the support of family is essential for women to manage controlling multiple duties in different places.

Keeping them in balance can be difficult at first. However, if there is the support of the family and, as I said, if the female politician has the ability to adapt to new challenging situations, she can survive more easily. (NMP 1)

RPP members highlight the gender quota of their political party which is 33% as an inadequate level for women to sustain gender equality in politics. It is argued that when the number of women will reach to the 50% rate in every organization of political party, it becomes possible for women to bring success to every place, she is in.

It is a political party that currently applies a 33% gender quota in our party. Is it enough? Of course, it's not enough, but it is an important step in the representation of women. But we do not find this struggle sufficient. I am making this self-criticism on behalf of my own party until we reach the same point in representation where women and men are fully equal, just as 50% of the society is male and 50% female. (RPP1)

But of course, as a woman, I never think that the representation of women is enough. (RPP2)

It is claimed that women's descriptive representation is not found sufficient by respondent in RPP and other political parties except PDP.

In IYI Party, there is a 25% gender quota which is specifically underlined that it is not a quota for women but for both women and men to be represented at least that rate. For IYI Party members, if the gender quota law is put aside, it is mentioned that there are some citizens who believe that women must not be in politics as they should stay in private sphere with their feminine responsibilities. Hence, there are difficulties that women have when they are in political spheres like not entering in spaces that are male defined.

Just as men cannot enter every place where women enter, women cannot enter every place where men enter, plus as I said, we have more responsibilities than men, we as a political party, work from morning to night, but when we come home, we cook our dinner. We take care of our child; we also do our cleaning

externally. In other words, we see ourselves as a robot established like this and we do it in Turkey, so our job is more difficult than men. (IP 2)

As it can be acknowledged from this statement, women are organized around various roles that gives them the ability to act like a robot with multi-task talent. Women must work harder and harder to make themselves visible in politics with continuing their household responsibilities. From these responses, it can be comprehended that women could not avoid gender roles when they participate in public life which is highly masculine. There are still pressures on them that reminds their duties at home which demonstrates that politics is not an appropriate space for them to exist. In addition to this, males have more political experience than female partners due to the ongoing political culture that gives rise to males more and higher positions starting from sub organizations of political parties.

First of all, male politicians have a lot of past experience. We are a party formed by people who join from other parties or people who have never joined a political party before. For example, I started to do politics with this party whereas the political background of male politicians in our party goes long way back. There are those coming from youth branches, there are men who have been active in politics in other parties. When their experience clashes with our comparatively low experiences, they seem to be one step ahead, considering their advantage coming from their gender as well. (IP 4)

This experience of males makes them more visible and preceding over women candidates which could impede women to participate in politics in an equal manner. This understanding explains how males run the political power through long ages that gives female candidates disadvantage to increase their voices.

Political representation in PDP is different from all other political parties since it adopts co-presidency in all mechanisms and apply 50% gender quota in elections. Besides these laws' adoption and implementation in their political party, they believe that it must be reflected in every institution to reach out gender equality as a society.

For example, we can't say Presidency, but we say something else like co-Presidency, why not a woman and a man rule together. Why are ministries not co-ministerial? Why don't all parties apply the zipper system when entering the elections? All parties should have in their party codes and practice the 50% quota for women representation. (PDP 2)

As it is seen in the theoretical debates on quota laws, it could be distorted by male politicians where women could be located in lower places in electoral lists. In that sense, it is not sufficient to adopt gender quota law on its own. The quota rule must be strengthened with other electoral mechanisms (Reynolds, 1999; Matland & Montgomery, 2003) which is established as a zipper system in PDP. This system means that lists must be created as one woman and one man in an order. Application of this rules in political party's codes leads to control the patriarchal system that gives power to male politicians. The debate in the literature is based the argumentation that the leftist parties are more willing to bring more women into politics because of their egalitarian worldview, and the tendency to be with the oppressed groups (Duverger, 1955; Matland & Studlar, 1996). As remembering the reasons why these respondents are in PDP with a focus on advocating the rights of the oppressed groups in Turkey such as Kurdish people, women, and the workers, this claim could be reflected as relevant for PDP emphasizing women's equal representation in political arena. In addition, in the following statements, it is mirrored that since the political arena is accepted as male power domain, women struggler with challenges to maintain their presence in an equal level with men.

Politics is seen as an area of power, and areas of power are closed to women. In general, women are positioned as working at the bottom and they don't exist if you go up. This is something we call as "the glass ceiling", it is the state of having very few women at the top. In fact, when we look at the total picture of politics today, we see that the rate of women in the parliament is around only 17%. Think about how low it is when you consider half of the Turkey population is consisted of women, but the representation of 50% is only 17% in the parliament. Similarly, only two ministers are woman when you look at the ministries. (PDP 2)

Especially in the parliament, this is something I noticed as soon as I walked through the door. If you describe the parliament, I am saying something that I have not seen in other areas, not in school, in university, in high school, in secondary school, in all areas of life, even in the courtroom. As soon as you enter from the door of the Assembly, it starts to smell masculinity. In other words, what you call as masculinity consists of dressing, behavior, bureaucracy, offices and ranks. This is what you struggle in the parliament. (PDP 4)

Unfortunately, politics is defined as a male domain in our country. When members of the parliament are mentioned, people only think about the men as politicians, not any woman. Especially if you are a young woman, it is much

more difficult for you. For example, when I was first elected, people constantly asked me if I travel with my husband or father or someone else when I went to the airport, they always asked me these kind of questions as they didn't imagine me as a deputy. (PDP 5)

For PDP members, the rate of female MPs and the number of female ministers in Turkish parliament is the representative of politics seen as the appropriate space for males. They support the argumentation by giving examples from their experiences in politics. Parliament is a unique institution which is constituted with masculinist traits. It is not possible to realize that much intense masculinity in any other institution. In addition, citizens' perspective reflects that it is more likely for an individual to be politician when the one has a male identity. In that sense, female politicians feel the male-dominated environment in politics and struggle against it.

Although JDP and NMP members explain the rules that support women's existence in politics, it is possible to realize that leaders' discourses influence female politicians' perceptions to follow the path created by these males. These two political parties mention the beneficial sides of gender roles which could have positive influence on political spheres where they mention the necessity to balance private and political responsibilities. On the contrary, although PDP members acknowledge the internalization of gender roles and gendered attributes, they do not celebrate women's private life roles that must be balanced with political ones.

4.4. Women's Coping Mechanisms with Intra-Party Dynamics

Most of the respondents argue that they face with challenges to exist in political arena since it is defined through male norms. To understand how female politicians overcome the problems that they face in political arena, coping mechanisms that they develop must be considered. In JDP side, creating a trust and working more than the male politicians are reflected as conditions for women to make themselves visible in that area. In addition to these individualistic efforts, it is supported that there needs to be a sisterhood agreement among women where they must grow together. With the

understanding of sisterhood, they should not undermine the works of other women to increase their existence in politics.

Woman should be determined in the way of the cause she believes in; she should know how to get up if she falls. (JDP 1)

The focus on women's effort as a collective movement is not mentioned by NMP members where woman as an individual must overcome barriers through sitting tight. If she falls due to the challenges, she has to continue her aim to be realized. Similar personalistic trends are seen in IYI Party side as being strong, put a brave front on threats, gaining trust of the public, standing firm, being honest and ethical are mentioned as the core coping mechanisms with patriarchal politics. In addition, women's gendered characteristics are also handled for women to transform political environment towards women friendly one in NMP.

For RPP members, women must believe her ideals and struggle in regard of their aim to be realized. Like other political parties, having strong stance towards challenges is also highlighted. The emphasis on women being peaceful and productive are seen as the ultimate reason behind the need of them to be in politics like stated by NMP member. However, while they will try to bring these features to the light in political environment, they must not lose their feminine identity by taking on masculine characteristics. It is argued that easier way for women to be visible in politics is sustained when they become male-minded individuals without considering women's concerns on behalf of their actual interests and rights. In that sense, enduring their feminine identity is one of the fundamental coping mechanisms towards political patriarchy. In addition, it is argued that women must demand, otherwise, their rights will not be given without any requisition. The perspective on women's attributed gender roles is also seen in that political party members as it is believed that women must be the excellent organizers where they have to fulfill their responsibilities in both private and public spheres.

One of the things I hate the most is women who use masculine language and show masculine behaviors after they have been in politics for some time. Of course, I believe that they shouldn't do it. (RPP 2)

In other words, women should demand so that they can take part in all decision mechanisms, starting from non-governmental organizations, maybe starting from the family unions of children, then local administration and mukhtars in the following process, and then the parliament if it can be, the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Therefore, women must demand above all. (RPP 2)

Gender roles such as being a mother, caring the children and doing the housework, create a compelling effect for women to exist in politics. You need to take care of your children, you need to do the housework, you need to take care of the elder ones if needed. Therefore, they need to be exceptionally good organizers. (RPP 2)

It is interesting to find out that rather than mentioning and creating ways for women to get rid of gender roles that are defined through patriarchy, RPP members underscore the responsibilities of women in households where they must develop organizational traits. Hence, it can be claimed that participating in politics does not emancipate women from male domination even they are represented in higher position to make their voices heard. Even in RPP members who mention the necessity of gender equality by criticizing right-wing parties, it is seen that internalization of gender roles in family, work, and politics lead women to think that women must balance gendered responsibilities with the public life ones.

Like in every other section, the members of PDP have a common saying considering coping mechanisms of gendered attitudes towards women in politics. The key mechanism is the women's solidarity against male domination. They claim that it is not possible to struggle against patriarchy on our own. In that sense, there needs to be a strong and powerful women's movement that stand together to destroy patriarchy that inhibits women to be equal individuals in the society.

This issue is not a personal issue, in fact women's solidarity is important here. When we look at the struggles of women, the support given by women to each other is particularly important because none of us can fight against patriarchy alone. (PDP 2)

Women must be in solidarity with each other. They will pave their way better when they act in solidarity in politics, and this cooperation will give each of them a lot of strength. (PDP 3)

Indeed, the phrase "we are strong together" which women have expressed a lot especially in recent years is more than just a phrase. While I am doing politics

in the parliament or in any part of my life, I feel the power of the whole women's movement which allows me to express myself and show my existence better. This is extremely important. (PDP 4)

This women's solidarity where women struggle against male domination in every sphere of life together is fed by women's movement in Turkey. Unless other political parties, the roles and significance of the history of women's movement and its achievements in Turkey is underscored where the mechanism that apply gender equality in their political party is supported by women's movement.

4.5. Functions of Women's Wings

As there are two women's wings among these five political parties today, there are several reasons whether to have that establishment within party. In terms of JDP members, they support the existence of women's wings establishment from bottom to the top. The other political party that has the women's wings is RPP, however, its members do not share that much strict support of the organization by explaining its pitfalls. Other three parties have varied understanding against women's branches and form different structures to take women's concerns into consideration. The functions of that organization must be handled to understand why some women against it while others find it necessary for women's interests and political party's continuation.

JDP members who worked in women's wings before their current positions and who are currently working in that organization believe that there is not any disadvantageous influence of it for many reasons. Almost all of them start their reasoning by giving President Erdoğan's saying "Women are not the objects of politics; they are the subjects" which is strengthened by one of the member's claim that JDP is a women's movement that acknowledges women as exceptional individuals of the society. Even when female politicians explain the functioning of women's wings, they could not separate themselves from the discourses of the party leader where women's position in the politics is handled in the same way with Erdoğan. This reveals the authoritarian structure of that political party where women branches are situated in lower positions

in party hierarchy so that they could not raise their unique voices even in the issues that are related to women directly.

All parties imitate the activities of the Justice and Development Party's women's branch, so to speak. Because all the activity and organization belong to women such as reaching the people and listening their problems. Because a woman is also a listener. In fact, women organize everything in all areas of life and in political parties, just as they do the whole organization at home. If a meeting will be held or a presentation will be made, our party's women's branches and youth branches handles them at the backstage for sure. Therefore, I believe that women's branch is the cornerstone in the Justice and Development Party. (JDP 1)

From these, it is seen that paying attention to what the public says, and organizational power are reflected as the fundamental functions of JDP Women's Wings. This organizational power of women is associated with their gender roles where women are already prepared for this multi-task responsibilities in private spaces which can be easily moved to the public life and its necessities to be able to exist in those male-dominated spaces. If all these functions of JDP's women's wings are leaved aside, almost all the respondents underscore the numbers of female members of JDP which is over five million.

We have more than 5 million members. Our women's branch is one of the largest women's movements in the world, with more members than many parties and non-governmental organizations in the world. (JDP 1)

It is perhaps the only organized women's community in the world with more than 5 million members. (JDP 2)

The important question that must be raised here is whether that high numbers of female members are effective to create substantive representation in politics on behalf of women as this party runs the government holding the power at hands. Is it enough to have considerable rates of females in political parties? Or can they make an influence on policy makers to change and renew policies regarding women's concerns? It is strange that previously it is argued that they do not give weight to quantity since they believe it is necessary to have quality of women who are in politics. If the number of female politicians in parliament should not be restricted with quota laws, why these women feel proud of the rate of women members.

In RPP sides, women's wings are there to sustain gender equality for women, equal citizenship, and equal political representation. Besides these, it struggles against violence against women and children, and create an organized campaign. These functions are written under Women's Wings Regulations which aims to guarantee their efforts to be accepted by the main body of political party. RPP Women's Wings also interacts with municipalities without looking at the political party in power, when it is necessary to find a place in women's shelter. From the responses, it is seen that women's branches have the responsibility to increase women's awareness about their rights. One of the respondents say that there are too many child marriages as this situation is enforced to women. After they start to realize themselves, they question their place and economic condition, then they go into depression. This example of child marriages helps us to locate what kind of support they could give women when they apply to women's wings of that political party for assistance. It is argued that the major problem is related to economics where women do not hold economic capital to sustain their children's and themselves lives. In the case of child brides, she could not get the awareness on her rights until she faced with harsh economic and psychological challenges. When she felt uneasiness and acknowledge that this situation is not normal, she applies to women's wings to seek help. After such an application arrives, women's wings of RPP tries to assist women in regard of increasing her economic situation by sustaining job, giving her psychological help by professionals, and provide with lawyer if she wants to get divorce. These functions are the indicator of how they immediately interact with women through touching their lives.

4.6. Different Perceptions about the Existence of Women Wings

Besides the functioning of women's wings in those two political parties, all different political parties' female members explain their opinions whether there should be women's branches to mention their problems as a separate entity. When the responses are analyzed, it is confronted that there are three understanding in regard of the women's branches' existence. These ideas can be defined as beneficial establishments, having a disadvantaged position within main body of that political party, and it should not exist ideally but in today's world it is somehow necessary.

4.6.1. Women's Wings as Beneficial Entities

It is clearly seen that most of the female members of political parties with women wings give value to that organization where they do not realize its handicaps. The responses coincide with the work of Dahlerup and Gulli (1985) that demonstrates the reasons behind the establishment of women's organizations as increasing party's votes, increasing members, and educating women in terms of their ideals.

For JDP members, generally they do not hold the idea that women's wings contain hitches in itself. According to this perspective, women's wings are the essential parts of the political power where they can specifically focus on women and perform an action regarding this unique subject to influence and enhance their life conditions. In that manner, they locate women at the center of their campaigns and works where they can touch women in person as an intimate and immediate support. The focus of in-person relationship with women is seen in NMP's female members. The reason behind this intimate relation of female citizens with members of women's wings are explained through easy communication due to the gender commonality. Without mentioning women solidarity to gain their rights and freedom, interaction among women is mentioned due to traditional Turkish structure where women could not communicate with men in a beneficial way. By giving tradition as a reason behind the establishment of women's wings, it is not possible to get rid of gender roles that defines women in a secondary position within society. According to both female politicians from JDP and NMP, entering households is seen as one of the ultimate responsibilities of women's wings where members could spread out their party ideology and program to women in all spheres. Since half of the society consists of women, it is a necessary duty to get into houses to contact with women where they could easily explain themselves and their policies. Not giving place in decision-making mechanisms to women in Turkish politics can be associated with their duties only as the enhancement of votes. Since this responsibility is given them by the male main body, women could not act freely (Minibaş, 1996). In addition, NMP members demonstrate that women's wings must express their political stance to their voters and educate women to participate in

politics by involving in field works. By this education, they mean that it is important to educate women who are the raisers of the new generations to develop the nation in regard of their own ideologies.

Maybe in terms of concentration, it would be easier for a woman to communicate with a woman which makes it normal to adopt such a point of view since it is easier for a woman to communicate with a woman rather than a woman's communication with a man in the Turkish traditions. (NMP 3)

It is a huge advantage for women to be able to simply knock on a door and be accepted by the households. (JDP 1)

Women can get around more freely than men in the society. For example, men are usually in the environment where only men are present, but we can get into houses or even coffeehouses during our works and studies on the field. (NMP 1)

Although there is not the establishment of central office women's wings in IYI Party, they are organized under Presidency of Women Policies. Like in JDP and NMP, the entering in household, and election campaigns are given as fundamental features and advantageous of having this kind of institution. Enhancement of the rate of party members through representing party's ideology is another aim that they adopt in their women's branches program. Their main purpose is conceived as bolstering up women's strength as independent individuals and inhibit violence that women encounter in every sphere of life. In addition, it is highlighted that Presidency of Women Policies are primary mechanisms to reach out women with different ideologies and various conditions of need. This gives them an opportunity to propagate their objectives and target to extend their influence area and ability to touch women when their status require assistance.

As opposed to this understanding that gives significance to women's branches, RPP members elaborate the magnitude of women's solidarity within women's wings where the collaboration of women brings powerful movement to create change. The main means to this end is sustained through organizational struggle which is resulted in the construction of women's strength against male dominated norms and structures.

There are many examples in the world which the collapses of dictators and monarchs have been ensured by extremely organized women. Women will be

organized in this sense, and we believe that we will be in power very soon. (RPP 5)

Women are strong together. (RPP 5)

As it can be understood from one of the previous sayings, there is an authoritative ruler in Turkey whose role can be ended with women's solidarity. Besides, main organizational structure of the political party, the role of women's wings to have an organizational power is celebrated. It gives the idea that it is not an individualistic struggle against masculinity, but women must come together to raise their voices louder which gives them vigor to demonstrate their ideals in politics. Solidarity among women is a prevalent conception that RPP female members have as it is claimed that women are hardworking, they work in a more organizational and systematic way with self-sacrifice. There is one female member who argues that women's wing of RPP have been transformed where the old tradition of canvassing door to door is abolished. President of central office women's wing Aylin Nazlıaka and the party leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu are the pioneers of this change.

4.6.2. Women's Wings as a Support Mechanism

Although female members mention the positive effects of women's wings, they also realize that there are some pitfalls of having such organization. In terms of NMP members, it is mentioned that it feels like there is a discrimination as it is separated from the main body. This structuring becomes backward when the relational developments among genders are taken into consideration. It is believed that women and men can come together under the same organization and work as pieces that complete each other. It is believed that women will bring kindness to the environment that she involves where more refined working conditions can be formed in a mixed structure.

In terms of IYI Party's female politicians, women's wings are appointed in particular period of times like election cycles. Their attained roles are entering in households to increase the vote rates of the political party by reaching out women in private realms.

This insufficient role defined for women's wings lead IYI Party not to establish it. On the other hand, they establish the Presidency of Women Policies to bring women's concerns into public policy agenda. From the responses, it can be said that when women are separated from the main body, they are excluded which hinders common work with the main body.

When I learned that our party was in the establishment phase and I started to negotiate to be a founder of IYI Party, initially I wanted to know whether there is a women's branch when I met with some of my friends who were also party founders. I believe that if there is a women's branch, it would not be right for me to become a member of this party. Because this structure simply limits women's existence and right to do politics in the party and utilizes them only as an instrument to visit housewives at certain times which are mostly the election periods. (IP4)

Through this statement, it is seen that women's wings stay as a side structure which becomes subaltern entity binding to the rules of the main body. One of the IYI Party respondents claims that from her view, the reason behind this subordinate establishment is socio-cultural norms that illustrates politics as masculinist way of expression where women could not identify themselves in a proper way. However, IYI Party does not favor this organization since it does not have economic independence and could not state their purposes effectively. In that sense, they have Presidency of Women Policies under the central offices where collective action of women and men is intended as equal subjects of life and politics specifically. In addition, it is inadequate to develop a policy regarding women as the existence of women's wings separate from the main body by discriminating it. As an external unity, its works could not get the deserved worth to influence the decision-making processes.

Existing as a side unity criticized by female politicians of RPP where women are seen as the objects to be represented to public who can enter into private realms easily to influence female voters. They do not deny the works done by women's branches in fields, however, they only appear as a support mechanism that help the reinforcement of the strength of the main body. The underlying cause of the weak organizational structure is women's lack of demand and struggle. This was exemplified with gender quota law applied in RPP which is 33%. It is highlighted that women do not seek their

rights as this quota must be raised to parity where equal representation must be followed. Since such changes are not expected and demanded, women's wings continue to exist as a side support institution.

In general, women's branch in all political parties are used as a showcase in a sense. I think this is inappropriate. (RPP2)

Besides these pitfalls of women's wings, the ultimate problem this organization face is its formality issue. These institutions have a right to raise their voices while they do not hold the power and authority to sign. This means that president of central office women's wings is able to participate in meetings of Central Decision Administration Committee, but she could not sign any decision. Not having any decisive role is the biggest issue that women's wings is trying to manage where the party needs a shift in codes regarding the role and power of women's wings the in main decision-making mechanisms.

Since PDP has a totally unique organization that emphasizes women's concerns, all female respondents from that political party criticize women's wings as feeble institutions. It is argued that definition as wings leads to the understanding of dependence which could not take its own decisions. This authority issue can be resulted in the decisions that are given by male minded ways that acknowledges women's interests as secondary.

What is women's branch? So, if the body is male, does the female make up the arms? Why should I be the arms of a body, I am a woman, and I am free. (PDP 1)

Women cannot make a decision on their own that men do not approve of, and they cannot take a step. They can't even decide to buy a pack of tea. Therefore, the expression "women's branch" never represented me and did not make me feel equal. (PDP 1)

What needs to be done to inhibit such ineffective functioning of women's wings as a side organization is represented as a transformation of mentality. In that manner PDP members believe that they give struggle both within and outside of their political party with the establishment of Women Assembly which will be defined in the section as different structuring for women's concerns.

4.6.3. Ideal vs. Reality Debate

Ideal vs. Reality debate is coming into light when Turkey's conjuncture is handled by some female politicians. As a personal opinion, one member from RPP claims that it is not appropriate to acknowledge women as a subsidiary part of the politics which is disadvantageous for women's equal descriptive representation. However, when the Turkey's conditions are considered, it is possible to notice that women do not participate in politics with equal conditions. In that sense, they need to find ways to organize as a group to increase their visibility in political arena. As it is not easy to manage this in the main body, they continue to create a ground to make their voices heard related to political participation of women, violence against women, women's participation to labor force, and women's human rights in general. On the other hand, one member of RPP's women's wings support the idea that there is not an old, structured organization besides the problem of sign in terms of decision-making. There is a great transformation within political party to realize women's branches as a fundamental body that have a considerable influence on women's concerns that women face in everyday life. In that sense, there is the transformation in the women's wing about codes which will give it a formality in decision making processes.

The same discussion is held by NMP's member in a diverged perspectives which emphasizes socio-cultural structures of the society in a gendered way. Since there are not an organization specific to males, she argues that it seems like an exclusion of women from the decision-making mechanisms. Nevertheless, it is argued that women can express themselves better when there is an organization that is consist of women only. They know that their demands and problems will be handled in a studious way.

In an environment consisting only of women, they may feel more comfortable and free because of our cultural structure. But when we look at it, we see that there is no such thing as men's branch, but there are women's branch. It sounds like that's a bit of a sexist approach. On the one hand, when we evaluate it from a socio-cultural point of view, it seems as if this is needed for women to move freely, but on the other hand, it seems to create a contradiction. (NMP 1)

In terms of ideal way of women's representation, it is claimed that women must not be separated to different entities broken from the main political body. Although RPP and

NMP members justify their perceptions in quite opposing ways, they both claim that women's wings are necessary for women's concerns to be handled by decision makers in Turkey's condition.

4.7. Different Structures than Women's Wings

Until now, the perspectives on the existence of women's wings are taken into consideration where different structuring in three political parties are mentioned. While NMP and IYI Party follow the similar pattern to focus women's concerns, PDP has a unique organization within political party. It is named as vice president who is responsible from family, women, and disabled in NMP. In IYI Party, it is the Presidency of Women Policies that directly approaches women's concern at the center. Lastly, PDP has Women Assembly that is matchless with any other political party women's institutions. Although there is a not a women's wings in NMP currently, female respondents generally do not hold the awareness about why they went through different organizational structure under the main body. In terms of IYI Party, out of four respondents, only one does not realize that women's wings diverge from women policies while she states that both are not separated from the main structure. Nevertheless, the main inclination of not having women's wings is not seeing women as a subsidy. The role of this structure is producing women policies, arrangements, regulations on laws, education given about women's rights to suborganizations, and establishing interaction between women and non-governmental organizations which does not see women's concerns as subordinate.

PDP organized as Women Assembly since they want to create an independence from the main political party which sometimes try to make male-dominated decisions. This unique and autonomous structure does not have any responsibility to mixed organizations where decisions are taken by women and there is not any right for males to discuss, make a criticism, and change the decisions. In that manner, when the decisions are reported to the political party, they must obey the rules, proposal, and decisions of Women Assembly. Female respondents strengthened this functioning by claiming that Women Assembly has a genuine position within PDP like this political

party's authentic position among other political parties in Turkey. This assembly structuring is the indicator of horizontal relationship among different party organizations rather than creating hierarchy where women's concerns are not considered as the initial focus of the main body. For female respondents, it does not mean that they do not realize any role of males to change patriarchal society, rather they believe that males must struggle to overcome the power and strength that male-dominated norms give them not to acknowledge women as inferior subjects that must follow their paths.

PDP does not have women's branch; it has a women's assembly. I emphasize that this women's assembly is completely independent, original and free from the mixed structure of the party. (PDP 1)

Even though it is a mixed structure, we organize separately as women, we make our own discussions, make our own decisions, and men have no saying in this matter. (PDP 2)

The difference of the women's assembly is that it is only possible for women to organize the women's mind through solidarity with the women's assembly. (PDP 4)

I think the most distinguishing feature is that the women's assembly within the party is unique and autonomous. Therefore, it is not responsible to co-chairmen, the central board of directors, in short, to anyone. The women's council is only responsible to women, this is very important. (PDP 5)

We think it is inappropriate for men to discuss women's issues. Of course, they should continue to struggle from their own point of view to overcome male domination, but women should have the right to decide on women's issues. (PDP 2)

Besides decision making mechanisms' being female minded, campaigns and actions are also only made by women where males could not participate them. For PDP side, the question that can be raised regarding this attitude is how males can transform themselves based on gender equality as they are not included in actions. It is argued that when males want to change themselves on women's concerns, they have to disclaim the traditional patriarchal norms. The way towards this transformation begins with males' houses and how they treat women there. They must create equal relationship with women in their lives and apply positive discrimination principles where they must open the doors to political participation.

Men should create environment for women in the house be able to attend such events. In other words, if it is necessary to take care of the child, let men take care of the child, cook the food, and do other works. So that the woman can leave the house and participate in that event because the subject literally interests them. This is what we recommend to men. (PDP 2)

In that sense, they do not totally exclude men from their struggle. They encourage males to help the destruction of gender roles where women can be emancipated by making their voices heard and making themselves visible in issues considering their lives.

When all intra party women's organizations are handled, it is essential to raise the question of whether these different establishment within political parties are adequate to open a ground for women's concerns. Rather than protect women's interests as a united women's movement with the combination of all political parties' women's organizations, they insist to keep the line of their political parties' ideology. Although there needs to be a common concern as women's human rights in Turkey where all women in different political parties must follow the same pattern, in general, intra-party women's units follow what is said by the main body of their political party. As it is seen from the responses, female politicians explain the reasons that lie behind the existence of women's unit within parties and somehow flatter their own establishment compared to other political parties. Hence, it does not give an opportunity to create strong interaction between women's organizations of all political parties when the women's concerns are handled.

CHAPTER 5

PERCEPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

As it is mentioned before, some argue that women's existence in political arena will result in the representation of women's concerns in public policy agenda. However, others support the idea that it is not always the case where women's numerical political representation could enhance the efforts given to assist women and their needs. The reflection of the second criticism is seen in the following response.

Why has violence against women come to the fore? Was there violence against women before, but not everyone was talking about it? Now I wonder if the rights given to women are too much, so that has these exhilarated women. (JDP 3)

The statement above is the response of one of the JDP members who are in a role related to women's concerns in that political party. It directly reflects the ideology that many of the respondents emphasize the urgent need where this mindset will be abolished to inhibit VAW and gain gender equality. Although all participants in that party do not share similar responses on the issue of VAW, this quotation carry the role of mirroring patriarchal norms that want to ignore women's human rights.

5.1. Violence Against Women Perceptions

Although VAW perceptions are handled under three subtypes as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide, political parties' female members' thoughts on VAW in general terms is essential to understand their stance. The principle of zero tolerance is reflected in the perceptions of JDP's female politicians in regard of their political party's perspective on VAW. They condemn violent acts towards women and every creation where physical, psychological, and any other violence type must be discussed all together. Different than other political parties, it is mentioned that they look from

the religious perspective when handling the issues about VAW as Islam forbids the violent acts that damages individuals. In addition, the emphasis on being supra-political conception is seen in JDP side as it is argued that VAW must not be the concern of politics where all parts of the society have to struggle against it. This point can be handled as an understanding that is against the perception of VAW as political. Hence, their view complicates to construe the real dynamics behind VAW that needs to be approached. They focus on their actions that compromise with their discourses so that they try to inhibit violence with their real-life implementations and practices.

In terms of not accepting violence against women, we take it from the religious dimension and bring it to today's situation. We also look at the event religiously in women's branch. (JDP 2)

It is necessary not to engage in politics on this issue, and not to be a material for politics. This violence against women is an issue that needs to be studied interdisciplinary. In other words, you cannot overcome this issue with only legal regulations, it is an issue that we have to fight with all layers of society. (JDP 1)

Different than religious based understanding and the position beyond politics, in NMP, they give importance to their political leader Bahçeli's saying and refer to his ideas in handling this issue.

We usually go on the words of our leader. Because we accept our leader as a wise person. Our whole society accepts himself this way anyway. Every sentence he says is very accurate on this subject and we express our opinion by being more active at the point of applying them through his discourses. (NMP 1)

The role of Devlet Bahçeli on the construction of NMP's female politicians' ideas is fundamental since they believe that he is the wise person whose ideas are relevant on every issue he talks about. In that sense, information that are given to women who faced with violence is made considering Bahçeli's guidance and instructions. When this understanding is taken into consideration, it is possible to argue that political actions on women's concerns are decided by the male mind where females of NMP follow his orders as they are accepted as the ultimate truth. Similar to JDP, NMP has the characteristics of being the leader party where Devlet Bahçeli follows the traits of the leader whose ideas are accepted by all cadres. Even the issue of VAW that must

be the ultimate concern of women in politics, it is the party leader who spread his perceptions to all members. Rather than explaining their stance as individuals or political party in general considering VAW, they pursue the discourses of the head. This could be given as the indicator that uncovers the authoritarian party structure that depends on the party leader who has the ultimate saying in all issues.

RPP members claim that they are clear on the issue of VAW as a party where they adopt the principle of zero tolerance like in JDP. On contrary to JDP, it is claimed that VAW is a problem of democracy as a political issue. It is also highlighted that they are not only struggle against VAW, but they also maintain a stance against every type of violence towards every creature. When the main concern of this study is handled, it is argued that women encounter with violence because of their gender identity where gender inequalities lie behind this issue.

Unfortunately, women in Turkey are exposed to violence because they are women, and we take this very seriously. The underlying reason for this is that gender equality has not yet been established in society. There is an understanding that a man is born as a stronger and leading being at a very young age. We look at it on this basis and we position our political struggle on the understanding of gender equality. Therefore, we approach violence against women from this perspective. (RPP 1)

It emerges as a result of an imbalance of power relations taught by society. Violence of all kinds is shaped in power relations. But violence against women is a violence brought by gender inequality. This is our point of view as the Republican People's Party, and we think that this is an area that we have to fight as the society. (RPP 2)

The emphasis on power relations is essential in their perceptions since they believe that social structures are shaped due to the patriarchal functioning of the society. These power relations are fed by masculinist norms since it realizes males as the superior individuals who have every right to perform on women. In that sense, women are seen as commodities that could not have any right on her life and when she does not obey the rules or when male want this action to be performed, women face with violence. Male's justification of performing violence towards women is sustained through their strength where women are the inferior ones that must be controlled by the male mind. As the statements mention, these power relations are taught to society starting from

very early ages so that they can easily internalize it and not to rebel this. Priority and significance that are given to males is the ultimate reason that led societies to have gender inequalities.

The similar attitude is also seen in IYI Party's female politicians. They argue that the zero tolerance is adopted towards every different type of violence. It is not only the physical violence that they do not accept, but also economic and sexual violence is acknowledged as the severe ones to reprimand. Besides the types of violence, they claim that violence towards any living creature cannot be legitimized or legalized.

We think that this is a social problem rather than a political one, that is, we see it as a supra-political problem. Therefore, when dealing with a supra-political problem, you can keep your perspective much broader on this issue. What does this mean, if there is violence against women or femicide is committed anywhere in Turkey, all women here can intervene in that matter, regardless of their political opinion or stance. (IP 3)

VAW being supra-political is important to understand the dynamics behind IYI Party's approach to women when they encounter with violence. What they mean when they refer to this concept has to be enlightened. It can be asked that does she means depoliticization of violence against women when being supra-political is considered like in JDP side? This is not the case while it is explained as not taking any notice of women's political stance when she reports that she faced with violence. They approach every woman in an equal manner without questioning their political perceptions and attitudes where it can be comprehended that they have a sensitive position about VAW.

PDP members claim that VAW and every unjust attitude and implementation towards women are at the top of their main concerns. It is mentioned that there are fashionable concepts in politics while focusing on their stance in terms of VAW such as zero tolerance, however, it does not go beyond being a declaration. Taking an action is something different from using such terms to reflect their position. Rather than having these concepts, the reaction in real life practices are essential features that defines political parties' positions towards VAW. How PDP's female members define VAW is essential to realize the difference they have or commonality they share with other political parties. They define this issue as male violence against women since there is

the male subject who perpetuate violence. It gets the power from patriarchal social structures that gave males a prior and superior position where gender roles justify the VAW as a mechanism that tries to ensure control over women. Their reasoning is explained by that the male violence towards women could be explained through the functioning of society with patriarchal norms (Brownmiller, 1975; Caputi, 1989; Kasinsky, 1975). With these structural forces, they claim that VAW cases are not individual issues rather they are political. Hence, due to the domination of male discourses and mindset, VAW is political where they see this issue as gendercide.

There are fashionable terms and rhetoric such as zero tolerance for violence against women. We see that the parties that use these discourses use it as a discourse but not as an action. Therefore, the rhetoric of our party is to ensure that women participate equally in all areas of life. (PDP 3)

We define the issue of violence as male violence against women. Because this has a subject. The perpetrators of this violence are men, and their source is a male-dominated system. In other words, we always say that femicides and violence against women are political... This is not an isolated matter or a matter of a man's anger. In fact, there is a consequence of the patriarchal system's gender inequality. There are roles that are imposed as the roles of femininity and masculinity, and as a result, we are faced with male violence. We say violence is not isolated but political because men use violence as a means of establishing authority over women. (PDP 2)

Equality is essential. Since the masculine mentality dominates politics, we approach the issue from the point of view that murders and violence against women are also political and carnage. (PDP 1)

When all responses are considered, zero tolerance is the concept that most of the political parties' members use to reflect their attitudes towards violence with similar understandings. In addition, it can be comprehended that those patriarchal forces justify VAW is only reflected in the RPP and PDP members as they realize the real mechanisms that give power to males so that they would like to stop violence by considering the structural reasons that lie behind it. Furthermore, being supra-political is mentioned in both female politicians of JDP and IYI Party in a diverged sense while JDP members acknowledge it as not handling it as political issue, IYI party members only refer the need to embrace all women in an equal sense. Although there are two debates of patriarchal root and being supra-political, NMP members do not involve in

these discussions since they speak with the terms used by their political party leader who approach every issue in an ultimately accurate way.

5.1.1. Domestic Violence

In terms of domestic violence, there are similar trends in political parties where the violence of the partner is categorized under this type without looking at marital tie. The reason why the concept of domestic violence is adopted rather than the use of family violence is to demolish the purpose of patriarchal mind that tries to narrow down the number of cases that can be counted as violence. In that sense, they are focusing on husbands, fiancés, or boyfriends' violence over their female partners regardless of the action happened in the house or not.

Domestic violence is the violence perpetrated by men within the conditions of living together at home. But maybe it should be expanded and said it as all kinds of male violence against women for our use. Because when you put it differently, they can look for a legal escape area. (PDP 2)

We use this concept as domestic violence; I do not find it right to compress it into a family concept. As I just mentioned, domestic violence is limited to family violence in Turkey. If a woman lives in the same house with her fiancée or boyfriend, it should be evaluated under the same category. In other words, I think all kinds of violence that a woman experiences from anyone she lives with should be defined in the same way which should not be limited to family only. (RPP 1)

Any situation experienced by a woman from her family, any blood relatives, spouse, fiancée, or partner. (JDP 1)

To understand whether there are certain causes that these politicians think behind the domestic violence is essential to locate the differences and commonalities of political parties handling these issues in politics. The extended understanding of domestic violence rather than mentioning family violence is adopted by most of the respondents since they emphasized the relational bound can be associated with marriage partners, or unmarried couples and it can happen both inside and outside of the house.

When the following issues that are seen in Turkey is considered, different political parties' members mention the triviality of reasons of violence. It can be waking up for

the breakfast, women's economic independence, economic crisis within family and many other factors can be given as the underlying reasons of violence. However, violence cannot be justified with any explanation or reason that is performed over women.

Here we are talking about a man who burned his wife for waking him up for breakfast, or we are faced with a woman who was subjected to violence because she did not prepare a meal. Therefore, there is no excuse for this, but the traditional factor that triggers is of course the mentality that does not see men and women as equal. Especially if the woman does not have economic freedom or has nowhere to go, the man sees the right to beat her. (RPP 1)

It was in Antalya if I remember correctly. There is a man who burned his wife and child with boiling water or oil because she said, "Breakfast is ready, let's eat." Therefore, it is not correct to seek a justification for domestic violence in Turkish society. (IP 4)

Whatever the cause of violence, I think it is important not to get lost in reasons because the result is terrible. Of course, there could be many reasons. Sometimes these reasons can be very simple, meaningless, or minor when we examine the events. Therefore, violence is a type of disease and there can be no justification for it. (JDP 1)

It is claimed that people should not hide behind such so called encouragements that could legitimize VAW. There could not be any eligible factors of violence as women's clothing, cooking, attitudes, or cheating. In that sense, male justifications with nonsensical expressions must not be the concern of both society and legal functioning since they must guarantee the safety of women whatever the reason behind violence is. On the contrary to these attempts to legitimize violence, it is argued that power relation between gender where males are located in a superior position leads to that violence to arise (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Stark & Flitcraft, 1991).

5.1.2. Sexual Harassment

Conceptualization of sexual harassment and perceptions towards it do not show variety since all political parties adopt similar notion when sexual harassment is the concern. However, the issue of taking women's declaration as the starting point for investigation and referring the consent openly or covertly are the points that

demonstrate variations in responses. The legal definitions are valued in JDP side to call an action sexual harassment. When they started to be exemplified this concept, they give several conditions considering physically touching, verbal disturbances, or the establishment of uncomfortable environment where women do not want these actions to be taken. Besides sexual harassment towards women, they disapprove the existence of it regardless of the target. However, in terms of the acceptance of the women's declaration for the sexual harassment cases, it is highlighted that there are women who abuse this understanding. Men can be the victims of the codes that include the issue of declaration as the starting point as it is not possible to prove this issue scientifically. By considering this argument, it must be asked that why women blame men in such an issue as it is woman whose honor is questioned by the society, and they are found guilty of this act.

I think sexual harassment goes beyond tangible, visible, medically demonstrable cases. I'm very sorry, but there are cases where we see abuses as lawyers. Since sometimes there are cases of abusive use, it is necessary to determine this situation well. That's why I think that maybe someone else's life should not be ruined based on a statement alone. (JDP 2)

In NMP side, it is argued that women are the ones that can understand the meaning of that action whether it is made non-abusive way. The ability to feel the content of an action is highly underscore in that party's female members even a look can be included as sexual harassment. The issue of women's declaration which has been very essential to focus that is valued by feminist circles and women's groups is not mentioned in that political party considering this concept.

There is hugging and touching someone's arm, but individual feels it. It is not like someone pats your shoulder in a fatherly way, but if it is uncomfortable, it is harassment. (NMP 2)

In fact, sexual harassment may be a feeling. Even one look can become sexual harassment. (NMP 3)

In RPP members' understanding, the sexual harassment conception provides a vital aspect where legal definitions are considered like in JDP. Hence, they favor to consider how legal frameworks define sexual harassment and act through this conceptualization. In terms of the conditions that can be called as sexual harassment,

they give several examples counted under this violence type. It is the acts that are performed towards women due to being women. The gender identity is given as the fundamental factor behind VAW.

We can call it as sexual harassment which a woman suffers any kind of sexual harassment just because she is a woman. There is not only physical sexual harassment, but also digital sexual harassment is common recently. Therefore, as the Republican People's Party, our point of view regarding sexual harassment against women opposes any kind of sexual assault. (RPP 2)

This is a very broad statement. Sexual harassment can take any form. It can be done by talking, it can be done by touching, or it can be directly rape. (RPP 5)

As it can be seen from the statements, they demonstrate how extensively this concept can be defined. It is not only the physical sexual act that is performed towards women, but also it could be the digital or verbalized disturbances that are given to women without consent. For instance, if someone insist to meet with a woman where she does not want this via social media, this could be sexual harassment that woman face.

IYI Party's female politicians also defines sexual harassment by referring to legal definitions where they do not accept any kind of violence and they take the women's declaration as a starting point for taking action and investigation. In terms of its explanation, they give some examples that can be named as sexual harassment. Even a disturbing eye on woman could be acknowledged as sexual harassment. The consent is highly mentioned in this political party's members when it is not given by women that could directly called as unwanted sexual action. What consent means is essential here as the voluntary desire to any kind of sexual activity that has to be in mutual realization that the other party is also wanting this action (Lim & Roloff, 1999, p. 3).

We think that the statement of the woman should be essential. (IP 4)

It is clear in PDP members to adopt the notions of consent and women's declaration while calling an action sexual harassment. Every intervention and action without giving consent by the other individual is accepted as sexual harassment. The content of the consent must be handled under giving a verbal approval for an action to be performed without any force. In addition, women's declaration must be the starting point to investigate this action in legal institutions. They develop different

investigation pattern in their political party if such a declaration occurs regarding sexual harassment distinctly from the classical legal functioning. Without putting a burden of proving it to women, this obligation is attributed to men to release women from such an unjust implementation. The reasoning behind this is explained through the difficulty for women to apply law enforcement offices immediately after it happened since the direct reflex of women is going home where they get rid of those clothes and clean themselves hours and hours which wipe out every evidence on their body and clothes.

Any non-consensual intervention is harassment. (PDP 1)

We use the basic principle that the woman's statement is essential. In such crimes, the statement of the woman is accepted as the basis, we say that the man must prove the opposite. You know, in classical criminal justice system, the claimant must prove their claim, while the other party defends themselves. We say that this situation should be reversed, and we apply this in our own disciplinary law and practice. We say that if the woman says something, if she has a statement, it is accepted as such, and the man has to prove the opposite. It is not true just because she said so, but we say the opposite must be proven by the other party. We describe a mechanism by which the burden of proof is displaced. Why are we saying this, especially in crimes such as sexual harassment or assault, women cannot easily raise this issue. It has a direct link with gender. Because when you bring up such an accusation, women are immediately accused and prosecuted. We already see in many practices and lawsuits that women are prosecuted rather than holding men responsible with statements like "what did you do", "what did you say". Secondly, women cannot immediately apply to the disciplinary committee or complain when something like this happens to them, because first of all, they try to get rid of the burden of the abuse they have experienced. Unfortunately, it is still gender related. If there is no immediate application, the evidence will not be there. We also have this problem in the judiciary. A woman who has been sexually assaulted is expected to go to court or the police immediately, but this is not possible. For instance, a woman's first reflex when something like this happens may be to bathe for hours. Taking a shower is actually something that can destroy all evidence. But that is your current psychology, you cannot run to the police and say I am raped. (PDP 2)

Although there are differences in the issue of women's declaration, there are similar understanding on what sexual harassment mean and how extend its conceptualization is. They all against the sexual harassment towards any creature, however, they realize that most of the cases women are the one who face with this violence (Tangri et al., 1982). The similarity of responses is strengthened through two conditions that are

given to respondents to analyze whether they see any difference between cases. In the first case, Ali comes to his ex-wife Elif's house, and he sexually attacks her after a conversation. In the second case, unknown person sexually attacks Ayşe at the street in late hours. It is asked whether relational past of the individuals create difference in their perception in terms of this sexual harassment situation. In regard of these two conditions that is mentioned above, it can be acknowledged that female politicians of all political parties do not realize any difference between two circumstances. However, some of them believe that the society could alleviate the first one since he is seen as the one who had a relation with her, and she could be blamed through asking the question of why she took him home. All members against this justification of sexual harassment made by the society since there needs to be the clear understandings about sexual harassment conceptualization and women's rights in terms of this issue. Consequently, as it is mentioned before by RPP and PDP members, the real dynamic that cause the occurrence of sexual harassment cases is the practice of male domination to control women (MacKinnon, 1979; Cockburn, 1991).

5.1.3. Femicide

Except JDP and NMP members, there are generally an awareness about the emphasis on the concept of femicide rather than taken this into consideration as a murder. Although Diana Russel heard about the concept of femicide that was used by Carol Orlock, she declared this at the Tribunal on Crimes Against Violence in Brussel. "It was my intention in resurrecting the term femicide to refer to killings of females by males because they are females, that this politicization of this widespread and most extreme form of male violence against women and girls" (Russell, 2009, p. 29). In that sense, femicide as a concept reflects the patriarchal rules that declare their rights on women which needs to be dissolved with feminist campaigns. To understand such awareness issue, the important questions that must be raised why the use of femicide becomes widespread instead of mentioning this issue in media and politics as murder? Among five political parties' members, two diverse reasonings emerge as favoring this conceptualization or not.

JDP members claim that it is already a human being who gets killed where the discrimination should not be made regarding the sex, or political stance. Without mentioning the gender identity of that person, it is said that the severity of the murder to every creature must be highlighted. Only one respondent from this political party holds the same ideology with other reasoning of gender identity. Besides this idea of the human being, it is mentioned that spreading fear is aimed where femicide emphasis is handled as a threat to other women to obey the rules. In terms of media's use of this concept, it is claimed by NMP circles that femicide conceptualization is preferred to influence individuals emotionally and psychologically that lead to getting attention of the audience. It is also said that there are more men who are killed more than women. In that sense, the femicide issue is consciously revealed and represented where some political parties try to affect public by using such concerns.

It is as if the concept of femicide is being politically portrayed, it is not a man or a woman, but a human being. In fact, it would be much better if we could all establish the concepts of murder and human, without making any party discrimination. In other words, if we can evaluate women as human beings without accepting them as a separate commodity, maybe we will proceed much more quickly with a different perspective. (JDP 2)

It is done in order to affect people psychologically, to affect more emotionally and to attract more attention to the news. This is actually wrong, but the news is made like this because it attracts people's attention. (NMP 3)

Perhaps more men than women are murdered. In general, women are brought to the fore, I think this is done on purpose. Some political movements are carried out by hiding behind women and children. (NMP 2)

As it can be seen in the previous statement, there are not an awareness about the use of femicide as the killing of women by men. As it is mentioned before, there is only one respondent from JDP who claims that it is essential to emphasize murder of women as femicide since it happens by men with relational motivations. Even there are many men killed in Turkey, it is highlighted that there is a clear difference between these cases and femicide that needs to be taken into consideration as a significant concept. This idea is also seen in most of the respondents from RPP and IYI Party, and all PDP respondents. It is argued that since other murders are handled under general crimes, femicide must be defined and acknowledged as women being killed by men. To create

a social awareness about this conceptualization of femicide as the motivation is women's gender identity, this term must be used by all institutions. Gendercide is acknowledged due to the high number of women who are killed by men coming from their responses. This also mirrors the severity of the femicide issue that has to be taken into consideration in politics to inhibit its occurrence.

More women are killed by men. Other murders are common crimes. But it seems to me that it is called femicide because women are killed by their husband or boyfriend. (IP 3)

Women are killed in this country just because they are women. Therefore, I think it is correct to define it as femicide or even as gendercide. (RPP 1)

We call the murder of a woman by a man as a femicide because of gender inequality. (RPP 2)

In other words, since femicide has entered an ever-increasing phase in a much more systematic way, it has now started to become more political... Therefore, femicide is exactly a statement that should be made against that political stance. (PDP 1)

It is very important to say femicide, but it is important to emphasize when there are crimes committed by men against women. And it is important to report from a place that tells you what this actually means, without legitimizing or normalizing it. (PDP 2)

As all these perceptions are considered, the necessity of the use of femicide must be highlighted to distinguish it from any other murders that are committed due to various reasons such as inheritance dispute, intracompany disagreements, or any other killings that are nothing to do with gender identity. To underline the staidness of the murders that are committed towards women with the motivation of their gender must be located in a particular position that is in urgent need of direct diligence.

5.2. Political Actions and Studies to Inhibit VAW

It is essential to understand the influence of female members and women's units of political parties to increase substantive representation considering women's interests. This substantive representation of women will be investigated in terms of their studies related to VAW and three subtypes that are the main concerns of this thesis. RPP and

NMP members give one of their big projects' names that they use as a tool to create awareness, reduce, and inhibit the cases of VAW in Turkey. On the other hand, other political parties mention their actions and studies in a general sense.

What JDP's female members claim is quite interesting when they are asked about the actions and studies they carry in terms of VAW. What they provide as efforts are the product of state institutions rather than the political parties own work in its functioning. It can be said that they cannot be counted as the work of JDP only just because it is the party in government. They give the law no. 6284, women's shelters, ŞÖNİM, Women Support App (KADES), alimony, education as examples of their efforts to make changes on legal frameworks and touch women's life by creating mechanisms to protect them. Since they cannot be appropriated to one particular political party, it is not possible to handle these under the special works that are done by JDP.

On the other hand, IYI Party members give value to awareness studies that they carry to inform the public and women specifically to explain their rights. They realize Istanbul Convention as a preventive mechanism of VAW. Their focus is about the importance of its effective implementation. For this aim, they created brochures that explains what the rights of women are, what women need to do when their rights are violated, and from where women can seek help. The awareness campaign of the law no. 6284 and Istanbul Convention is their ultimate concern to demonstrate that the VAW is a social issue that needs to be handle in political circles where IYI Party is the most systematic and consistent one to highlight and work on these problems from their perspective. Besides this, they have a project name Women of Sun as women cooperatives to assist women and providing employment opportunities. With economic independence, it will be possible for women to have a right on their lives, and they could find a power to speak and stand against violence when they face it.

When PDP's attempts to inhibit VAW is handled, they have educational projects to establish a bound between society and themselves to work together for the reduction of VAW cases. This awareness campaign is also followed by socio-cultural studies, workshops, and charettes including different individuals and institutions both within

and outside of the political party. Justice for Women is another campaign that they carry which underline the naked body search in prisons, and exhortation of rights of women. Besides this direct focus on VAW, they also continue to create campaigns regarding women's poverty which damages women's independence that could not lead them to stand against violence.

We had women co-chairs and we created women's policy directorates. Under them, we have established centers that both directly support women's institutions and directly intervene in violence against women. We started to work with foundations and associations that fight violence against women. (PDP 3)

All kinds of activities that empower women, especially gender trainings, created by municipalities. (PDP 4)

The previous responses are the various attempts of these three political parties to inhibit VAW. The following two political parties mainly mention the considerable projects that they have to change policies and implementations in regard of. In NMP's responses, the Policies of Women, Family, Children, and Disabled (KAÇEP) Symposium Society, Women and Violence is given as their worthy study that aims to create awareness on the violence problems that women face and women's importance in the society. There are two books coming out of this symposium where politicians and academics have articles that explains Turkish women's historical position in relation to society, the various violence types, the reasons that lie behind violence, and the proposed solutions to these issues. As the related articles from those books are read, it is seen that the Turkish family structure is emphasized as a mechanism that can reduce the number of VAW cases if it sustains the features without demolishing. Although male domination is given as a reason of violence, women's so-called sacred position within family is highlighted as the reproducers of the next generations who could teach cultural norms of Turkish society (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 2020).

RPP members highlight the importance of Right to Live Project (YAŞAM HAK) that they created as an important mechanism to stand with women. Within the scope of this project, they opened a call center where women get interact with party officials to explain their situations and demands. Without looking at women's political stance,

they try to assist women considering their needs which could be lawyer support, psychological support, interact with municipalities for a place in women's shelter, helping them to take the protection order, or finding a job if possible. The project's field is comprehensive that can cater to every woman's needs.

Our local governments are always by of women's side who have been subjected to violence with the understanding of the social state, and they always support them. Again, with the support lines against violence against women, they communicate their problems with the bar association or women's associations or provide employment if they are unemployed. Therefore, our party is trying to be on the side of women from all sides, with a policy of zero tolerance for violence against women. (RPP 1)

We follow the court process of a woman who was raped in Yenimahalle. Her last trial was on the 17th, but in court we learned that her lawyer had withdrawn. So, the woman was also surprised. She is right, she was raped, she is a victim of violence, she has a child, she has financial difficulties, what will this woman do? She took refuge in the Republican People's Party because the Republican People's Party arranged a lawyer for her, my friends are currently working on it. (RPP 5)

Besides this project, it is said that they give legislative proposals and parliamentary questions that is consist of VAW. For instance, persistent following is one of their ultimate concerns that needs to get a necessary attention to find a ground in criminal justice system that could prevent women for a possible violence they could face.

5.3. Recommendations to Inhibit VAW

5.3.1. Education

Education is highly mentioned recommendation in all political parties; however, it is taken into consideration with different meanings. For instance, JDP members claim that education is the ultimate condition which can erase all backwardness. It is claimed that there are three interrelated steps for an individual to obey the rules of the society without having any violent actions which are family, school, and the environment. The first station is the family as an institution where an individual's initial communication begins. This education and upbringings in the family is the root of every motivation

and movement that an individual take that is strengthened through the school's and the environment's attitudes and perspectives about social relations.

The similar concern of education is seen NMP members where family is at the center of this recommendation as the vital institution for the continuation of the state without any violent actions by citizens. It is argued that the reason behind VAW is related to corruption of the society where moral values do not remain at the forefront of individuals' relations with each other. The current social interactions are established on the base of commodities so that it is important for a family to rebuilt old moral codes on their children to have a harmonious way of life. In that manner, they demand to construct the traditional Turkish family structure which must be enlarged with educational systems that teaches how to be a moral person rather than giving priority to math and science. The updated education in schools must be based on high qualified Turks with Islamic cultural values.

The need on education is mentioned in academic sense to cease domestic violence as a policy recommendation in IYI Party. The reasoning behind this is that there are less violence cases in educated families since it gives individuals owning extensive vocabulary with the ability to use them while expressing themselves to others. As uneducated man does not have such possession, they try to express the feeling of anger with a violent act.

In my opinion, the most important solution or the most important policy that can be produced on this issue is education. In other words, cases of violence are less common in the family structure formed by educated individuals. However, the cases are more common in the family structure with a lower education level. A man with a lesser vocabulary shows his anger fiercely for not being able to express himself towards his partner. (IP 4)

Placing educational background as a ground where the domestic violence can be understood is a vague concept since the use of vocabulary simplifies the violence. What they mean by education must be given in a detailed manner to clarify questions that can be raised such as is it only necessary to give the academic education, is there a need for a knowledge related to moral norms, or what should be the place that education will be given. One of the respondents in that party gives point to the

education of gender equality where couples must be subject to the pre-marriage training where all the requirements of that concept must be reflected. In addition, there is also another perspective that give value to gender equality training to every organization of IYI Party which can diffuse to diverse parts of the society. This gender equality training must be given to children starting from early ages in schools since gender roles are attributed at those ages, this education will inhibit the internalization of these roles that create gender inequalities where women are seen as the secondary individuals.

In RPP, education is given as the solution to inhibit sexual harassment in society starting from family relations. It is claimed that both violent behaviors and gender roles are shaped within family structure so that gender equality training within this institution could sustain the reduction of such violent actions of individuals. Curriculum of school education is also highlighted that will consolidate the gender equality understandings of children.

When we look at our education curriculum, starting from primary school, the woman is positioned as a housewife who makes pickles, and the man as the head of the family who earns money. Gender-free education needs to be given and gender equality needs to be taught as a lesson. Of course, starting from primary school, I think this should be included in a curriculum. (RPP 2)

It cannot be denied that gender equality training in schools are the essential parts of drawing attention to gender roles that must not run the society since they are the games of patriarchy that wants to protect its position. Hence, children in early ages must understand the incorrect perception that cooking, cleaning, and caring are the responsibilities of women while bread winning is the duty of men. While there is the focus on such education, the emphasized education in the family does not rescue women from a subordinate position. The following statement argues that male members of the family must be educated in a way that the other women in the society are somebodies' sisters and mothers where we must treat them with that respect. This idea could put women in a needy position where males must see them as dependents rather than individuals by themselves.

For example, I believe that boys or brothers should be educated that women outside are just like their own sisters and mothers. (RPP 5)

This gender equality training is also handled by PDP members which must be implemented and internalized in every institution of the society. Only with that way, it becomes possible to realize the policies in real-life practices. Without any awareness raised in different associations and the members of various offices, policies cannot reach its aim to provide gender equality.

5.3.2. Women Focused Recommendations

5.3.2.1. Raising Women's Awareness

There are also proposals that directly aims to focus on women where they could enhance their positions within society without facing with violence or appropriately reacting to violence if they encounter. In JDP's side, it is argued that women's awareness must be heightened to feel themselves empowered in the case of domestic violence. They have to seek their rights where they know that the state supports them in every sense. They should understand that all public institutions from hospitals to law enforcement offices will assist them in a considerable sensibility since it is claimed that they give trainings to these institutions regarding the cases of domestic violence.

Public institutions and organizations were provided with one-on-one service in this regard. We have served hundreds of thousands of public personnel in this sense. In other words, in every institution they go, they will find a public official who will greet them with great sensitivity. They have important legal rights, and it is crucial for them to know and seek these rights. I think it is valuable to raise awareness of women in this sense. (JDP 1)

Similar to JDP's perception, the significance is given to women's education in NMP. As it helps individuals to gain their core identity, and self- confidence, it becomes possible for that person to stand against violence. Besides an education that strengthens women's self-development, they need to be informed about the public institutions that they can receive support if there are violence in their lives.

I attach great importance to creating an environment where women can feel safe and express themselves in the best way, with trained and experienced units formed by local administrations, state governorships and security forces. So, when a woman is exposed to such a thing, she must have a place to go. I think

she should be able to be with educated people who will find solutions and place them wisely or reach them quickly. (NMP 3)

As it can be remembered from the projects of IYI Party, its members give value to raise awareness of women in terms of their rights and every violence type. This awareness raising campaign with women's education have a different perspective in RPP members' explanations. Women are essential since they both constitute half of the population, and they give birth to the other half. Beyond the reproductive role of women, children's educational responsibility is given to them. It is also reflected in the following statements that women complain about the males' violent behaviors even they are the raisers of that group of individuals. Although respondents claim that women's role is vital to raise the generation that is purified from gender roles, this aim cannot be realized as they attribute this training role to women continuously again and again. It can be comprehended that these gendered educational roles that are attributed to women in RPP are contradictory to their free and independent individual understanding who get rid of the gender roles.

All I can say is education, especially the education of women. Because I always said that half of the world is consist of women, but they give birth to the other half. That's why education is so important. (RPP 5)

A great deal of work falls on parents, but especially on women. We are now complaining about men here, but we raise those men after all. Therefore, especially in the family, gendered explanations should not be made, you are a girl, you are a boy, do this or that. In other words, the family has a great responsibility in raising children who are free from gender roles. (RPP 2)

This training role of women in the family is not seen in PDP as women's awareness issue is urged upon by this political party's female members where women must know their rights and their unique position in social relations with their gender identity without having any discriminatory behaviors coming towards themselves. They offer to reach out every woman in field works regardless of their environment, background, political stance, and other identities where they can assist women to meet with consciousness of their identity of being women. Hence, women must learn that they are not subordinated citizens as they are free and equal individuals whose rights and actions cannot be determined by any patriarchal forces.

In all women's studies, it is necessary to reach all women from different environments, one by one, to enable them to meet with the awareness of womanhood. I think this is very important. We need to take steps and develop policies and projects that will remind women who have been made to forget their female identity, who have been turned into a shadow person, who are not even told that they are equal as first-class people, and how free and equal women they should be. (PDP 1)

First of all, I would say gender equality. Secondly, I think it is important to have policies that help women to express and empower themselves. (PDP 4)

So, it is a matter of awareness, of course. Women need to be empowered in this regard because sharing harassment cases is a very difficult process for women. Therefore, it is necessary to knit a mentality together for women to be very comfortable in this regard, to be strong, to create grounds for making this statement, to not be questioned and blamed. (PDP 5)

The private is political, family matters are impersonal, cannot be left at the mercy of men, it is not a space to which we turn our backs as private. From that point of view, these family relations should be really transparent. It is necessary to build mechanisms that will politically intervene in these areas. It is necessary to build mechanisms that will empower women and create awareness for women. (PDP 5)

With the awareness of femininity and women's rights, it becomes possible for women to declare that they face with violence. Saying that they are sexually harassed is not an easy issue for women, in that manner, they should know that they will not be questioned and criticized like it is their fault. Rather, women must feel comfortable to reveal the violence towards themselves as they are strengthened by laws and consciousness of their gender identity.

5.3.2.2. Women's Economic Empowerment

There are two concentrated proposals to develop women's participation in social life and gain their economic freedom to make their voices heard. Family Insurance project is the product of RPP members where women who work in the household can get independence from the male member of the family's insurance system that will give them an ability to stand by themselves so that they could not be silent if the violence is occurred in their lives. In the following two statement, the content of this project is

expounded profoundly. As it is seen, an item will be given to women like a pay data card where some amount of money will be loaded monthly. This will lead women to sustain their children and their own lives without bending male member of the family's strength.

For example, it has a very nice project for our women who do not work or have no economic income. We will go and tell this to our women in those villages. Family insurance is already a work for the woman in that house. It is a very nice work, but it needs to be explained. They will have a card like a salary card in their hands, a monthly amount will be loaded, they will go to buy bread and milk to their child. So she will not be at anyone's mercy. (RPP 5)

As the Republican People's Party, what we have been saying from the very beginning is family insurance. The implementation of family insurance is very important because the social existence of women should be strengthened, and their poverty should be prevented. (RPP 2)

To reduce the rates of VAW, women's economic status is aimed at RPP where both participation to labor force and giving insurance to their labor in household must be sustained by laws and mechanisms by the state. Besides women participation to labor force, not ignoring women's labor within private sphere and provide insurance to this effort is essential to help every woman in the society to declare their freedom from the men who could possibly oppress them with the economic power they have.

The similar concern is also shared by PDP since they give weight to the social insurance system to guarantee women's powerful stance against male's economic priority as they are seen as the breadwinners with the establishment and continuation of patriarchal structures. In that purpose, women who are called as housewives are targeted where they must be included under their own social insurance system as they can access to health systems through their own insurance without relying on men's.

For example, I think that women should be provided with social security regarding domestic violence. Women in the status of housewives should first be considered as insured and they should have the right to health from their own insurance. Sometimes it happens that the woman has to use the insurance of the man she was subjected to violence for treatment. Again, these housewives need to have their retirement rights after a certain age. By applying positive discrimination to women in all institutions for women's employment, from public institutions to municipalities to private companies, women's employment should be strengthened, and uninspired policies should be ended.

In other words, it is said that we will increase women's employment every two or three years, but the employment rate decreases on the contrary. Referring women to precarious or makeshift jobs is not a solution for women's employment. (PDP 3)

As a social state, many mechanisms such as kindergartens and shared laundries must be established to meet the domestic labor of women. The care of the sick and the elderly should not be imposed on women but should be done under the responsibility of the state. (PDP 2)

As it is reflected in this response, they also focus on the rights about the pension of these housewives where the insurance system is wanted to be produced for them. In that way, it will not be the only women's early ages that insurance system will be provided, but with the pension right they will continue their independence in every stage of lives. Besides this insurance system for women's economic enhancement, it is claimed that women's domestic labor must be sustained by the state with its feature of being social state. The actions to be taken are mentioned as nurseries, laundries for everyone, and care of patient and elderly must be provided by state mechanisms that will relieve women to enjoy their rights. This is very essential since women's attributed roles are tried to be dissolved where women will get rid of the chains of patriarchy. If women's so-called responsibilities are undertaken by the state, it will be necessary for women to participate in labor force without having any burdens and extra duties to carry. With that proposal, it can lead women to be able to join the public life if they would like to since their all gendered duties are taken by the state institutions. Hence, their proposals are feasible to bring more women to public spaces where they can gain their self-confidence and economic and social independence to establish a powerful stance towards unjust and unequal attitudes and violence towards them.

5.3.3. Legal Frameworks

Disincentive punishments are given as one of the crucial proposals that could restrain the occurrence of VAW cases. All political parties' female members claim that there needs to be a criminal justice system that implements deterrent penalties where other individuals in the society realize their severity to keep themselves out of violent behaviors.

Laws need to change. First of all, the penalties should be very heavy so that there is some deterrence. Because the man commits a crime but gets out of jail the next day. (IP 5)

There is definitely a defect in the laws because if the necessary penalties are given, it would be a deterrent. A man who is suspended from his wife comes and kills the woman when the suspension is over because there is no deterrent. Or the man who is suspended comes at the time of the suspension and kills the woman. So, we can't protect women. (IP 2)

First of all, what needs to be done immediately is the elimination of the policy of impunity. Some policy changes need to be made. In other words, it is necessary to purify all institutions from this male-dominated understanding. A gender egalitarian political attitude that supports women's liberties in society should be defended in all areas of life. (PDP 3)

The justice mechanism needs to act fast. Sometimes the woman applies twenty times but the man is not arrested or is arrested but released after a month. For example, we saw with this execution law, tens of women whose ex-husbands were released from prison were murdered in this way. In this respect, governments and states should take responsibility in this regard, build mechanisms, create legal guarantees so that femicide can be prevented. (PDP 5)

As it is seen from the statements, they give several reasonings behind their suggestion on more rigid way of imposing penalties. The laws must be transformed in VAW cases where aggravated penal sentence must be applied. Since the man perpetrates violence and come out of the jail one day or a month later, it does not have an impact on the ones who use or will use violence in regard of giving up such actions. They argue that the legal frameworks based on VAW does not protect women from perpetrators. There are cases in Turkey where males give harm or kill women even they have a restraining order. Or there is not any intimidating feature of the penalties given to these crimes as males come and harm women during or after their restraining order. Justice mechanisms does not fulfill its duty immediately or do not work properly not to aggrieve women. As it is mentioned by RPP response, there is a woman who applied to law enforcement offices 23 times as she felt the threat, however, it became impossible for her to get sufficient protection measures. She was attacked by men who she got divorced in the street and she died after 45 days fight to survive. In that manner, punishments must be given in upper limits, there should not be tie remissions

considering the clothing of males in trials, and there should not be gendered implications by court.

The harsher proposal comes from one of the NMP's member where she offers execution and eunuch for VAW cases. She gives a dialogue with a reporter about this proposal. After some time that the reporter questioned her proposal, that member asked the reporter whether she has a daughter, and the reporter had a four-year-old. The respondent asked what you would do if someone rape and killed her and he took 10 years sentence. The reporter said that she will wait in front of the prison that time and kill him after he gets out. In that manner she argues that the laws must appease the public's conscience. If the families know that the one who did this to my child does not breath, they will find a modicum of peace.

In PDP, changes in the regulation of women's shelter are noticed by claiming that it should not be the women who go to shelters when they encounter with violence, but it must be the perpetrators that needs to be isolated from the society. Besides this, if she needs a shelter, there has to be mechanisms that provide women with a safe place to stay. The system does not work appropriately if she goes to the police where this space is not sustained to women. It is claimed that there is also such a problem in current mechanism of women's shelter where the place does not embrace women's children. Thus, it is proposed that such convenient functions must be altered with the old regulations that do not contain human rights of women that must be sustained by the social state.

Shelters need to be opened widely and vigorously. If we look from a different point of view, maybe even by making rapid changes in the laws, mechanisms should be established where the men who perpetrate violence are isolated, not the women are located to shelters. (PDP 3)

For example, mechanisms need to be produced where the call centers for women can be implemented effectively... The number of shelters needs to be increased. Sexual violence call centers need to be established urgently. There should be mechanisms that can be implemented effectively and that will support women in every way when they apply. It doesn't make any sense for the woman to apply to the police when you do not provide them with the right to shelter, if she has to return to the same house or if you do not provide a place for her to stay with her children. For example, they say come to the shelter, but

do not bring your children. How can you leave a woman with such a choice? On the contrary, a mechanism should be established where they can establish a safe life with their children. (PDP 2)

In addition, there are different debates on ŞÖNİM coming from different political parties' members. These centers are given as the works that are done by the JDP by its respondents although they are the state led projects. There is a criticism to this being proud of the establishment of ŞÖNİM by JDP members coming from RPP. It is argued that although JDP boasts about these institutions, it did not provide any assistance to Ayşe Tuğba Arslan and it also did not follow her case. Moreover, in all cases towards ŞÖNİM, the ministry protected its own officials rather than investigating unjust and inappropriate implementation of the laws. The effective functioning of ŞÖNİM can be sustained through the education of all institutions that women consult when she faces with violence and its threats. This recommendation comes from the members of IYI Party, RPP, and PDP where they give value to the necessity of training of judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement officers. When women seek help from these institutions, they will provide necessary information about their rights and do not want a proof from women about violence that they face. Their declaration must be the starting point for them to protect women from any possible violence towards them. There should not be any omission in the implementations of rules without directing women to any other institution.

There are several additional suggestions by RPP that prevents the occurrence of VAW and protect women if such actions are seen. It is claimed that women are killed even men are suspending from the household and women. Hence, it is essential to demonstrate the effectivity of electronic handcuffs so that men's location can be determined. In addition, gender roles that define the places of individuals within society must be dissolved in media platforms. Social codes which subordinate women must be effaced from the TV series and ads. As below statement explains, women are located in responsibilities related to household while men are seen in a more public environment without any duty in private which must be handled. There are also series that somehow legitimizes VAW where males who have such behavior are not criminalized. Besides this, it is argued by IYI Party member, there needs to be effective

public service ads that focus on consent issue in sexual harassment. These must be strengthened by supreme court's decisions, for instance, a man send a flower to office of a woman which was accepted as sexual harassment by the court. Since sexual harassment is an abstract conception, it needs to be turned into a concrete understanding that are exemplified with real life issues. In addition, they gave importance to electronic handcuffs so that men with restraining order cannot step up where woman's life is in danger.

Unfortunately, we observe that men kill women even though there is a restraining order. For this reason, we attach great importance to the electronic handcuffs, if the electronic handcuffs had become widespread, thousands of our women would have survived until today. (RPP 1)

Ministry of Women is another specific solution to VAW that is highlighted by RPP members as it will not be endure only for a show. Rather they wanted to create an institution that effectively and directly focus on women's concerns and women see it as a ground that will recognize their all rights.

5.3.4. Istanbul Convention

In terms of the existence of Istanbul Convention and the debates of abolishing it by presidential decree, there are two diverse understandings among these five political parties' female members. While JDP and NMP respondents are the advocator of that decision, other three political parties underline its magnitude and vitality for society to inhibit VAW if it is implemented carefully.

In JDP side, states cannot be regulated by international agreements only as they have domestic legal order. It is said that Istanbul Convention led to the creation of the law no. 6284 which is already in force. They argue that this convention is expressed as a tool that will stop VAW, however, it normalizes some actions that damages Turkish common law and traditional family structure. The similar understanding is hold by NMP respondents as it is highlighted that it has not changed the rate of VAW during its being in force. Abolishment does not result in increased number of VAW cases, and its existence did not make any changes on the reduction of this issue. One of the

respondents argues that women are used to realize some political parties' aims through gaining identity to some individuals. In addition, responses also represent that during its being in force there has not been any decrease in VAW cases.

It can be thought that the Istanbul Convention can make the legal steps taken more quickly. However, as Turkish society, we have different dynamics, so maybe more national approaches can solve the problem in the same way. That's why I think we do not need international conventions, especially on this issue. In other words, I think that we can find a solution to this problem not with their impositions or what they propose, but with our own point of view, with the values that make up the Turkish society. (NMP 3)

In different parts of the in-depth interview, the respondents of IYI Party, RPP, and PDP mention the necessity of Istanbul Convention to end VAW. IYI Party members claim that if Istanbul Convention could function effectively, it could inhibit the VAW cases. One of the respondents claim that although party in power supports its abolishment as it damages traditional family structure, she gives her personal opinion by saying that it does not destruct family structure rather it could stop the violence within Turkish family since it is not possible to call it as family when the violence occurs there. RPP respondents realize Istanbul Convention with four-dimensional mechanism that prevents women, protect them, and provide assistance, and give necessary punishment to the perpetrator. The weakness to reduce the VAW comes from the implementation of this convention. They argue that if it would be function in a proper way, the VAW cases would not be in such dramatic levels.

There was a tweet of the Ministry of Internal Affairs a day or two after this convention was lifted. In that tweet, there was a statement that 35 women were killed three days before the contract was lifted, and 24 women were killed after it was lifted. We are really surprised; it is not a success. So again, 24 women died there, this is not a success. (RPP 5)

The Istanbul Convention will almost be declared guilty of violence against women. There are groups that create the perception that if we withdraw, the violence will end. Therefore, I find it unacceptable that this should be brought up for discussion in any way. Instead, it needs to be fully implemented effectively. (RPP 2)

Now, I heard such a statement the other day: "Wasn't there the occurrence of femicide when there was the Istanbul Convention? The Istanbul Convention was not implemented. If it had been implemented, maybe those murders would

not have happened or would have decreased, it was never implemented. (RPP 3)

The similar concerns of previous statements are seen in the discourses of PDP's female members as they do not recognize its abolishment and continue to struggle against male domination that tries to take over women's achievements. It is argued that withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention opens a gate for violence as it is wanted from women to be comply to these practices. In addition, its aim is to prevent violence against everyone and protect every individual without considering their gender identity. This convention ensures the protection and assistance that will be sustained to every individual who face with violence without looking at gender identity or marriage status. The explanation of state officials in terms of the discussions regarding the withdrawal from Istanbul Convention is also highlighted in this political party as this clarification argues that VAW is decreased after the decision is made through presidential decree. It can be claimed that the reason behind such discourses are the product of efforts to cover VAW rates in Turkey.

If we look at the Istanbul Convention and the law numbered 6284, the struggle of women has reached very important stages and achieved gains. But the problem was that they were not implemented in practice, and now there is the issue of withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention. In fact, this male violence against women and the male-dominated system itself would have been regressed if it had been implemented in real terms. It would have been significantly regressed. But male dominance needs to be further enlarged in a model that is suitable for the authoritarian and oppressive system that the government wants to establish. For this reason, it has been trying to establish such a system that imprisons women in their homes, destroys their economic freedom and disregards their other freedoms. We are faced with a government that interferes with how many children we should have, where we can or cannot go, whether pregnant women can go outside and so on. (PDP 2)

The reasons behind the attempts to inhibit violence can be best explained by one of the statements from PDP member. It claims that there is the Manhood Agreement between males and the state in Turkey where they try to sustain and risen the power they obtain by oppressing women through males' help. There is a win-win situation for both men and the state which needs to be broken for the sake of women's existence with their gender identity as equal and free citizens without facing with unjust implementations and violence types.

Indeed, there is an unnamed, undescribed Masculinity Contract between the ruling party and men. This contract really needs to be broken. It is getting harder and harder for women to live in this country without breaking this Masculinity Contract. (PDP 5)

A change of mindset is needed. If you truly believe that women and men are equal, when you bring into power a mentality that does not consider it immoral for women to be able to roam freely in the streets, laugh, wear red lipstick, and walk on the street while pregnant, many problems will be solved by themselves. (RPP 1)

The change in mindset that is mentioned in the first part of this chapter is the necessary condition that will ensure the establishment of mechanisms for gender equality that are mentioned by mostly IYI Party, RPP, and PDP members.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the VAW perceptions and recommendations to inhibit VAW of female politicians of different political parties that are represented in GNAT as JDP, NMP, IYI Party, RPP, and PDP. The data coming from the Grand National Assembly's website demonstrates the rate of female and male politicians in the parliament and their proportion in different political parties where 17.32% of the members are females that refers to 101 out of 583 deputies currently continuing their roles. By analyzing this data, it is possible to argue that there is a gendered atmosphere in political arenas that limit women's quantitative representation that will eventually influence the visibility of women's concerns in political agenda. Different levels of women's representation in political parties also reflect that they have varied policies and codes within political party to approach women's interests and issues. Hence, the starting point of this study was the assumption that there are different understandings in handling the VAW cases and this can be detailed through using distinct violence types.

For this end, this study tried to place the similarities and differences between female politicians based on VAW perceptions and recommendations. In that manner, in-depth interviewing as a qualitative research method was adopted to locate women's perceptions on VAW as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and femicide to locate their understandings in various contexts. In addition, the present study tried to examine the policy recommendations of political parties' female members to the issue of VAW to raise awareness, reduce, and efface the occurrence. Considering these aims of the study, the research questions were as follows:

- What are the perceptions, discourses, and proposed policies of women members in political parties who are represented in the GNAT towards violence against women?
- What are the similarities and differences between female politicians in different political parties in terms of VAW perceptions?
- What are the similarities and differences between female politicians in different political parties considering recommendations to inhibit VAW?

It becomes possible to find out the relevant answers to those questions after field research is done through interacting with female politicians who are in high and active positions in that space. In terms of political stances, it was acknowledged as conservative democrats in JDP, nationalist and idealist in NMP, following the six fundamentals as Republicanism, Populism, Reformism, Secularism, Statism, and Nationalism in RPP, and feminist, leftist, democrat, and socialist in PDP. Besides such similarities in the side that locate themselves, IYI Party members have separated ideologies such as being leftist and being conservative. It is possible to realize that their background and experiences shape their ideologies and make them close to the political party they are in. All these ideological explanations lead them to take different stances regarding women's concerns even it costs to women's lives.

It was essential to understand the practice of gender equality in political parties which gave clues for their approach to women and women's concerns. Gender justice concept was highlighted rather than gender equality in JDP since it was believed that women and men are not equal creatures with different strength and features. In that manner, they favor to use gender justice that underline the just attitudes towards every individual as all have the same value. Since gender justice principle is adopted in JDP, respondents claimed that they feel that equal value is given to them. This could be a dangerous conceptualization since not recognizing gender equality will inhibit women to reach out their human rights. Hence, the gender difference must not be confused

with gender equality by creating other terminologies that somehow overlook the women's human rights issues. RPP members, on the other hand, followed the conceptualization of gender equality and they supported that they could raise their voices in their political party and criticize it in necessary condition which demonstrate the functioning of gender equality principle within RPP. As the concept of being equal and free citizens was highlighted, they gave value to working together with male members to strengthen this principle deeply. IYI Party has a unique position within other political parties since it has a female leader that was mentioned by every respondent as the ultimate feature. Even it was said that political parties mirror society so that there is gendered dynamic that run these institutions, having a female leader gave them the perception of having equal treatments to genders. For PDP, it was not possible to realize gender free political environments until the whole structures and institutions will be freed from the chains of patriarchal norms. On the contrary, NMP's female members demonstrated an understanding as they believed that their place is equal and even higher than males in that political party by referring to Turkish culture and history.

Considering the perceptions about gender equality in political parties, women's political participation could be the key factor that can help the determination whether this principle is appropriately working in that political party. JDP members gave examples from the discourses of the President Erdoğan to represent the importance they give to increase the level of women in politics. They gave the data that 54 MPs out of 102 females in the parliament are the members of JDP, however, they neglected the fact that only 18.75% of their members are female. Like in JDP, NMP members focused on the necessity of women's existence in politics since their ability to love gives them a unique position to look issues in a different way than men. The other three political parties could be gathered under the same umbrella of gender quota law where they adopt certain lower limits for a gender to be represented in that political party. In RPP, 33% gender quota is adopted which was seen as an important but inadequate step to enhance the rate of women's political representation. To have complete equality, they provided with responses that 50% quota laws must be implemented like the society's consistence of 50% from each female and male. There

are 25% gender quota law in IYI Party since there are many challenges that women encounter when they want to participate in politics such as society's perception that politics is male's responsibility, they have more experience in the field, and having gendered roles. Hence, it is difficult to change the ideas that attribute politics to males until the society will be purified from gender roles and political representation will reach the level of 50%. It was said that the 50% gender quota is implemented in PDP, and they also discovered the manipulation of electoral systems even there are gender quotas so that they created zipper system where they locate one female and one male in an order in electoral lists. Nevertheless, the members claimed that gender free environments cannot be possible without abolishing male domination from every institution we have starting from family to politics. With the influence of having the leader party result JDP and NMP to provide only discourses rather than creating regulations to increase women's political representation compared to other three parties.

The role of women's wings in relation to the enhancement of women's both quantitative and substantive representation were represented since there are three perceptions on the existence of women's units of political parties. Considering functions of women's wings, organizational power of it was given as the strength in JDP by mentioning the considerably high number of female members as 5 million as the indicator of it. RPP members mentioned its role to create equal environments and attitudes towards every gender within society by focusing on equal citizenship, representation, and campaigns regarding women's concerns. The first perception in terms of the existence of women's wings was seeing it as necessary units to make women's ideas visible in male dominated arena. JDP members did not reflect any pitfalls that is occurred with the establishment of that units since they give women an ultimate significance and try to touch their lives in an intimate and immediate manner in terms of their view. NMP members also emphasized the importance of women's organizations within political party by giving the reason that women could make easy communication with other women where they express their demands in a comfortable way due to the Turkish cultural norms. Although IYI party does not have such unit, the advantageous was given as entering houses to interact with women. It is argued

that collective movement among women is essential to raise their voices to violation of their rights so that the women's wings give them a power in RPP's members' perspective. The second apprehension realized such establishment as a side mechanism that only support the males in the main cadres. In NMP side, it was acknowledged that the discrimination can occur as locating women in a discrete organization. Hence, there needs to be mixed structuring where women could bring her features of being kind to the political environment for more harmonious working conditions. IYI Party members realized that women's wing's role endures in electoral cycles only to provide political party with more votes which was shared by RPP members. In addition, these organizations do not have a decision power over any mechanism which give them an inability to sign works that will be done. The third perception was related to ideal vs reality debate. While women's wings create inequality by referring to its subordinate position in the main body, they should exist in current structure of society where women must express their concerns directly in RPP member's perception and women could easily interact with their own gender in NMP respondents' thoughts. Hence, it can be said that authoritative political party structures in Turkey except PDP that locates women's organizations in lower positions result in these units' inability to have an influential role to approach women's interests.

Besides the debates on the establishment of women's wings, NMP, IYI Party, and PDP have different structures to approach women's interests. In NMP, it is the vice president who is responsible from family, women, and disabled, however, respondents explained its functioning not diverse than the women's units. Presidency of Women Policies exists in IYI Party as most of the participants from this political party emphasized their distinctive position of not locating women in a side organization that only support the main body, but they gave the importance on touching women's lives directly with acknowledging their concerns as one of the main issues in the society. When all these structures put aside, PDP respondents defined their organization as Women's Assembly that is independent from the mixed structure where it can give its own decisions and these decisions cannot be discussed and criticized by male members.

When the perception of these female respondents was handled considering VAW in general, there were three concepts that came to light as zero tolerance, being supra-political, and the existence of patriarchal norms. Different than other parties, NMP respondents gave the discourses of their leader as the ultimate reality that demonstrate their stance towards violence. Generally, parties used zero tolerance principle when they wanted to specify their stance related to any kind of violence to any creature. Nevertheless, one of the PDP members criticized this concept since these words only exist in discourses without transforming into actions. The participants from that political party emphasized the role of patriarchy that needs to be dissolved to stop the cases of violence as similar trend is seen in RPP. VAW being supra-political is another debate where JDP member claimed that it must not be the tool of politics where all institutions must cooperate to inhibit it. IYI Part member took it in a different way as it is explained through approaching every woman in an equal manner without questioning their political stance. This understanding of JDP contradicted with the RPP and PDP's perception that VAW is political as structural reasons lie behind it.

In regard of three types of violence, there were overlapping understandings among all political parties about domestic violence and sexual harassment. In terms of domestic violence, most of the participants from all political parties claimed that marital tie and the location of the house must not be looked for when the violence between couples is taken into consideration. Although some reasons can be given as the motivations of domestic violence such as economic crisis and cheating, they do not legitimize the use of violence towards an individual. It was argued that there are various ways to call an action as sexual harassment where a touch, a look, or sending a message can be named under this category and they did not realize any reasons for justification when the relational bound of individuals were considered. The notion of consent and women's declaration were differential factors between political parties. Although mutual consent is only mentioned in IYI Party, RPP, and PDP, all of the responses somehow represented the importance of consent for action not to be called as sexual harassment. In addition, the emphasis on women's declaration was given by IYI Party, RPP and PDP members as some cases cannot be proven and it can be difficult for a woman to go law enforcement offices immediately after the sexual harassment. The essential

focus was made by PDP as their political parties' rule gave the obligation to the perpetrator of sexual harassment where that person must prove the opposite of women's declaration to be cleaned.

As opposed to such similarities between political parties, there were two perceptions whether the femicide conceptualization must be adopted rather than murder. Except most of the members of JDP and NMP, there were awareness on the use of femicide in other three political parties. It was highlighted in JDP circle that women must be considered as human beings so that they must not be treated as district commodities. It was also claimed that the aim of the use of femicide is to spread fear to women. NMP member supported that it is a perception operation of some political parties to hide behind such discourses in realizing their ultimate purposes. On the contrary, IYI Party, RPP, and PDP members claimed that femicide is the killing of women by men because of their gender identity. Since the number of femicides are very high in Turkey, some of the respondents of these parties use the concept of gendercide to emphasize the severity of the issue.

The actions taken by political parties were essential to understand the real-life practices of their perceptions on VAW. JDP members generally gave the works that are done under state institutions and legal changes rather than giving specific works that are conducted by their political party separately. In terms of IYI Party, they gave the awareness raising campaigns where they reach out women to explain their rights and where to apply in case of needing assistance with regard of Istanbul Convention. Besides this, the project of Women of Sun was given as an example to help women participating in labor force where their economic independence can be beneficial for them to stand against violence. In terms of PDP, they focused on the campaigns regarding educational projects related to gender equality in institutions both within and outside of the party structure. They continue the campaign of Justice for Women to struggle against naked body search in prisons and violation of women's human rights. In NMP, the respondents highlighted the KAÇEP Symposium and the book coming out of this project to create awareness on the issue of VAW. Although some articles within that book mention the patriarchal norms that give rise to VAW, women's sacred

role in Turkish society as the reproducer and rarer of the next generation is underscored. The Right to Live Project was reflected as the one that has an extensive area so that every woman who face with violence can apply to seek assistance. In that project, there is a call center that women reach out easily to explain their demands, it could be the need for a shelter, lawyer, or job where the women's wings get in touch with those women to help them avoiding violence.

When policy recommendations of the respondent were taken, four fundamental proposals emerged with various understandings. Education is the initial offer to solve VAW issue in the society as JDP members claimed that family, school, and environment are the places where individual internalizes their characteristics. In that sense, starting from family, an appropriate education must be given not to show violent behaviors. Similarly, NMP members underlined the importance of traditional Turkish family structure to raise children to be high qualified Turks with the Islamic values. Education of men were reflected to develop themselves where they could express themselves better so that violent acts will reduce by IYI Party member. However, this perception simplifies the occurrence of VAW due to the low ability of males to state what they want to say. In addition, pre-marital education to couples and gender equality training starting from early ages in every institution were other recommendations that will reduce the VAW cases coming from IYI Party. In RPP side, education starting from family and schools were also valued with reference to breaking the gender roles that locate women in private sphere. However, as the educational responsibility in family was given to women, it was not possible to claim that abolishment of gender roles can be learned clearly.

The second recommendation is based on raising women's awareness and economic empowerment as fundamental steps to stand against VAW. JDP and NMP took the raising awareness of women in terms of informing them about their rights and the educated officials that can assist them. Although the importance of women's education was highlighted in RPP, members gave the answers based on women's reproductive roles so that they should take the responsibility to educate children. On the contrary, PDP participants followed the consciousness raising project where women could find

out their gender identity as women. In terms of economic recommendations, Family Insurance System of RPP aimed to give women money in return of their work in household so that they could take care of their children and themselves without depending on males. Similarly, PDP members supported that women's domestic labor must be guaranteed under their own social insurance system so that they can get benefit from these rights. In addition, it was argued that the state must handle the domestic responsibilities of women considering its characteristic of social state so that women could participate in labor force if they want.

The third category of proposals was taken into consideration under the legal frameworks as all political parties' members explained the need of deterrent punishments to stop VAW. Since the perpetrator do not get the adequate punishment for violence and come out of the prison in a short time period, they think that I can engage in violent acts as there is not any harsh implementations in criminal justice system. The most severe proposal came from the NMP member as the implementation of execution and eunuch in the case of VAW to relief the family and the public a little bit. The need for an appropriate functioning of law enforcement offices was explained by PDP members as sustaining women's shelter members to protect women and their children from the perpetrator. In RPP side, the ineffective functioning of Center for Violence Prevention and Monitoring (ŞÖNİM) was also highlighted to prevent women from violence as there are malfunctions in it. RPP member focused on the context of media where gender roles are mirrored and internalized that could influence the individuals' ideologies so that it needs to be taken into careful consideration. İYİ Party member supported to have public adds that explains the concepts of sexual harassment and other violence types with the help of supreme court decisions to make them more concrete for public. RPP members also gave importance to the establishment of Ministry of Women that can approach women's concerns not in discourses but in actions. The ineffective functioning of Center for Violence Prevention and Monitoring (ŞÖNİM) was also highlighted to prevent women from violence as there are malfunctions in it.

The last recommendation was based on the debate of Istanbul Convention, its ineffective implementation, and withdrawal from it. In terms of JDP and NMP side, it was claimed that the existence of Istanbul Convention did not solve the issue of VAW since there is not any reduction in the numbers. It was also claimed that to protect Turkish family structure, this decision is essential that was needed to be taken. On the other hand, IYI Party, RPP, and PDP members highlighted the significance of Istanbul Convention's contextual basis, however, they gave the reason of not inhibiting VAW as the ineffective implementation of it. It was said that rather than damaging traditional family structure, it prevents and protects every individual in the society regardless of their gender identity that can bring the idea of equality to the table. It was argued that the Manhood Agreement between the state and the males is the vital example that lies behind all violence types that women face. The state and the males support each other's power not to lose the authority over women. In that manner, there needs to be a change in mindset that prioritizes male desires over women to inhibit VAW.

This study aimed to demonstrate the perception of female politicians on one of the crucial issues that needs an urgent consideration in Turkey. For future studies, VAW perceptions of both female and male respondents from political party structures who have a high-level authority can be studied. In addition, VAW perceptions of officials from local administrations and officials from relevant ministries can be handled. The factors that influence the similarities and differences between female politicians in different political parties can also be studied. Lastly, the gaps between the discourses of political parties and the thoughts of female politicians can be studied to understand what kind of problems and advantages these discrepancies create in handling VAW.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
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29 OCAK 2021

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu


Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Fatma Umut BEŞPINAR

Danışmanlığımı yaptığınız Şule Taşcıoğlu ÖRS'in "Siyasi Partilerdeki Kadın Üyelerin Kadına Karşı Şiddet Algısı" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 036-ODTU-2021 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.


Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
İAEK Başkan Vekili

B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

Dünya geneline baktığımızda siyaset erkeklere ait bir alan olarak tanımlanmış, kadınların bu alanda görünürlüğünün artmasına yönelik etkili çalışmalar yapılmamıştır. Bu görüşün yansımaları Türk siyasi yaşamında da fark edilmektedir. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisinde (TBMM) kadın temsil oranı ele alındığında eşit temsil anlayışından ne kadar uzakta olduğu gözlemlenmektedir. Bugün Türkiye’de görev alan 583 milletvekilinin 101’i kadınlardan oluşmaktadır. Yaklaşık olarak %18 kadın temsili erkek egemen siyaset anlayışının güçlü bir göstergesi olarak karşımızda durmaktadır. Kadınların kendi alanları ile ilgili konuları erkeklere kıyasla daha fazla dile getirdikleri düşünüldüğünde, kadın temsil oranının yükselmesi kadın sorunlarının siyaset gündeminde daha fazla yer almasına neden olması beklenmektedir. Kadın sorunlarının en önemlileri arasında yer alan kadına yönelik şiddet konularının görünürlüğünün artması ve bu konuları çözmeyi amaçlayan çalışmaların çoğalması için kadınların siyasette daha fazla yer alması gerektiği söylenebilir. Bu anlamda kadın siyasilerin bu sorunlar özelindeki görüşleri ve çözüm önerileri önem arz etmektedir.

Kadının siyasi yaşamda niceliksel temsili kadın sorunlarının gün ışığına çıkmasının ilk aşamasını oluşturduğu düşünülmektedir. Alan yazında niceliksel temsilin artmasını sağlayacak etkenler dört tartışma alanı altında ele alınabilir. Cinsiyet kotası uygulandığı takdirde kadınların siyasi parti yapılanmalarında ve devlet dairelerinde daha fazla yer alacağı belirtilmektedir (Matland & Studlar, 1996; Tripp & Kang, 2008). Farklı ülkeler temel alınarak yapılan çalışmalar cinsiyet kotası uygulamasının kadın temsiliyi yükseltmede ne derece etkin olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. İsveç, Latin Amerika ve Güney Afrika ülkelerinde cinsiyet kotasının benimsenmesiyle birlikte kadın temsili artışı gözlemlenmiştir (Sainsbury, 2004; Htun ve diğerleri, 2015), ancak bu kotasının uygulanmasına rağmen sorunlarla karşılaşan ülkeler de bulunmaktadır. Cinsiyet kotasının yanında, ülkedeki seçim sistemi ve seçim listelerinde kadınların seçilebilir sıralara yerleşip yerleşmemesi siyasette kadın temsiliyi etkileyen önemli unsurların arasında yer almaktadır (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). Üçüncü olarak, siyasi partilerin ideolojileri ve ülkedeki koşullar kadınların bu

alandaki yer almasını etkileyen önemli etkenler olarak alan yazıda karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Sol siyasi ideolojinin eşit vatandaşlık hakkını ve demokrasiyi savunmasının bir sonucu olarak kadın temsili artırmaya daha çok önem verdiği vurgulanmaktadır (Sainsbury, 2004). Ancak sol görüşün her atmosferde kadın temsili dile getirmesi mümkün olmamaktadır. Farklı siyasi, sosyal ve ekonomik koşullar kadınların temsil gücünü etkilemektedirler. Son olarak parti dışı kadın yapılanmalarının kadın temsili yükseltme noktasında etkinliğinin olup olmadığı bir başka tartışma konusunu oluşturmaktadır. İsveç'te kadınların parti içi ve dışı çabaları sayesinde siyasi partilerin daha fazla kadın üyenin parti içi mekanizmalarda yer almaya başlamıştır (Sainsbury, 2004). Ancak aynı durum Meksika için geçerli olamamaktadır, kadın sorununu dile getirmek için bir yapılanma ortaya çıkmasına rağmen bu konuları dile getirmekte etkisiz kalmıştır (Craske, 2005).

Siyasi Partilerin Kadın Kollarının kadın sorunlarını temel alarak söylemlerde bulunması ve bu söylemleri kanun değişiklikleri ile sağlamlaştırmasındaki rolünün etkin olup olmadığı tartışma konusu olmuştur. Siyasi partilerin kadın yapılanmalarının siyasi temsil açısından önemli alanlar açtığını düşünen çalışmalar olsa da (Htun, 2005; Kittleson, 2011; Cowell-Meyers & Patrick, 2017), kadın yapılanmalarının ana mekanizma üzerinde bir güce sahip olmadığını düşünen görüşler de bulunmaktadır (Roza 2010). Bunların yanı sıra, kadın siyasi partilerin oluşması kadın sorununu siyasi gündeme getirebilmenin bir çözümü olarak düşünülmüştür (Cowell-Meyers, 2016).

Dünya genelinde siyasi partilerde hangi kadın sorunlarının ele alındığı bu konuların ne derece dikkate alındığını anlama açısından önem taşımaktadır. Niceliksel kadın temsili niteliksel temsili de yanında getireceği düşünülmesine rağmen, kadın temsili sayılarla ölçülemeyeceği, bunun yerine kadın sorunlarını dile getirme biçimleri ve sıklıkları dolayısıyla niteliksel kadın temsili siyasette önemli olduğunu vurgulanmaktadır (Morgan & Hinojosa, 2018). Meksika örneği ele alındığında artan niceliksel kadın temsili ile birlikte kadın sorunlarının ve kadın haklarının siyasi alana daha çok girdiği gözlemlenmiştir. Evlilik, boşanma, çocuk velayeti ve kürtaj gibi konular kadınların siyasette ön plana çıkardığı kadın sorunlarıdır. Ancak siyasi

hayattan dışlanmamak için Brezilya'da bulunan kadın siyasiler kürtaj gibi konuları dile getirmekten çekinmektedirler (Htun & Power, 2006).

Kadına yönelik şiddetin hangi çerçeveler temel alınarak tanımlandığı kadın siyasilerin bu konuya bakış açılarını ve çözüm önerilerini anlama açısından önem taşımaktadır. Bu çalışmada ev içi şiddet, cinsel taciz ve kadın cinayeti olmak üzere üç farklı şiddet türü kavramsallaştırılmaktadır. Ev içi şiddet ele alındığında evli olsun ya da olmasın kişiler arası ilişki bağlantısı aranmaktadır. Ev içi şiddet, fiziksel şiddetin dışında ekonomik ve psikolojik gibi farklı türler olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır (Walby, 2004). Cinsel taciz yerine cinsel şiddet, cinsel saldırı ve tecavüz gibi kavramlar kullanılmasına rağmen en uygun kullanımın cinsel taciz olduğu görülmektedir. Daha genel bir bakışa sahip olmak ve kadına yönelik cinsel içerikli davranışları adlandırmayı daha anlaşılır bir hale getirmek adına cinsel taciz kavramı benimsenmiştir çünkü cinsel içerikli eleştiriler ve bakışlar da bu kavram içerisinde ele alınmaktadır (Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997). Kadın cinayeti kavramı ele alındığında Russel bu kavramı kadınların erkekler tarafında kadın oldukları için öldürülmesi olarak tanımlamıştır (2009).

Türkiye'de kadınların niceliksel temsil tarihi ele alındığında, ilk olarak Nezihe Muhittin'in önderliğinde kurulan siyasi parti, Kadınlar Halk Fırkası, kadın hakları konusunda bilinç kazandırmayı ve kadınların ekonomik, sosyal ve siyasi haklarını tanımayı amaçlamaktaydı. 1909 seçim kanununa göre bu partinin kadın aday çıkarması engellenmiş, dolayısıyla belirlediği amaçlara erişememiştir. Bu engelle birlikte Kadınlar Halk Fırkası siyasi parti olmaktan çıkıp Türk Kadınlar Birliği olarak devam etmiştir. İsviçre Medeni Kanununun kabul edilmesiyle birlikte Türk Kadınlar Birliği 1937 seçimlerinde oy kullanma ve siyasal katılım haklarını kullanmak için isteklerini dile getirmişlerdir. Yerel seçimlerde 1930, genel seçimlerde ise 1934 yılında kadınlar bu haklarını kazanmışlardır. (Ansari & Ahmed, 2018). Daha önce bahsedildiği gibi, günümüzde mecliste kadınların oranı %17,32'dir. Türkiye'ye baktığımızda kökten dincilik ve ataerkil yapılanmanın kadınları ikincil plana iten ve ev içine hapseden etkenler olduğu ve bunun kadınların siyasi temsil gücünü olumsuz etkilediği söylenmektedir. Sonuç olarak kadın temsil oranının kadın sorununu ele

almak ve çözüm üretmek açısından yeterli olmadığı söylenebilir (Ansari & Ahmed, 2018).

Türkiye'ye baktığımızda kadın kolları yapılanmasının ortaya çıkması 1960'lı yıllara dayanmaktadır (Ayata-Güneş, 1998). Kadın kolları oluşumu kadınların aktif bir rol almasının önünü açmamıştır çünkü kadınların siyasetteki rolü tali ve egemen ana yapılanmayı desteklenme olarak görülmektedir. Bunun altında yatan nedeni feminist bilim insanları özel-kamu alan ayrımının kadını ikincil plana iten ve kamu alanında söz hakkı vermeyen bir anlayışla açıklamaktadırlar (Pınarcıoğlu, 2017). Buna karşıt olarak, Türkiye'de kadın kolları yapılanmalarının kadınlara bir yol açtığı ve kendilerini erkek egemen siyaset alanında görünür kılmalarını sağladığını belirten görüşler de bulunmaktadır (Tulum, 2014). Türkiye'de İYİ Parti ve MHP'nin kadın kolları yapılanması bulunmamaktadır. AKP ve CHP'de kadın kolları oluşumu bulurken, HDP'de kadın meclisi olarak farklı bir yapılanma görülmektedir.

Türkiye'ye baktığımızda seküler, İslamcı ve Kürt kadın hareketleri farklı kadın sorunlarını dile getirmede önemli rol oynamışlardır. İslamcı kadın hareketinin en başta dile getirdiği sorun başörtü yasağı olmuştur. Kendini seküler olarak tanımlayan kadınlar tarafından kamusal yaşama ve iş gücüne katılım haklarının kadın özgürleşmesindeki rolü vurgulanmıştır. (Aldıkaçtı Marshall, 2005). Bunların yanı sıra, Kürt kadın hareketi kadınları etnik kimlikleri temel alınarak yapılan ayrımcılık ve şiddete karşı mücadele etmiştir (Diner & Toktaş, 2010).

Türkiye'de kadına yönelik şiddeti durdurma çabaları uluslararası çalışmalar ve mücadelelerle birlikte ortaya çıkmıştır. Birleşmiş Milletler Kadın Konferansları kadının insan haklarını, cinsiyet temelli ayrımcılık ve kadını ikinci plana atan kültürel toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini ele almıştır (Zinsser, 2002). 1993 Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin Ortadan Kaldırılması Bildirgesi bu konunun uluslararası olarak kabul edilmesi, ele alınması ve çözüm üretilmesinin ilk adımıdır. Türkiye'de kadına yönelik şiddete karşı mücadele Çankırı'da hamile kadının eşinden şiddet görmesi sonucu açtığı boşanma davasını hâkimin "Kadının sırtından sopayı, karnından sıpayı eksik etmeyeceksin" sözünü dile getirerek davayı düşürmesi sonucu hız kazanmıştır. İlk feminist çalışma

Kadına Karşı Her Türlü Ayrımcılığın Önlenmesi Sözleşmesi'nin kabul edilmesi için yürütülen imza kampanyası olmuştur (Altınay & Arat, 2008). Dayağa Karşı Dayanışma Kampanyası ve Mor İğne Kampanyası ilk kampanyanın arkasından gelen ve kadına yönelik şiddeti vurgulamayı ve buna yönelik hukuksal etkiler oluşturmayı planlamaktaydı (Balsoy, 2021). Bu mücadelelerin sonucu olarak kanunlarda değişiklikler ve yenilikler yapılmıştır.

Türkiye'de kadına yönelik şiddet çok önemli bir toplumsal sorun olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Anıtsayaç verileri şiddetin ciddiyetini ortaya çıkarmaktadır. 2020 yılında Türkiye'de 410 kadın cinayeti görülmüştür. Tüm bunlar göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, bu çalışmanın amacı TBMM'de temsil edilen siyasi partilerin kadın üyelerinin kadına yönelik şiddete bakış açılarını, kadına yönelik şiddetle başa çıkma mekanizma ve çözüm önerilerini analiz etmektir. Bu tezin amacı dikkate alınarak araştırma soruları şu şekilde belirlenmiştir; (1) TBMM'de temsil edilen siyasi partilerdeki kadın üyelerin kadına yönelik şiddete dair algıları, söylemleri ve önerdikleri politikalar nelerdir? (2) Kadına yönelik şiddet algıları açısından farklı siyasi partilerdeki kadın politikacılar arasındaki benzerlikler ve farklılıklar nelerdir? (3) Kadına yönelik şiddeti önlemeyi amaçlayan önerileri dikkate alındığında farklı siyasi partilerdeki kadın politikacılar arasındaki benzerlikler ve farklılıklar nelerdir?

Kadın siyasiler ve kadına yönelik şiddet konularını temel alan bir çalışma yürütmek araştırmacının kişisel deneyimlerine dayanmaktadır. Feminist bir çalışma yürütürken araştırmacı kendi deneyimlerinden yola çıkarak bir alan açmalı ve araştırmaya bu noktadan başlamalıdır. Bu anlamda erkek egemen olarak kurgulanmış siyasi alan içerisinde kadın siyasilerin deneyimlerine odaklanmak toplumsal cinsiyete dayanan ilişkilerin gün yüzüne çıkmasını hedeflemiştir. Benimsenen bu kriterler, veri toplama süreci ve araştırmanın amacı dikkate alındığında nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden olan derinlemesine yüz yüze görüşmenin uygun olduğu düşünülmüştür.

Veri toplama sürecine başlamadan önce Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu onay aşaması gerçekleşmiştir. Araştırmanın başlığı, amacı, araştırma soruları, verinin nereden toplanacağı, örneklem, yanıtlayıcılara nasıl

ulaşılacağı, ses kaydı alınıp alınmayacağı ve araştırmmanın alan yazıya muhtemel katkılarını içeren başvuru formu doldurulmuştur. Ayrıca yanıtlayıcılara imzalatılmak üzere hazırlanan araştırmaya gönüllü katılım formu ve derinlemesine yüz yüze görüşme sorularını içeren dosya başvuru formuna eklenmiş ve komiteye onay için gönderilmiştir. Komitenin değerlendirmesi sonucu 01.02.2021 ve 25.06.2021 tarihleri arasında saha çalışmasını yürütme ve veri toplamaya izin verilmiştir. Yanıtlayıcıların görüşlerini halka açık bir şekilde dile getirdikleri göz önünde bulundurulduğunda isimlerinin tez içerisinde yer alması araştırmaya gönüllü katılım formunda kendi tercihlerine bırakılmış olmasına rağmen her siyasi partiye eşit tutum alınması açısından siyasilerin isimleri tez içerisinde yer almamaktadır. Görüşmenin ses kaydına alınması da yanıtlayıcının tercihine bırakılmış, ses kaydını tercih etmeyenlerin cevapları not alınmıştır. Gönüllü katılım formunda yanıtlayıcılara istedikleri zaman görüşmeyi sonlandırabilecekleri açıklanmıştır.

Bu çalışma mümkün olduğunca siyasette yüksek pozisyonlarda görev alan kadınlarla derinlemesine yüz yüze görüşmeler yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Yanıtlayıcılara ulaşmak için farklı yollar izlenmiştir. AKP, MHP ve İYİ Parti için araştırmacının tanıdığı kişiler aracılığı ile ilk yanıtlayıcılar ile bağlantı sağlanmış, daha sonrası için kar topu örnekleme tekniği benimsenmiştir. CHP ve HDP açısından kadın vekillerin danışmanlarına ve kadın kollarına telefon ile ulaşılmış ve araştırmmanın amacı anlatılmıştır. İlk görüşmeler ayarlandıktan sonra çalışma kar topu örnekleme tekniği ile devam etmiştir. Örneklem büyüklüğüne baktığımızda, TBMM'de temsil edilen Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP), Halkın Demokratik Partisi (HDP) ve İYİ Parti'den 5'er kadın ve Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi'nden (MHP) 4 kadın üye ile toplam 24 görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir. MHP üyelerinden birinin görüşmeyi iptal etmesi nedeniyle görüşme sayısı 4'e düşmüştür. Derinlemesine görüşme soruları siyasi yaşam, kadına yönelik şiddet ve kadına yönelik şiddeti durdurmak için çözüm önerileri olmak üzere üç başlık altında toplanmıştır.

Araştırmanın veri analizi için ses kayıtları yazıya döküldükten sonra, dikkatli bir şekilde okunup analiz edilmiştir. Bu aşamada ortaya çıkan temalar ve ortak kavramlar not alınmış, daha sonra bu temalarla muhtemel tez başlıklarını oluşturacak şekilde bir

dosya hazırlanmıştır. Ayrıca anahtar kelimelerden oluşan tablolar hazırlanmış ve her parti için ilgili alıntılar kelimelerin altına yerleştirilmiştir. Daha sonra önemli kısımlar belirlenerek tez başlık dosyası ile eşleştirilmiştir. Sonuç olarak tema bazlı analiz araştırmanın bulgularını değerlendirmenin temelini oluşturmuştur.

Araştırmanın sınırları COVID-19 sürecinin getirdiği zorluklar ve yanıtlayıcıların siyasiler olmasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Siyasilere ulaşmak normal şartlar altında zor iken, pandemi süreci bu durumu daha da zorlaştırmıştır. Bazı siyasiler çok yoğun olduklarını belirttikleri için bazı görüşmeler yarım saat sürmüştür. Ancak diğer siyasiler iki saate yakın vakit ayırmış ve soruları ayrıntılı bir şekilde yanıtlamışlardır.

Araştırmanın bulguları kadınların siyasi katılımı ve kadına yönelik şiddet olmak üzere iki ana başlık altında ele alınmıştır. İlk olarak siyasi parti ideolojisi ve katılımcıların siyasi duruşları ele alınmıştır. AKP üyeleri insan temelli ve milli olmak gibi kavramlar üzerinde dururken, MHP üyeleri milliyetçilik ve ülkücülük ideolojilerini benimsemektedir. Kavramsal olarak farklılıklar görülse de açıklamalarında iki parti de devletin devamlılığını vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca, CHP ve HDP üyeleri demokrasinin önemini vurgulamaktadırlar. İYİ parti üyeleri arasında ortaklaşan en önemli nokta kadın lidere sahip olmaktır. AKP ve MHP üyelerinin cevaplarında parti liderlerinin kadına verdiği değer noktasında ortaklaşmasına karşın diğer üç partinin üyelerinin kadın sorununun demokrasinin ve farklılıklara verilen önemi olarak ele alınmasıdır.

Kendi siyasi duruşlarını nasıl tanımladıkları dikkate alındığında AKP muhafazakâr demokrat, MHP milliyetçi ve ülkücü, CHP 6 oku benimseyen ve HDP solcu, sosyalist, demokrat ve feminist gibi kavramları kullanarak kendi siyasi görüşlerini açıklamışlardır. Bu dört parti içerisinde yer alan kısmi görüş yakınlığına rağmen İYİ Parti üyeleri arasında bir ortaklık söz konusu değildir çünkü solcu, muhafazakâr, milliyetçi ve Atatürkçü olmak üzere farklı ideolojiler benimsenmektedir. AKP, CHP ve MHP üyeleri aile geçmişi ile birlikte kendi siyasi duruşlarının oluştuğunu belirtirken, İYİ Parti üyeleri gelecek kaygısı yaşadıkları ve daha eşit bir Türkiye için bu partide olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. HDP üyelerinin siyasi duruşlarının oluşumu kendi yaşam deneyimlerinden kaynaklanmaktadır.

Parti içi mekanizmalarda toplumsal cinsiyetin etkisi kadınların siyasete katılımını ve kadın sorununu dile getirmeleri açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Katılımcılar parti içi toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği kavramını hem parti içi hem de partiler arası olarak farklı bakış açıları ile ele almışlardır. AKP üyeleri kadın erkek eşitliği yerine kadın erkek fırsat eşitliği ve adalet kavramları üzerinde durmuşlardır. Kadın ve erkeğin yaradılıştan gelen farklılıkları olduğunu bu yüzden eşit olmadıkları ama değer olarak aynı şekilde muamele görmeleri gerektiğini savunmaktadırlar. CHP üyeleri bu partide yer alan kadınların diğer partilere kıyasla daha şanslı olduğu çünkü erkekleşmeden siyaset yapabilme ve seslerini duyurabilme güçlerinin varlığından bahsetmektedirler. Bunun altında yatan neden CHP’de kadınların bağımsız bireyler ve vatandaşlar olarak kabul edilmesi olarak yorumlanmıştır. İYİ Parti’de yer alan kadınlar toplumda kadını ikincil plana atan toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin yansımalarının siyasette de görüldüğünü savunmaktadır. Ancak İYİ Partiyi diğer partilerden ayıran özellik kadın liderlere sahip olmakla birlikte kadınlara toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini sağlamak için seslerini duyurabilecekleri ve çalışmalar yapabilecekleri ortam sağlanması olarak belirtilmiştir. HDP üyeleri siyasi partilerinde kadın özgürlükçü çizginin benimsenmesine rağmen toplumdaki erkek egemen yapının partide de görüldüğünü belirtmektedirler. Toplumdaki tüm kurumlar toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı ayrımcı anlayıştan kurtulmadıkça toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin tam olarak sağlanamayacağı dile getirilmiştir. Tüm bunlardan farklı olarak MHP üyeleri partide kadınların ön planda olduğu ve bunun kadına değer veren Türk kültürünün bir sonucu olduğu vurgulanmaktadır.

Partilerin kadınların siyasete katılımı konusundaki görüşleri ve uygulamaları kadın sorununun siyasi gündeme taşınması açısından önem taşımaktadır. AKP üyeleri Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’ın söylemlerini vurgulayarak kadınların siyasetin özneleri olduğu ve AKP’nin bu konuda önemli adımlar attığı ileri sürülmüştür. Burada lider partisi olmanın sonuçları kadın konularında parti liderinin söylemlerinin temel alınması olarak açıklanabilir. AKP’de kadın milletvekili oranı yaklaşık olarak %19 olmasına rağmen mecliste bulunan 102 kadın milletvekilinin 54’ünü AKP milletvekillerinin oluşturması kadınların siyasete katılımına önem verdiklerinin göstergesi olarak aktarılmıştır. AKP üyelerinde olduğu gibi MHP üyeleri de toplumsal cinsiyet kotası

uygulamasından söz etmemişler hatta bazı AKP üyeleri kadınların kotalara sığdırılmayacağı dolayısıyla niceliğin değil niteliğin öneminden bahsetmişlerdir. Bunların yanı sıra CHP’de %33 kota uygulamasının benimsendiği bahsedilirken bazı üyeler bu limitin yetersiz olduğu toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği için %50 toplumsal cinsiyet kotasının uygulanması gerektiğinden bahsetmişlerdir. Benzer bir şekilde %25 toplumsal cinsiyet kotası İYİ Parti’de kabul edilmiştir. Toplum tarafından benimsenen toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri kadınların siyasal yaşama katılımı engellemektedir, bu yüzden siyasi partiler toplumsal cinsiyet kotasını kadın temsilini artırma açısından önemli bir araç olarak görmektedirler. %50 toplumsal cinsiyet kotası HDP’yi diğer partilerden farklı bir konuma yerleştirmektedir ve bu limite erişebilmek için seçimlerde fermuar sistemi benimsenmiştir. Kadın siyasiler siyasetin erkek egemen olarak tanımlanması ve kadınların toplumsal rollerinin devam etmesinden kaynaklı olarak siyasette varlıklarını koruma ve devam ettirme açısından zorluklarla karşılaşmaktadırlar. Kadınların siyasette karşılaştıkları zorluklarla başa çıkmaları için AKP üyeleri bireysel kararlılık ve kadınlar olarak birlikte hareket etmekten bahsederken, MHP üyeleri bireysel kararlılık ve dayanıklılığın önemini vurgulamaktadırlar. Ayrıca MHP üyeleri kadının siyasete nezaket getireceği, bunun da daha uyumlu ve düzenli bir çalışma ortamı getireceğinden söz etmektedirler. Bireysel sağlam duruş aynı şekilde İYİ Parti üyelerinin siyasetteki zorluklara göğüs germe araçları olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Sağlam duruş ve ideallere inanmışlığın yanı sıra, CHP üyeleri kadın kimliklerini kaybetmeden erkekleşmeden siyaset yapabilmeyen bu zorluklarla başa çıkmadaki önemine değinmektedirler. Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinden arınmış bir toplum idealinden bahsetmelerine rağmen kadınların evdeki sorumlulukları ve siyasi görevleri arasındaki dengeyi kurabilmenin önemi CHP üyeleri tarafından ele alınmıştır. HDP üyeleri ortaklaşan bir cevap olarak siyasette ve toplumun her alanında bulunan erkek egemen anlayışa karşı kadın dayanışmasının gerekliliğinden bahsetmektedirler.

Siyasette kadın sorununun ele alınması açısından siyasi partilerin kadın kolları yapılanmasının varlıkları hakkında üç temel görüş ortaya çıkmaktadır. Birinci görüş kadın kollarını gerekli ve önemli yapılanmalar olarak adlandırmaktadır. Genel olarak AKP üyeleri kadın kolları oluşumunun olumsuz yönleri olmadığını düşünmekte ve

kadınların erkeklerin giremediği tüm ortamlara girerek kadınlarla yakın temas kurabilmesinden bahsetmektedir. Kadınların evlere girip parti idealleri anlatabilmeleri MHP üyelerinin de ortaya koydukları bir özellik olarak görülmektedir. İYİ Parti’de kadın kolları oluşumu olmamasına rağmen Kadın Politikaları Başkanlığının seçimlerde kadınlarla temasta bulunması önemli bir özellik olarak belirtilmektedir. CHP’ye baktığımızda kadın kollarının görevi kadın dayanışmasını güçlendirmek ve bu sayede kadınların ihtiyaçlarına yönelik toplumsal ve hukuksal değişiklikler yapmak olarak belirtilmiştir. Diğer görüş kadın kolları yapılanmasını siyasi partiyi destekleme mekanizması olarak görmektedir. MHP’de bazı görüşler kadın kolları olarak ana kademedan ayrı bir yapılanmanın ayrımcılığı desteklediği ve kadın ve erkek olarak aynı çatı altında çalışmanın daha doğru olduğunu savunmaktadır. Ayrıca İYİ Parti üyeleri kadın kollarının sadece seçim dönemlerinde toplanan, ana kademeye bağımlı ve partiye oy getirme amaçları olan bir yapılanma olarak tanımlamaktadır. Benzer bir görüş CHP üyelerinde de görülmektedir, kadın kollarının vitrin görevi gördüğü ve karar mekanizmalarında oy hakkının olmadığından bahsedilmektedir. HDP üyeleri kadın kolları yapılanmalarının olmamasının nedenini bu oluşumun ana kademeye bağımlı ve kendi kararlarını veremeyen özelliğe sahip olmasından kaynaklandığını söylemektedir. Son olarak, MHP ve CHP’nin bazı üyeleri nedenleri farklı olsa da ideal olarak kadın kolları yapılanmasının ayrımcılığa neden olduğunu ancak günümüz şartlarından bu oluşumun gerekliliğinden söz etmektedir. Bunların yanı sıra, MHP’de Kadın, Aile ve Engellilerden Sorumlu Başkan Yardımcılığı ve İYİ Parti’de Kadın Politikaları Başkanlığı olarak ana kademe içerisinde yapılanmalar bulunmaktadır. MHP üyeleri bu yapılanmanın kadın kollarından farklılığını net bir şekilde dile getirmemelerine karşın İYİ Parti üyeleri kadın sorununu merkeze almak adına böyle bir yapılanmaya gidildiğini dile getirmiştir. Tüm bunlardan farklılaşan bir yapılanma HDP’de Kadın Meclisi olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Kadın Meclisinin en önemli özelliği özgün ve özerk olmasıdır. Kadın Meclisinin kararları kadınlar tarafından alınır ve erkekler tarafından tartışmaya açılmaz, bu meclis kadınlar dışında kimseye karşı sorumlu değildir. Dolayısıyla, Kadın Meclisi olarak yapılanma diğer tüm partilerden ayrı olarak bağımsız bir karar alma mekanizması olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada ele alınan üç şiddet türü dikkate alındığında, ev içi şiddet kavramını tanımlama ve açıklama açısından tüm siyasi partiler benzer bakış açılarına sahiptir. Evlilik bağına ve şiddetin nerede gerçekleştiğine bakılmaksızın partnerler tarafından uygulanan fiziksel, cinsel, ekonomik ve psikolojik şiddet gibi her şiddet türü ev içi şiddet altında toplanmaktadır. Bu şiddet türünün uygulanmasını meşrulaştırmaya yönelik herhangi bir neden olamayacağı belirtilmektedir. Cinsel tacizin tanımlanmasında her siyasi partide benzer bir yaklaşım benimsenmiştir. Cinsel tacizin bir bakış, söz, dokunuş, ya da saldırı gibi pek çok davranışı kapsayabileceği belirtilmektedir. Cinsel taciz vakalarının araştırılmasının ve koruyucu tedbirler alınmasının başlangıç noktası olarak kadının beyanını esas almak konusunda İYİ Parti, CHP ve HDP üyeleri ortak bir tutum sergilemektedirler. Buna karşın AKP tarafında kadın beyanının erkeği mağdur edici durumlar oluşturabileceği vurgulanmaktadır. Rıza kavramı İYİ Parti, CHP ve HDP üyeleri tarafından etkili bir biçimde kullanılmasına rağmen, AKP ve MHP üyeleri bir olayın cinsel taciz olarak adlandırılması için karşılıklı rızanın olup olmadığı konusunu önemsemektedir. Kadın cinayeti kavramı ele alındığında iki farklı görüş ortaya çıkmaktadır. İlk olarak genel olarak AKP ve MHP üyeleri cinayetleri insan temelli olarak ele almakta ve MHP tarafında kadın cinayeti kullanımının medya tarafından daha çok ilgi görmek için vurgulandığı söylenmektedir. İYİ Parti, CHP ve HDP üyeleri dikkate alındığında kadınların erkekler tarafından sırf kadın oldukları için öldükleri belirtilmekte ve kadın cinayeti kavramının kullanılma nedeni hakkında bilinçli bir tutum sergilenmektedirler.

Partilerin kadına yönelik şiddeti vurgulamak, azaltmak ve durdurmak için yaptığı çalışmalar göz önünde bulundurulduğunda AKP üyeleri partinin getirdiği kazanımlar olarak ŞÖNİM, KADES ve 6284 sayılı kanun gibi bir takım devlet kurumları tarafından yapılan çalışmalardan bahsetmektedir. İYİ Parti üyeleri İstanbul Sözleşmesi ve 6284 sayılı kanun ile ilgili broşür hazırlayarak bilinç yükseltme çalışmaları yürütme ve Güneşin Kadınları kooperatif projesi ile kadınlara iş imkânı sağlayarak şiddete karşı sağlam duruş göstermelerine yardım ettiklerini belirtmektedirler. HDP üyeleri kadına yönelik şiddeti durdurmak için eğitim projeleri ve bilinç yükseltme kampanyalarının yanı sıra Kadınlar için Adalet Kampanyası ile kadınların karşılaştığı her türlü şiddete ve hak ihlaline karşı durduklarını açıklamaktadırlar. MHP üyeleri KAÇEP

Sempozyumunun kadına yönelik şiddet çalışmaları arasında önemli bir yere sahip olduğunu söylemektedir. Sempozyum sonucu oluşturulan kitapta erkek egemenliği şiddetin nedeni olarak açıklanmasına rağmen kadına yönelik şiddeti durdurmanın en önemli etkeni geleneksel Türk aile yapısının korunması olarak belirtilmiştir. Son olarak CHP üyeleri YAŞAM HAK Projesi ile şiddet gören kadınların parti yetkililerine hızlı bir şekilde ulaşabildiği ve gerekli psikolojik, hukuki ve maddi desteğin sağlanmaya çalışıldığını dile getirmektedir.

Kadın siyasilerin kadına yönelik şiddeti durdurmaya yönelik önerileri dört ana başlık altında toplanmaktadır. Eğitim tüm partilerin önemseydiği bir öneri olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. AKP tarafında şiddet eğilimi göstermeden toplumsal ve bireysel ilişkiler kurabilmenin temelini ailede verilen eğitimden geçtiği belirtilmektedir. Aynı şekilde MHP üyeleri geleneksel Türk aile yapısının şiddeti önlemede önemli bir rol oynadığı bu anlamda çocukların İslam ahlakı ile yüksek vasıflı Türk olarak yetiştirilmesi gerektiğini belirtmektedir. İYİ Parti üyeleri toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği eğitiminin evlilik öncesi çiftlere ve toplumdaki tüm kurumlara verilmesi gerektiğinden bahsedilmektedir. Aynı şekilde toplumsal cinsiyet eğitiminin tüm kurumlarda verilmesi ve içselleştirilmesi CHP ve HDP üyelerinin de vurguladığı bir nokta olarak görülmektedir.

Kadını temel alan öneriler kadının bilinçlendirilmesi ve ekonomik olarak güçlendirilmesi olmak üzere iki alt başlık altında ele alınmaktadır. AKP ve MHP üyeleri kadınların bilinçlenmesini yardım arayabilecekleri kurumlar hakkında farkındalığa sahip olmak üzerinden ele alırken, İYİ Parti üyeleri kadınların şiddet türlerini anlamak ve haklarını öğrenmek için bilinçlendirilmesinden bahsetmektedir. CHP üyeleri toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği eğitimine önem vermelerine rağmen kadının toplumun diğer yarısını dünyaya getirdiği dolayısıyla onları eğitime sorumluluğuna sahip oldukları dile getirilmektedir. Toplumun şiddetten arınması için bu sorumluluk nedeniyle kadınların bu konularda eğitilmesinin önemi CHP üyeleri tarafından belirtilmektedir. HDP üyeleri şiddetin karşısında durabilmek için kadınların bilinçlenmesini haklarını öğrenme ve kendi kadın kimliklerini keşfetme olarak açıklamışlardır. Kadının ekonomik olarak güçlenmesi konusunda CHP ve HDP

üyeleri kadınların ev içi emeklerinin sigorta altına alınması gerektiğini savunmaktadırlar. Bu sayede erkeğin eline bakmadan sağlık, gıda ve barınma gibi ihtiyaçlarını karşılayabilecekler ve şiddet ile karşılaştıklarında bu duruma boyun eğmeyecek duruma gelebileceklerdir.

Kadına yönelik şiddeti durdurmak için kadın siyasiler yasal çerçevede birtakım önerilerde bulunmaktadırlar. Tüm partilerden katılımcılar cezai yaptırımların caydırıcı nitelik taşıması ve indirimlerin uygulanmaması için çalışmalar yapılması gerektiğinden bahsetmektedir çünkü erkek şiddet uyguladığında “1 hafta yatar çıkarım” anlayışı ile şiddeti uygulamaktan çekinmemektedir. Bunların yanı sıra, en sert öneri bir MHP üyesi tarafından kadına yönelik şiddet vakalarından cezaların toplum vicdanının bir nebze rahatlaması adına idam ve hadım olarak benimsenmesidir. HDP tarafında şiddete uğrayan kadının sığınma evine giderek kendini toplumsal hayattan kısıtlamasının yerine erkeği toplumdan tecrit edecek güçlü mekanizmaların kurulması gerektiği belirtilirken var olan sığınma evlerinin işleyişinde sorunlar olduğu kadınların çocukları ile birlikte kalmasında yaşanan zorluklardan bahsedilmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra CHP tarafında ŞÖNİM’in etkin bir şekilde faaliyetlerini sürdürmediği belirtilmekte ve işleyişinin düzelmesi konusunda eleştiriler yöneltilmektedir. Bunun dışında e-kelepçenin kadına yönelik şiddet vakalarında kadını korumak için önemli bir adım olduğu ve bu uygulamanın mümkün olduğunca yaygınlaşması gerektiği belirtilmektedir. Ayrıca hâkim, savcı ve kolluk kuvvetlerinin şiddete uğrayan kadın başvuru yaptığında doğru ve etkin bir işleyişe sahip olmaları adına eğitilmeleri gerektiği İYİ Parti, CHP ve HDP üyeleri tarafından belirtilmektedir. CHP tarafında toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini içselleştiren ve kadına yönelik şiddete meşrulaştıran yayınların kaldırılmasına yönelik bir öneri gelirken İYİ Parti tarafında cinsel taciz gibi konularla yargı kararları ile birlikte olayların somutlaştırılarak toplumda bilinç oluşturulması gerektiğinden bahsedilmektedir.

Son olarak İstanbul Sözleşmesi özelindeki tartışmalar ve İstanbul Sözleşmesi’nin kadına yönelik şiddeti durdurmak için nasıl bir araç olduğu ele alınmıştır. AKP ve MHP tarafında bu sözleşmenin yürürlükte olduğu süre boyunca kadına yönelik şiddet vakalarında bir azalma görülmediği belirtilmektedir. Ayrıca bu sözleşmenin

geleneksel Türk aile yapısına uygun olmadığı ve bu kurumu zedeleyecek noktalara sahip olduğu eklenmektedir. Tüm bunlara karşın, İYİ Parti, CHP ve HDP üyeleri tarafından İstanbul Sözleşmesinin etkin bir şekilde uygulanmadığı, eğer uygulansaydı kadına yönelik şiddet vakalarında azalma görüleceğini belirtmektedirler. Bu sözleşmenin sadece kadınları değil şiddete uğrayan tüm bireyleri kapsadığı vurgulanmaktadır.

Bu çalışma kadın siyasilerin kadına yönelik şiddet algılarını ve çözüm önerilerini araştırmıştır. Gelecek çalışmalar, siyasi partilerde yer alan kadın ve erkeklerin kadına yönelik şiddet algılarını inceleyebilirler. Ayrıca yerel yönetimlerde ve ilgili bakanlıklarda çalışan yetkililerle bu çalışma yürütülebilir. Bunlara ek olarak, kadın siyasiler arasındaki benzerlik ve farklılıklara neden olan etkenler araştırılabilir. Son olarak, kadın siyasilerin görüşleri ve partilerinin söylemleri arasındaki boşlukların kadına yönelik şiddeti ele alma konusunda ne tür sorunlar ve avantajlar oluşturduğu araştırılabilir.

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