

Attitudes of Women's NGO Members towards Women's Representation in Turkey^{1 2}

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Abstract

The issue of women's representation started to be discussed intensely in the academic literature, especially in the 2000s. Conceptual discussions demonstrate that this term has different dimensions such as descriptive and substantive representations, and theoretical discussions often focus on the relationship between these dimensions. Besides representation of women's interests is one of these dimensions, it can be observed in different levels such as national, subnational or cross-national. Moreover, representation can be hold by different agencies, actors, institutions or organizations such as members of parliament, women's NGOs, femocrats or women's policy machineries. This study analyses representation of women's interests in Turkey in two levels. First of all, women's NGO members' attitudes on representation policies of governments and political parties will be questioned. Secondly this study will focus on the perception of women's NGO members on how well women's interests are represented by different public institutions, women's policy machineries and political parties. For the aims of this study, between November 2017 and February 2018 a survey was run with 735 women who are members of women's associations from Ankara and Istanbul, two biggest cities of Turkey. 151 women's associations were included in this research that reflects a representative sample of women's NGOs in those two cities. The results of this research suggest that members of women's NGOs does not have high levels satisfaction with representation of women's interests by government actors and institutions.

Keywords: Women's representation, policy, women's NGOs, gender quotas, survey research

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Kadın STK'larının Türkiye'deki Kadının Temsiline Yönelik Tutumları

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Öz

Kadının temsili konusu özellikle 2000'li yıllarda akademik literatürde yoğun olarak tartışılmaya başlanmıştır. Kavramsal tartışmalar bu terimin betimsel ve asli gibi farklı boyutları olduğunu göstermekle beraber ve teorik tartışmalar sıklıkla bu boyutların birbirleri arasındaki ilişki üzerinde yoğunlaşır. Kadın çıkarlarının temsili ise bu boyutlardan biri olmakla birlikte; ulusal, yerel veya uluslararası gibi farklı düzeylerde gözlemlenebilir. Dahası, temsil, parlamento üyeleri, kadın STK'ları, femokratlar veya kadınların politika mekanizmaları gibi farklı aktörler ve kurumlar tarafından da yapılabılır. Bu çalışma, kadınların Türkiye'de temsilini iki düzeyde analiz etmektedir. İlk olarak, kadın STK'ların üyelerinin, hükümetlerin ve siyasi partilerin temsil politikalarına yönelik tutumları sorgulanacaktır. İkinci olarak, bu çalışma, kadın STK'ları üyelerinin, kadınların çıkarlarının farklı kamu kurumları, kadınların politika mekanizmaları ve siyasi partiler tarafından ne kadar iyi temsil edildiğine ilişkin algısına odaklanacaktır. Bu araştırma, Kasım 2017 ve Şubat 2018 tarihleri arasında, Türkiye'nin en büyük iki şehri olan Ankara ve İstanbul'daki kadın derneklerine üye olan 735 kadını içeren bir anket çalışmasına dayanmaktadır. Bu iki kentteki kadın STK'larının hepsi ile iletişime geçilerek çalışmaya katılmayı kabul eden bütün derneklerin temsili bir örneklemini yansıtan 151 kadın derneđi bu arařtırmaya dâhil edilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler nicel yöntem kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Arařtırmanın sonuçları kadın STK'ları üyelerinin devlet aktörleri ve kurumlarının kadınları temsili için yüksek düzeyde memnuniyet düzeyine sahip olmadığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadınların temsili, politika, kadın STK'ları, kadın kotası, anket çalışması

Introduction

Women's representation has been an agenda issue at both national and international levels including various types of actors such as policy-makers, civil society, human rights communities and academics. Although these debates and discussions mostly focused on the numbers of women in the parliament, the real act of standing for constituents or the representativeness of formal arrangements are less frequently discussed. Therefore, this study aims to question whether constituents, which in this study are represented by civil society members, think that different policy-makers such as government actors, institutions and political parties are representing women's interest or not. Vickers (2006) identifies three characteristics for woman-friendliness of a state; 1) Women's participation in decision making, 2) Their involvement in the state structures, where policies are discussed and formulated and; 3) State need to be responsive to other political structures such as civil society movements. Thus, at a certain sense this research aims to cover all these three characteristics by asking members of women's associations several questions on women's representation as follows: How successful do you find political party policies to increase the representation of women in parliament? To what extent actors, institutions and organizations represent the interest of women in Turkey? Who is the politician who best represents women's expectations? Should gender quotas be implemented in Turkey?

The representation role of parliamentarians as well as other politicians is highly crucial. However, it is not always the case that representation automatically occurs by actors. On the contrary, many political actors do not act representatively to their constituents. Similar to actors, some institutions might also play the role of representation and decision-making. These are various state agencies established to promote women's status such as women's ministries or parliamentary commissions as well as women's movements and civil society (Lovendusky, 2005; Stetson and Mazur 1995). In Turkey, organizational structure, purposes and service principles of women's associations are very diverse, however they sometimes act together for joint campaigns and lobbying activities (Anıl et al., 2005; İlkaracan-Ajas 2008; Sancar, 2010; Paker, 2009). The most successful example for this kind of collective action is women's movement success on Penal Law Reform of 2007 and Civil Code Reform of 2004.

As a part of civil society, women's associations play a representative role for women both in the political field and in society. However, it would be misleading to state that all women's associations aim to represent women as there are many different types of associations such as leisure time activity, solidarity or cultural aims. For example even during Ottoman times, there were nine types of women's associations: 1) Aid associations, 2) Associations aiming to train women and give them employment, 3) Cultural associations, 4) Associations aiming to find solutions to country problems, 5) Women's associations for national defense, 6) Women's associations of different ethnic groups, 7) Women's associations of political parties 8) Feminist women's associations, 9) Political women's associations with political aims (Çakır, 2013, p.87-132). Thus, the ideas, behaviors and attitudes of members of women's association are very much diverse. Their ideas and attitudes are also very crucial as they represent women's interests and expectation in the policy making processes. Thus, this research was conducted with the members of women's NGOs.

In this paper, first of all the concept of women's political representation will be discussed. This part is particularly important to define and conceptualize the main issue of the paper which later on will be useful for the operationalization of the term women's representation. Secondly, gender quotas and their impact on women's political representation will be discussed as gender quotas are seen as one of the most effective policies to increase the level of women's representation at parliaments. Thirdly, methodology of the paper will be presented including sampling method, operationalization of dependent and independent variables and statistical procedures. Fourthly, the findings will be presented focusing on four dimensions of women's representation: Attitudes towards gender quotas, attitudes towards representation policies of political parties, the most representative politician of women's interests and representation of women's interests by key policy-makers and institutions.

The Concept of Women's Political Representation

Representation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that was examined in depth in Hanna Pitkin's book: *The Concept of Representation*. Pitkin (1967) introduces four types representation: Formalistic representation, descriptive

representation, symbolic representation and substantive representation (Pitkin, 1967). Formalistic representation refers to institutional arrangements and rules accomodating authorization by which a representative obtains his or her position and accountability of representatives that is the ability of constituents to control their representative and expect responsiveness of the representative. Symbolic representation refers to the ways, signs and objects (symbols) that serve as a representative in place of the represented. This type of representation is somehow an illogical dimesion of the representation because the represented adopts the idea that some symbols or items represent them. Thirdly, descriptive representation introduces the idea of numerical representation and assumes that there is an important level of similarity between the represented and representatives. Lastly, substantive representation requires the actions taken on behalf of and in the interest of the represented. (Pitkin, 1967)

Many scholars focusing on women's representation framed their studies within the conceptualization of Pitkin and mostly focused on different dimensions of the concept. Schwindt-Bayer and Mischler (2005) created a comprehensive model of women's representation by analyzing all four dimensions of women's representation in 31 democratic countries. They demonstrated that descriptive representation measured by the percentage of female representatives is the most important factor explaining women's confidence in the legislative processes and their policy responsiveness. Thus, descriptive representation is seen as a unifying and mediating factor between formal representation and symbolic representation (Schwindt-Bayer and Mischler, 2005, p.422).

The literature on women's representation mostly focus on the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. Some empirical studies found that women's descriptive and substantive representation are positively associated arguing that once women are present in the elected offices, they start to act for their constituents- women- and initiate women-friendly policies (e.g. Atchinson, 2015; Bratton and Ray, 2002; Caiazza, 2002; Chaney 2008; Childs and Withey, 2004; Saint-Germain, 1989). Once women have access into the political institutions, they are more likely than their male colleagues to work on women's issues (Saint-Germain, 1989). Literature on industrial parliamentary democracies often supports this argument and find that increa-

sing trends in women's representation in parliaments or cabinets lead to promotion of women's friendly policies (E.g. Atchinson, 2015; Caiazza, 2002; Chaney, 2008; Grey, 2001; Saint-Germain, 1989). Moreover, some literature shows that women introduce a female standpoint into the politics and they would favor policy issues supporting social welfare, health or human security. For example, Chen (2010) indicates that increasing numbers of female policymakers lead to higher government expenditures of social welfare.

However, it would be misleading to assume such an automatic relationship between descriptive and substantive representation of women. Particularly, the conclusions driven from the analysis of women in the parliaments of developed nations may over-determine the possible impact of number of women and ignore other factors (Beckwith, 2007, p.33). Thus, some scholars particularly emphasize the impact of detrimental factors such as party dictates (Ayata and Tutuncu, 2008), partisan divisions (Reingold and Harrel, 2010) or wider political contexts such as party instability or electoral unpredictability (Waylen, 2008) that affects whether female representatives act for women. Questioning the arguments of Western literature, Devlin and Elgie (2008) demonstrates for the Rwandan case that the increase in women's representation lead to women's issues to be raised easier and a strong advocacy of 'international feminism' but it has a little effect on policy outputs. In addition, Schumacher (2008) questions the association between descriptive representation of women and maternity leave policies in 167 countries and could not find any empirical evidence to confirm a positive association (Schumacher, 2008).

A review of the Turkish scholarly literature on women's representation exposes that the majority of published work focuses on women's descriptive representation in politics. For example; *The Study on Women's Representation in Politics* aimed at analyzing the attitudes and values towards female candidates, towards women in social life and in politics (KADER, 2011). This research is designed as a survey research that includes the questions about why women's representation in politics is low and the suggestions of NGOs about how to increase those numbers. Some literature also focused on women's parliamentary representation in an historical perspective and showed the evaluation of women's representation in parliament (Gökçimen, 2008; Arslan, 2004). These studies demonstrated that increase in parliamentary representation of women is not enough and also does not ensure fairness. They also aim

to suggest some solutions to the problem of low representation of women. Moreover, Arslan (2004) demonstrated that left wing parties are more women friendly than right wing parties in terms of women's representation in politics. Some studies such as Sancar (2008) also examined the issue of women's equal representation in political decision-making positions by focusing on not only parliaments but also judiciary or political parties. Other studies focuses only on inadequate representation of women in subnational level political institutions such as municipalities, the municipal councils, provincial councils (E.g. Yaylı and Eroğlu, 2015; Biricikoğlu, 2013; Belli, 2017). There are also a few studies that examined women's representation at executive branches and the the profiles of women's ministers (Aydın and Kahraman, 2017). In short, besides descriptive representation of women at different levels of political institutions, different dimensions of women's representation need to be studied for the Case of Turkey. Therefore, this study aim to focus on the attitudes of members of women's NGOs towards three dimensions of Pitkin's women's representation conceptualization: descriptive, substantive and formalistic representation of women.

Gender Quotas as Affirmative Action Policies

Women's representation is important not just because it is a sign of democracy and spreads the exercise of human rights but also it will transform women's values in a positive way (Demir, 2015). Countries might adopt various types of women's representation policies which could include all the actions in promoting different dimensions of women's representation in the political arena (Mazur 2002). Independently from government, political parties as the main gate keepers of the recruitment processes in the politics might also adopt women's representation policies. The most important policy that is increasingly adopted in the world is gender quotas a type of a positive discrimination policy. There has been a growing number of countries adopting gender quotas to increase women's proportion in national parliaments. Gender quotas are considered as affirmative action policies aiming at "ensuring that women constitute at least a "critical minority" of 30 or 40%" (IDEA, 2019). Famous critical mass theory of Kanter (1977) is at the center of most debates on women's representation and legitimation of gender quotas globally. The

critical mass theory assumes that women will act together and work for women-friendly legislations only when they have a certain proportion of representation in parliament, which she calls 'tipping point' (Kanter, 1977: 986). The tipping point or so called 'threshold' is important as it leads to feminization of political behavior, policy agenda and policy outcomes (Kanter, 1977; Grey, 2001; Saint-Germain, 1989). Thus, there is an assumption and argument that once women reach at a certain proportion in parliament they start to act for women as they are keener to form strategic coalitions with other women and lobby for women's interests as well as they are more influential on men's behavior for a more women-friendly direction (Childs and Krook, 2009).

However, critical mass theory was criticized due to difficulties in identifying the critical mass in different contexts and political cultures and its theoretical assumption about a direct linear association between women's proportion in parliament and policy outcomes (Beckwith, 2007; Childs and Krook, 2009). Accordingly, the critical mass theory poses many disadvantages about research design including case selection, context, time frame, and small numbers problems (Beckwith, 2007). Besides Beckwith (2007), many other studies questioned the arguments about direct relationship between women's descriptive and substantive representation and demonstrated that women's numeric representation in the politics do not necessarily lead to women friendly policies (Ayata and Tutuncu, 2008; Celis et al., 2008; Weldon, 2002; Wide, 2002). These scholars find it ambiguous to indicate that a numerical increase of women in parliament and elected-offices guarantees women's substantive representation (Ayata and Tutuncu, 2008; Delvin and Elgie, 2008; Wide, 2002).

Another debate around adoption of gender quotas focuses on positive discrimination also called affirmative action. Affirmative action policies aim to overcome the effects of past and current discrimination against disadvantaged groups such as women, black citizens or religious minorities by redistributing the opportunities from advantaged to disadvantaged ones (Kellough, 2006). Thus, positive discrimination is applied as a compensation to the existing disadvantageous situation. Supporters of affirmative action argue that it is a legitimate tool to combat against inequalities (Akbaş ve Şen, 2013). For instance, it is argued that the natural progress of women's equal representation in politics would take about 70-80 years thus, quotas as affirmative action policies fasten the progress and open up new opportunities for

women (Demir, 2015). Moreover, when gender quotas increase the share of female legislators, it also triggers their influence on various policy issues such as social welfare and health expenditures (Chen, 2010). Thus, gender quotas do not only affect the representation but also the types of policies that are adopted. In short, positive discrimination provides a legitimate framework although contradicting the notions of equality and non-discrimination in order to fasten the progress in elimination of existing inequalities and disadvantages. However, opponents of affirmative action question whether those women or minorities who manage to enter into the political institution would have adequate standards of merit. Therefore, affirmative action is seen as a tool that lowers the qualification standards in those institutions (Kellough, 2006). However, some studies demonstrated that “the benefits of quotas outweigh their costs and that they are an effective way of tackling group-based inequality” (Morgenroth and Ryan, 2018, p.1).

In the light of the above discussions, in last decades adoption of gender quotas has become a global trend (Krook, 2004; Dahlerup 2008; Hughes et al., 2015). It is seen as one of the effective tools to increase women representation in politics so that it is highly suggested by international agreements and conferences. International developments such as the CEDAW (1979), Vienna World Conference on Human Rights (1993) or Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) resulted in a global level action to increase women’s descriptive representation. In addition, civil society organizations started to create global networks and women’s rights advocacies to raise more awareness on women’s issues. These international linkages between state and non-state actors are particularly important in the diffusion of global human rights standards and change of values. National policies on gender quotas are also influenced by international developments and pressures (Krook, 2006; Hughes, et al., 2015). The gender sensitivity developed by the Second Wave Women's Movement and international organizations have played a major role in increasing the prevalence of gender quotas as a type of positive discrimination policies (Öztaş, 2004). In addition, international institutions such as the UN and the EU put direct pressures on national leaders and they take decisions to apply gender quotas (Krook, 2006; Öztaş, 2004).

Briefly describing, there are three types of gender quotas in politics globally: 1) Reserved seats (constitutional and/or legislative), 2) Legal candidate

quotas (constitutional and/or legislative) and 3) Political party quotas (voluntary) (International IDEA, 2018). As the former two forms of quotas are regulated through legislative or constitutional means, political party quotas are not regulated through national mechanisms but on a voluntary base at party level. Thus, the role of political parties is very important to increase women's representation in politics that will be particularly questioned by this study.

Although many studies demonstrate that quota adoption is a global phenomenon, today there are still some countries like Turkey where geographic policy diffusion for gender quotas has not occurred at constitutional or legislative levels. In Turkey, some women's civil society organizations such as the Association for Supporting Women Candidates (KA-DER) have constantly demanded from the government to take the necessary actions to increase women's representation in politics, and to have at least 30 percent elective gender quota system (Yenilmez, Kılınc and Ateş, 2016; Yenilmez, 2016). Some political parties such as People's Democratic Party (PDP) apply 40 percent voluntary party quotas also leading to around 37 percent women's representation in the PDP at 2018 national parliamentary elections. However, the Justice and Development Party (JDP) objects against application of gender quotas not only because it is seen as dangerous to party progress but also it is seen as an interference with the merit of the individuals who are candidates (Yenilmez, 2016)

Considering the debates on gender quotas in Turkey, it is worth questioning whether civil society members are in favor of implication of such measurements to increase women's political representation or not. So far, there is a gap in literature questioning the attitudes towards gender quota adoption in Turkey. Another gap in the literature is that there are no studies investigating people's attitudes towards representativeness of their representatives such as MPs etc. Thus, this paper questions the perceptions of members of women's NGO's towards their attitudes about the level of representation of women's interests by political actors and institutions.

Method

This research was designed as a face-to-face survey conducted with 735 members of women's association in Istanbul and Ankara from November 2017 to February 2018. The survey was conducted as a part of a larger project called

“Evaluating Women’s Policies from the Perspective of Women’s Organizations” funded by Scientific Research Coordination Unit of the Social Sciences University of Ankara. The survey included questions covering demographic information, attitudes towards diverse set of policy issues including, health, education, institutions, representation, family law and prevention of violence against women in Turkey. This paper only covers the data on the attitudes of women’s NGO members towards the representation of women. As actors of policy making through pressuring and lobbying the policy makers, civil society is considered as keener to follow the agenda and policy issues and thus they are more knowledgeable about the issues. Thus, civil society organizations and its activist members have a certain impact on policies particularly once they create a movement in a collective base (Coşar ve Onbaşı, 2008). This research aims to collect individual level data from the members of women’s associations on different dimensions of women’s representation. This study uses quantitative research methods including descriptive statistics and OLS regression analysis.

Sampling

The selection of women’s associations in Istanbul and Ankara has been based on a three-level systematic unbiased selection procedure. The official web page of Internal Ministry, Associations Desk online system of associations was used as the main source to find women’s associations.

Table 1. Sampling Method and Confidence Levels

City	Sample Aim (5% Confidence interval) (%95 Confidence level)	Final Sample
Ankara	87 NGOs x 5 members = 435 members	76NGOs x (max. 5 members) = 370 (7% Confidence interval) (95% Confidence level)
İstanbul	123 NGOs x 5 members = 615 members	75NGOs x (max. 5 members) = 365 (9% Confidence interval) (95% Confidence level)
Total	210 NGOs= 1050	151 NGOs = 735

Firstly, all the women's associations that consider themselves as operating in the field of women's rights was included in the dataset. Secondly, we searched further for the names of associations with the key words: woman, girl, lady, mom, mother, feminist etc. and included all those associations having these words in their names. Lastly, we excluded all the branches of the same associations and we kept the main quarters to provide equal representation of all associations. In this way, the list of women's associations was updated for the cities of Istanbul and Ankara in November 2017. After this procedure of selection, we have found a total of 290 associations, 179 from Istanbul and 111 from Ankara. We invited all these associations to participate in our survey via mail. In addition, we called all the associations (those with available phone numbers) to convince to participate in the survey. To assure equal representation of each association, we aimed at including 5 respondents from each association at 5% confidence interval, summing up to 1050 respondents in total (See Table 1). However, we could not reach our aim of 1050 respondents because of high nonresponse rates particularly in the city of İstanbul. Thus, the final sample consisted a total of 735 respondents from 151 NGOs. Thus, the sample remained confident at 9 percent confidence interval in İstanbul and at 7 percent in Ankara. 365 respondents are from İstanbul and 370 are from Ankara.

Operationalization of Variables

Dependent Variables

The operationalization of women's representation attitudes focuses on descriptive, substantive and formalistic representation policies. First of all, gender quotas as the main tools to improve descriptive representation are questioned. Secondly, party level women's representation policies are taken as another important tool to increase descriptive representation. Thirdly, the most representative politician is asked in order to specify the substantive representation of women by individual political actors. Fourthly, the extent of which members of women's associations feel represented by key policy institutions and policy makers was asked. This allowed us to question the dimension of formalistic representation by focusing on the role of institutional arrange-

ments and procedures. We assume that defining the level of representativeness of key policy institutions would bring the respondent's calculations on accountability. The detailed survey questions and scales are presented in the following;

1. Quota attitude: "As practiced in some countries to increase the representation of women in politics, gender quotas should be introduced in Turkey." To what extent do you agree with this statement? (Likert Scale)

(1) Certainly don't agree – (5) Certainly agree

2. Women's representation policies by the main political parties: How successful do you find policies of the political parties, which I will tell you now, to increase the representation of women in parliament? (Likert scale)

(1) Very unsuccessful – (5) very successful

3. The most representative politician of women's interests: According to you, who is the politician who best represents women's expectations? (Open ended question)

4. Representation of women's interests by key policy-makers: From the people / institutions / organizations and political parties that I am going to tell you, to what extent do you think that they represent the expectations of women in Turkey? Can you rate between 0-10?

(1) Not representing at all – (10) Totally representing

Actors:

- President
- Prime minister
- Women Deputies
- Women Ministers

Institutions:

- Parliament
- Parliamentary Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
- Ministry of Family and Social Policy
- Municipalities

Other:

- NGOs
- Media

Political parties:

- Justice and Development Party
- Republican People's Party
- Nationalist Movement Party
- People's Democratic Party

Index of Representation Attitudes (IRA): For the aims of statistical analysis an Index of Representation Attitudes (IRA) was developed by utilizing actors and institutions dimensions of representation of women's interests in key government policy-makers. This measurement included 8 variables including the groups of actors and institutions to develop an index (See Table 2).

Table 2. Correlation Matrix between Scale Items of Index of Representation Attitudes

Actors/ Institutions	President	Prime minister	Women deputies	Women ministers	Parlia- ment	Parl. commis- sions	Ministry of FSP	Municipal- ities
President	1.0000							
Prime minister	0.9432	1.0000						
Women deputies	0.7491	0.7956	1.0000					
Women ministers	0.7980	0.8297	0.9100	1.0000				
Parliament	0.8409	0.8651	0.8066	0.8059	1.0000			
Parl. com- mission	0.7644	0.8044	0.8434	0.8790	0.8173	1.0000		
Ministry of FSP	0.8698	0.8998	0.8399	0.8829	0.8379	0.8199	1.0000	
Municipali- ties	0.7218	0.7627	0.7229	0.7814	0.7625	0.8115	0.7635	1.0000

Note: All correlation coefficients are significant at the level of $P < 0.000$

The index is created by summing the value of all indicators with a procedure by using STATA software. This scale ranged between a minimum of 8

and a maximum of 88. Then a standardization procedure was applied to limit the score between 0 and 1 to make interpretations easier. Table 2 present correlation matrix of components of the IRA Index. As seen from the Matrix, all items are highly correlated between each other and all the coefficients are statistically significant at level of $P < 0.000$. In addition, the IRA Index is also highly reliable considering that Krombach's alpha coefficient for item reliability is 0.9722.

Independent Variables

Thirteen independent variables are used in determining representation attitudes of members of women's NGOs (See Table 3 for descriptive statistics). All of these variables are measured at individual level and can be grouped in 4 clusters: 1) Demographics, 2) Personal ideology, 3) NGO related variables 4) Politics.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variables

Variable Name	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max
Education	735	6.002721	2.053771	1	9
Income	735	3.178231	2.136249	1	7
Marital Status: Married	735	0.5931973	0.491572	0	1
Age	735	41.32245	12.73673	19	78
Ankara	735	0.5034014	0.5003289	0	1
Left	735	0.4748299	0.4997061	0	1
Religiosity	735	6.644898	2.617359	1	11
Gender inequality index	735	25.88163	16.06351	10	86
Representation important	735	9.47483	2.260092	1	11
Membership	735	0.0585034	0.2348527	0	1
Administrative position	735	0.5251701	0.4997061	0	1
Index of political participation	735	12.57143	2.158564	9	18
Following policy	735	3.62449	0.9726219	1	5

Firstly, demographic variables include education, income, marital status, age and the city. They define personal background that would be very important on people's attitudes and behaviors. Secondly, personal ideology, that is measured by being leftist, being more religious or having more gender egalitarian attitudes, might play an important role in their attitudes towards their representation attitudes. Thirdly, as the sample of this research consists of members of women's associations, there some NGO related variables such

as having a membership in a second NGO or having an administrative position in a NGO are expected to have some impacts on their attitudes as well. Lastly, people's interest in politics and in women's policies is also important as these show whether they are knowledgeable about the political issues and whether they are following the agenda on women's representation policies. Table 3 presents the full list of independent variables and their descriptive statistics.

Here, it is important to mention about two indexes developed in the survey: Gender Inequality Index and Index of Political Participation. The gender equality index consists of ten questions asking ten different dimensions of gender equality. These dimensions were combined in a unique index by adding all those items' scores. Finally, the index range was between 10 and 86. The respondents were expected to rate the level of agreement between 0: Not agreeing at all to 10: Completely agreeing to the following 10 questions;

- 1) Since men are responsible for family livelihood, men should be given more salary than women.
- 2) Women are more suited to social sciences, men are more prone to numerical sciences.
- 3) Because women are more emotional than men, they have difficulty in doing professions such as management.
- 4) Men are more prone to politics than women.
- 5) Man should decide how to use the income in the family.
- 6) The level of education among men should always be higher than that of women.
- 7) The main duty of the woman in society is motherhood.
- 8) Girls and boys should benefit equally from the financial means of the family.
- 9) A man should not be expected to be involved in housework such as ironing, laundry, child care.
- 10) A woman who is unhappy in her marriage must still maintain her marriage.

Second, applying the same procedure as the gender inequality index, we created an index of political participation (See the range in Table 3) by asking them whether they agree with the following ten statements:

- 1) Political issues take my attention.

- 2) I follow the news and the agenda.
- 3) I participate in political meetings, rallies and/or marches.
- 4) I follow the political debate programs on TV.
- 5) I vote in elections.
- 6) I follow the debates in the parliament.
- 7) I volunteer activities for election campaigns.
- 8) I am a member of a political party.
- 9) I like to chat in political matters.
- 10) I read books on political issues.

Findings

This section presents attitudes of women's NGO members towards representation of women's interests by focusing on four dimensions: 1) Gender quota attitudes, 2) Attitudes towards the best representative politician in Turkey, 3) Attitudes towards women's representation policies of main political parties, 4) Attitudes towards representation of women's interests by key policy-makers.

Gender Quota Attitudes

Figure 1 presents a bar graph describing the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement: "As practiced in some countries to increase the representation of women in politics, gender quotas should be introduced in Turkey." The Figure 1 shows that people are tended to agree with the quota adoption in Turkey as also the mean level of 650 respondents who replied this question is 3.68 over 5 as the highest score. This shows that 65,69 percent of the respondents agreed with the adoption of a type of gender quota. In brief, members of women's NGOs have a positive attitude towards adoption of gender quotas whereas those who have a negative attitude remain as the minority.

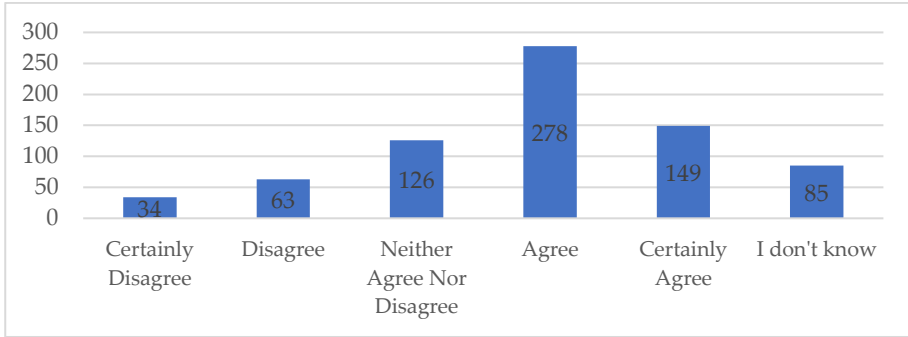


Figure 1. Gender Quota Attitudes of Members of Women's NGOs (Number of People)

The Most Representative Politician of Women's Interests

Many politicians including MPs, ministers, and political party members are supposed to represent and seek the citizens' interests, preferences and demands when making policy decisions. However, political field does not always bring together citizens' and politicians' interests. This is partly due to party dictates, political, economic or social contexts or personal characteristics of politicians. In the light with this information, the most representative politician in Turkey was questioned among the members of women's NGOs. Figure 2 presents 10 highest ranked politicians that are mentioned by at least 2 percent of 143 members.

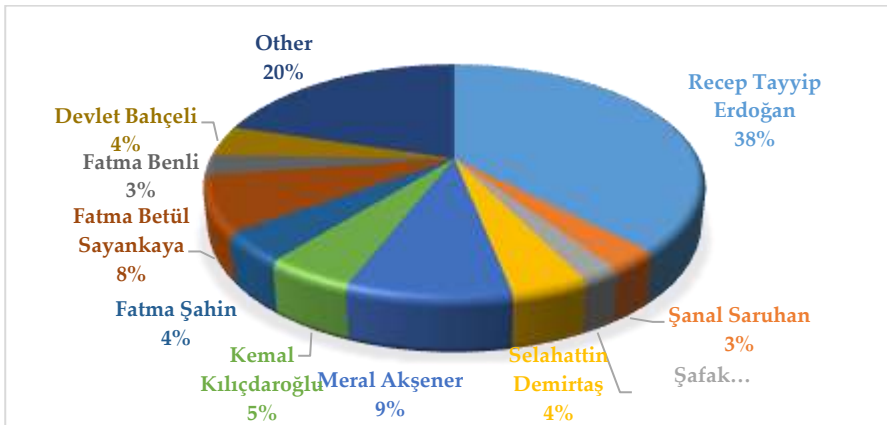


Figure 2. The percentage of the names that are mentioned for most representative politician of women's interests (N: 143)

From the sample of 735 people 467 (63.54 percent) preferred “Don’t know” option showing that most of the members of women’s NGOs avoid giving a name of a politician. In addition, 125 people (17.01%) said that “there are no such politician who represents women’s interests” demonstrating some kind of distrust for any politician. As a result, only 19,43 percent of our sample responded this question and stated a name of a politician that is presented in the Figure 2. As seen from the Figure, the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the most preferred politician with 38 percent of whole votes and Meral Akşener who is a leader of an opposition party followed him with 9 percent. At the date of survey, the Minister of Family and Social Affairs, Fatma Betül Sayankaya, was mentioned as the best representative politician by 8 percent of the respondents. An interesting finding is that we can find all the major political party leaders - Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, Devlet Bahçeli, Meral Akşener and Selahattin Demirtaş - in the list demonstrating that members of NGOs might behave subjectively towards their political party preferences and political ideologies.

Women’s Representation Policies of Main Political Parties

Political parties are the entities where candidates for elections are selected. Thus, their internal policies about equality between men and women including representation of both sexes are crucially important. Therefore, we asked how successful respondents find the policies of the political parties to increase the representation of women in parliament. This item can be seen as a question related to party politics on descriptive representation of women. The results do not vary much between political parties ranging the lowest mean level of 2.29 of Nationalist Movement Party (NMP) to 2.86 of the Republican Peoples Party (RPP). Considering that highest rank of the success is 5 in the scale, one can argue that in average respondents are not very much satisfied with political parties’ policies to increase women’s descriptive representation. Observation numbers for each political party is as the following: JDP: 635; RPP: 616; NMP: 626; PDP: 584. This shows that there is a high non-response rate for these questions, varying also which political party is at stake.

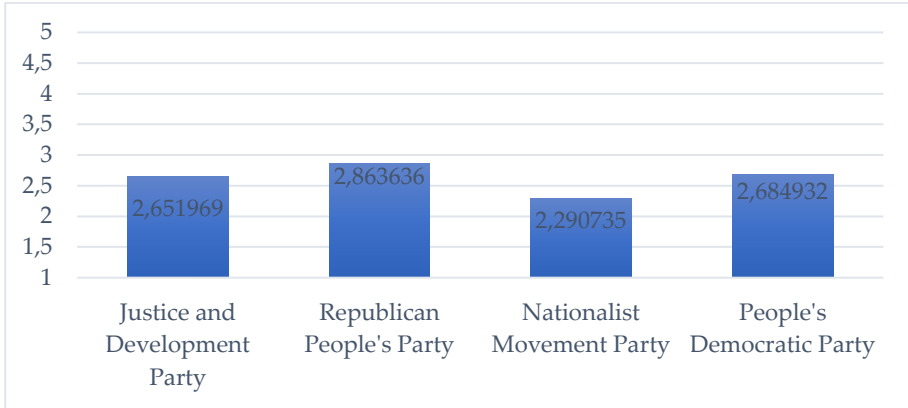


Figure 3. Attitudes towards the Success of Party Policies to Increase Women's Representation

Representation of Women's Interests by Key Policy-Makers

There are various levels of policy-makers that can have a power on policy-making processes. In this section, attitudes towards representation of women's interest by various entities such as government actors, institutions, media, civil society and political parties are analyzed. As seen in Figure 4, there is not much fluctuation between representation levels perceived by women's NGO members. Strikingly highest score (6.47) belongs not surprisingly to NGOs as our sample consists of only women's NGO members, although one might expect even a higher mean score. Media, as an independent social institution has a mean score of 4.66 that is less than the medium level of 5. This shows that respondents are not very much happy with representation of women in media. Looking at attitudes towards political parties' representation levels, the JDP gets highest mean score of 4.86, followed by the main opposition party RPP with a score of 4.56 and PDP with 4.29. Similarly to the results of previous section on the success of party policies to increase representation, the lowest mean score belongs to the NMP (4.10) demonstrating that from these four political parties the NMP is seen as the least responsive to women's expectations.

Turning at the government actors, the mean level of women's representation ranges from the lowest for prime minister (4.78) to the highest for women deputies (5.28). One can argue that the difference between actors is between

.5 over a 10-point scale that does not reflect a significant change between different government actors. The difference between government institutions is even less than the actors as the highest score is 4.99 for Ministry of Family and Social Affairs and the lowest is 4.82 for the Parliament. Thus, considering this small variance, we can argue that except NGOs, governmental actors have higher levels of representation perception considering the fact that women deputies (5.28), women ministers (5.02) and the president (5.07) are only actors which could pass the mean of 5. Although we should keep in mind that the trust in actors can be open to fluctuation as the actors might change after their term for service finishes.

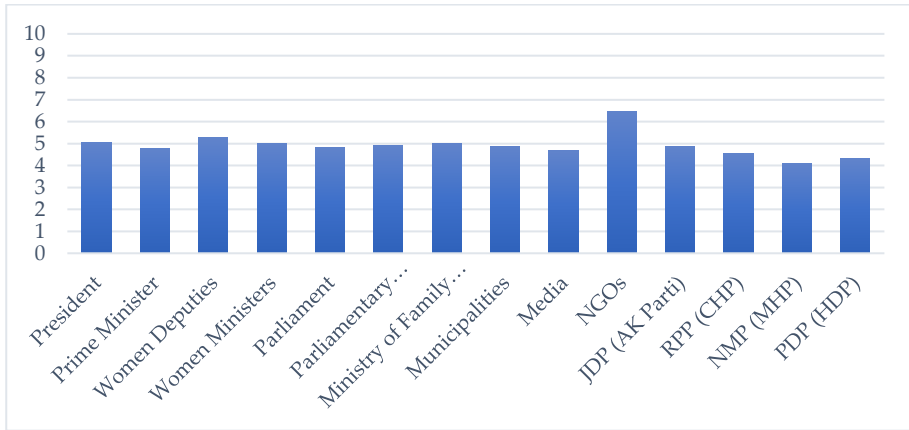


Figure 4. Attitudes towards the mean level of representation of women's interests by various entities.

Determinants of the Index of Representation Attitudes

Table 4 presents the results of OLS Regression analysis of the determinants of NGO member's attitudes towards representation of governmental policy-makers. The adjusted R square of .46, which is quite high for social science analyses, demonstrates that the statistical model explains 46 percent variance in the dependent variable. Starting with demographic variables the regression coefficient of education is insignificant demonstrating that education levels does not have a statistically significant impact on peoples' attitudes. Income and marital status have positive and significant coefficients showing that the

higher is the income the higher they think that government actors and institutions are more representative to women's interest. Married people are also more tended to be satisfied with the representativeness of government institutions. The age variable has a negative and significant coefficient showing that the older the respondent is, the less score they assign to the IRA so older people are more critical about representation of women's interest by governmental policy-makers. In addition people whose NGOs are located in Ankara are also less happy with representation of women's interest by governmental policy-makers looking at the negative coefficient.

Turning at the ideological stances, the people with leftist ideological backgrounds tended to give less scores of IRA. In the contrary the more the people are religious, the more they think that governmental institutions and actors are representative of women's interests. Gender inequality index is also negatively associated with IRA showing that the more people have gender equal attitudes the less they are satisfied with the representativeness of government institutions.

Regarding NGO related variables, being a member in a second NGO seems to have no significant impact on IRA. However, being in an administrative position in a women's NGO has a positive coefficient showing that those people who are at administration of their NGOs seems to have more positive attitudes towards representation of women's interests in governmental institutions and actors.

Lastly, the more people follow women's policies, the less they find governmental institutions and actors representative of women's interests. This might be due to their level of knowledge on women's policies that results in their dissatisfaction with representation activities. On the other hand, political participation does not seem to play an important role on women's NGO member's attitudes towards their perception of governmental representation.

Table 4. OLS Regression Analysis of Index of Representation Attitudes

Variable Name	OLS Model
Education	0.00264 -0.73
Income	0.0101** -2.86
Marital Status: Married	0.0461** -2.98
Age	-0.00197** (-3.28)
Ankara	-0.0919*** (-5.25)
Left	-0.110*** (-6.78)
Religiosity	0.0295*** -9.35
Gender inequality index	0.00227*** -4.46
Representation important	-0.0124*** (-3.69)
Membership	0.0184 -0.58
Administrative position	0.0690*** -3.91
Political participation	-0.000452 (-0.12)
Following policy	-0.0213** (-2.61)
Constant	0.410*** -4.96
N	735
Adj. R-sq	0.467

Note: *t* statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Conclusions

This study aimed at questioning whether women's NGO members think that different policy-makers such as government actors, institutions and political parties represent women's interest or not. This question was answered by conducting a survey with members of women's associations in a four step analysis. At the first level, NGO member's attitudes towards gender quotas

was examined. This section demonstrated that gender quotas are seen as a positive mechanism to increase women's representation in parliament. Therefore, policy-makers might take into consideration NGO's demands and formulate gender quotas by having an in-depth analysis of global examples and Turkish conjuncture. Secondly, most of the respondents avoid replying the question on the best representative politician of women's interests in Turkey. From those who responded, the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was mentioned with the highest percentage (%38). In addition, all other political party leaders were also in the list of top 10 that made us to interpret these replies as a political and ideological decision rather than real perception. Thirdly, none of the political parties receives a high credibility about representation of women's interests both at institutional and policy level. This shows that political parties need to spend more efforts to integrate women at all levels of party politics. Lastly, the results proposed that members of women's NGOs in general does not have high levels satisfaction with representation of women's interest by government actors and institutions. Particularly, those NGO members who are not married, with lower income statuses, older, less religious and have more leftist ideologies are less happy with women's representation. These findings might address a possible concern about a feeling of being ignored or marginalized by governmental actors and institutions. Thus, policy-makers better need to focus more on those women such as who are not married, and/or leftist, and/or less religious or with lower incomes and their needs in policy making processes. Some of these demographical characteristics might be also a determinant of awareness on women's issues in Turkey that might be also an explanation for The NGO members which are based in Ankara, the capital of Turkey. They are also less satisfied with women's representation. This result might be because their geographical closeness could increase their awareness and knowledge through their individual or institutional experiences with some of the public offices such as presidency, parliament or ministries. As a result, they might have higher expectations of responsiveness in comparison to those members who geographically are more distanced. Relating to this people who follows women's policies are less satisfied with the women's representation policies. Thus, we see a clear impact of awareness and knowledge on satisfaction with the policies. Moreover, whether people have gender inequality attitudes, and whether they have an administrative position at the NGO level have a negative

impact on their attitudes towards representation of women's interest at the government level. Having more gender egalitarian attitudes brings together expectations on better gender equality policies including women's representation in different levels of government. Thus, it is assumed that these expectations result in a more negative attitude towards IRA. Being in an administrative role in a women's NGO also require one to be more active in the functioning of the association, contacting more with policy makers, other NGOs and public. Thus, those respondents who are in administrative positions assumed to get more possessed in women's issues. The awareness and knowledge on the women's issues might generate less satisfaction and lead to negative attitudes towards representation of women's interests in governmental actors and institutions.

Considering the fact that a women-friendly state need to have high women's representation in decision making, high incorporation of women at the state structures, and high responsiveness to women's representation by political structures (Vickers, 2006), it can be argued that Turkey still needs to accomplish some more representative and responsive structure and policy making process. State actors, institutions as well as political parties need to spend more efforts to improve women's representation not only at the descriptive level but also at formalistic and substantive levels. Thus, this study has very important policy implications. Policy makers certainly need to be more responsive to women's NGOs, to women's interests and expectations. Thus, the women's NGOs needed to be integrated in policy processes by applying certain mechanisms such as conducting wide range surveys, organizing workshops and hearings. Women's attitudes on women's policies can be also gathered by doing public opinion surveys. In addition, government institutions need to integrate gender mainstreaming in their institutional structure and decision-making processes. Policy actors particularly need to count on women when they adopt new public policies since the women are one of the main receivers of the public services and public policies.

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