

## User Tendencies towards the Political Word of Mouth Communications over the Social Media

### Sosyal medya üzerinden ağızdan ağıza siyasal pazarlama iletilerine yönelik kullanıcı eğilimleri

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*Revolutionary transforming in information technologies led to serious transitions in people's communication styles. One of these transitions is social media usage. Widespread usage of social media also made political inquiries to be shared on social media. In this study which is discussing the political message sharing over social media, data gathered over a 618 peopled sample by online questionnaire and these data are analyzed. It is identified that this communication which is determined as Political Word of Mouth Marketing over Social Media occurs in three styles as "active-aggressive", "passive -sensitive" and "relative-neutral". These communication styles' impacts on political message sharing over social media and also their interactions with socio-demographics are analyzed. The results point out that political message sharing over social media is distinctly affected from "active-aggressive" communication style.*

**Keywords:** Social media, Political marketing, Word of mouth marketing.

**Jel Codes:** M15, M31, D83

*Bilişim teknolojilerindeki devrimsel dönüşüm insanların iletişim şekillerinde önemli değişimlere yol açmıştır. Bu değişimlerden biri de sosyal medya kullanımudur. Sosyal medyanın yaygın kullanımı siyasal içeriklerin de sosyal medya üzerinden paylaşılmasını gündeme getirmiştir. Sosyal medya üzerinden siyasal ileti paylaşımını ele alan bu çalışmada 618 kişilik örneklem üzerinde online anketle veriler elde edilerek bu veriler analiz edilmiştir. Sosyal medya üzerinden ağızdan ağıza siyasal pazarlama olarak nitelendirilen bu iletişimin "aktif-saldırgan", "pasif-duyarlı" ve " ilgili-nötr" olarak üç türde meydana geldiği belirlenmiştir. Bu iletişim türlerinin sosyal medya üzerinden siyasal ileti paylaşımındaki etkilerinin yanı sıra, sosyo-demografik değişkenlerle etkileşimleri analiz edilmiştir. Ulaşılan sonuçlar sosyal medya üzerinden siyasal ileti paylaşımı belirgin bir şekilde "aktif-saldırgan" iletişim türünden etkilendiği göstermektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal medya, Siyasal pazarlama, Ağızdan ağıza pazarlama

**Jel Kodları:** M15, M31, D83

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Along with the emergence of Internet-based media applications, social networks allow people to communicate common thoughts, knowledge and advice (Attia et al., 2011) and this resulting communication can lead to a widespread influence. The communication structure has changed especially with the start of Web 2.0 applications that have started to carry internet users from passivity to activity. Communication has shifted from unidirectionality to versatility and interactivity. This situation has led to the fact that internet-based social networks are an appropriate environment for politics as well as for many issues. Thus, the changes and transformations experienced in information and communication technologies in recent years have undoubtedly showed themselves in the field of political marketing "which can be conceptualized as the application of marketing concepts, principles and approaches in political matters by persons, groups, organizations and nations" and "which includes planning, implementation, evaluation and control of political activities by persons, groups, political parties, governments and lobbies" (Osugwu, 2008: 794).

The experience of humanity with internet-based social networks, despite its short history of use, reveals that this new way of communication has had a significant impact on individuals, groups and communities in general (Bakker and De Vreese, 2011: 452; Morales et al., 2012: 2012, Bickart and Schindler, 2001: 32; Cheung and Lee, 2010: 24, Dunne et al., 2010: 46, Moore and McElroy, 2012: 267). The possibility that communication is based on social and political problems further expands the widespread influence of social networks on the Internet and can further deepen the positive or negative consequences of communication. In order to clarify these effects, it is important to determine how the respondents or those who are exposed to the communication react. From this point of view, the attitudes and behaviors of social media users towards political messages transmitted through social media are examined. In this framework, in order to analyze the reactions given to political messages more clearly than the marketing perspective, the subjects of politics and marketing relations, use of social media, word of mouth marketing through social media and political communication via social media have been included in the theoretical curriculum of the study. In addition, the questioning of the reality of shared messages has been included in the survey, since the messages in the social media, especially a certain amount of the political ones, are experienced to be manipulative, non-serious and even lie. Different findings were acquired with the analysis of the data obtained by questionnaire application in field research.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Marketing and Politics

Political marketing is a relatively new and underdeveloped area of academic discipline (Scammell, 1999: 718) which not only simply explains the advertising features of modern politics, but also has to be examined from the perspectives of politics, marketing and communication as a means of analyzing party and voter behavior (Baines et al., 2002: 6). In other words, political marketing is concerned with communicating with prospective funders, media and party members as well as voters (Lock and Harris, 1996: 14) and an effort to build, maintain and increase long-term voter relations (O'Shaughnessy, 2001: 1048). The concept is a marriage between two disciplines. Political marketing takes its main direction from marketing as its main partner while it penetrates marketing to the arena of politics, but it is

applied based on the attention of politics as a sensitive partner (Akıncı and Akin, 2013: 330). Political marketing is a process by which political candidates and ideas are to satisfy the political needs of voters and thereby obtain support for the candidate and the idea (Shama, 1976: 766). In this understanding, political parties, interest groups and local assemblies (administrations) are the groups more effective in communicating "their product proposals", who create and develop marketing information, identify citizens' concerns (or interests and needs), and change their behavior to meet these demands (Akıncı and Akin, 2013: 330). At this point, marketing offers political parties the ability to address the interests and needs of different voters through the analysis, planning, execution and control of politics and election campaigns (O'Cass, 1996: 40). Because political marketing helps to achieve organizational goals, satisfies voters in the face of votes, can be considered very functional in the analysis of ideas and in environmental analysis of political parties or candidates for the development and promotion of competitive proposals (Wring, 1997).

As a result, political marketing is carried out by candidates, political parties, governments, lobbies and interest groups who want to direct public opinion, to adopt their own ideologies, to win elections, to have a say in government and to respond to the expectations of people and groups in society (Newman, 2002: 1). Political marketing focuses on the communication process between voters and political formations (party or candidate), by neglecting organizational components in practice (Baines et al., 2002: 6). Social media, which is one of the most important of internet-based applications for focus, and especially two-way and high-involvement communication tools, is being used more and more every day in political matters.

## **2.2. Word of Mouth Marketing and Social Media**

Word of Mouth Marketing (WOMM) is a new marketing method that allows receivers to use electronic communication (e.g., e-mail) to launch brand messages across a common network (Li et al., 2010: 295). WOMM has three main components. The first component is interpersonal communication, preferably individual, and certainly not using mass communication. The second component is the exchange of information depending on a product, brand or service. The third component is that communicators should be perceived as neutral (Alire, 2007: 546). Interpersonal communication of these basic components has an important influence on consumer buying behavior (Mangold et al., 1999: 74). Because word of mouth (WOM), commonly known as a powerful WOMM tool (Groeger and Buttle, 2014: 1187), is a form of interpersonal communication in which consumers are exchanged ideas about the consumer experience (Lam ve Mizerski, 2005: 217; Liang et al., 2013: 585). Arndt (1967), one of the first researchers to investigate the impact of WOM communication on consumer behavior, has identified WOM as the person-to-person verbal communication of a brand, product, or service between a buyer and a buyer's resource that they do not perceive as a commercial identity (Buttle, 1998: 242 Stokes and Lomax, 2002: 350, Carr and Hayes, 2014: 38). In other words, positive or negative WOM communication is the behavior exhibited by consumers about a product or service (Cheng et al., 2006: 97, Goyette et al., 2010: 7, Sandes and Urdan, 2013: 181). Generally, WOM is concerned with consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction with previous purchasing experiences (Mangold et al., 1999: 74). At this point, WOM communication can have a positive or negative content and is an information exchange between a group, independent experts, family, friends and/or

customers about a product or service (current or potential). This information exchange seems to be more convincing and acceptable to the consumer than commercial communication because it is perceived as experienced one. This is more clearly based on the fact that WOM is a widely accepted non-commercial source of information (Wu and Wang, 2011: 451), which has a great influence on consumer purchasing decisions.

All WOM communication takes place within social relationships that can be categorized according to the closeness of the relationship between the information seeker and the resource (Brown et al., 2007: 4). With the advent of the Internet, electronic communication over online consumer criticism sites has allowed direct information flow to a wider mass as a single message that can affect all site visitors (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004: 42; Chen et al., 2011: 87). In this understanding, the internet has become a powerful and unobtrusive tool to communicate WOM, an important and dynamic piece of online communication (Sun et al., 2006: 1106). It is seen as a new hybrid component of integrated marketing communications that enables organizations to build strong relationships with consumers for social media marketing activities (Chu and Kim, 2011: 47; Ashley and Tuten, 2015: 16), especially with the rapid adoption of the Internet on a global scale (Koch and Benlian, 2015: 37). Moreover, this virtual new generation communication is also considered as a traditional interpersonal communication extension (Cheung et al., 2008: 231).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010: 61) have described social media as a whole of web-based applications that are built on the technological and ideological infrastructure of Web 2.0 and allow for the creation and modification of user-based content. Social media sites serve consumers as a unique platform to promote WOM communication and promote appraisal of purchased products (Jin and Phua, 2014: 181). Consumer related online communities on these platforms represent WOM networks, such as purchasing advice for individuals interested in a product category (Brown et al., 2007: 4). Social media blogs contain many kinds of WOM communication forms such as company-sponsored bulletin boards and chat rooms, consumer to consumer e-mail, consumer product or service evaluation sites and forums, internet discussion boards and forums, microblogs (sites that contain digital audio, video) and social network sites (Wang, Mangold and Faulds, 2009: 358). This new form of WOM communication may contain positive or negative expressions made by potential, current and former customers about a product or company on the internet (Cheung and Thadani, 2012: 461). This means that consumers can reach global products or services in blogs, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, MySpace and Friendster), sites where creative work is shared (e.g., YouTube and Flickr), collaboration sites (e.g., Wikipedia) and microblog sites, and can do evaluations very effectively (Chu and Kim, 2011: 48, Carr and Hayes, 2014: 39). It is seen that social media applications are applied intensively both in personal information, opinions and experiences and in the sharing of information, news, decisions and interpretations belonging to political organizations, and that this formed communication is transmitted to the people WOM through the social media.

### **2.3. Social Media Usage and Politics**

Today's Internet technologies include communication and analytical technologies such as e-mail, social media, blogs, databases and dashboards (Harris and Harrigan, 2015: 255). These new information and communication technologies have significantly changed our lives and

interaction patterns (Quintelier and Vissers, 2008: 411). Because it is seen that social media has a great influence on world population as online social networks in everyday life (Kim, 2011: 971; Morales et al., 2012: 5244). Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, MySpace, LinkedIn and other similar online social networking sites provide online space for individuals to create profiles and connect to others' profiles to create a personal network (Cheung and Lee, 2010: 24). The social network profile is the focal point of one's social network presence. Each profile page is unique to its owner and gives the owner a chance to transfer his or her own presence in writing as desired. Each member is encouraged to upload a personal profile photo and a set of personal information, such as where he went to school, and to share details about personal tastes such as movies and music they love (Dunne et al., 2010: 48).

Schematically, a functional public space is regarded as a constellation of communicative spheres (a community of elites) that allows the circulation of information, ideas and debates - ideally unlimited - and at the same time the formation of political will (e.g., public opinion) (Dahlgren, 2005: 148). In these areas, social networks are referred to as "social networking friends", which are defined as web-based services that allow people to maintain and shape social relationships by creating their own profiles, sharing individual profiles and exchanging messages with others (Baek, 2015: 13). These social networks are increasing the role of citizens in creating an online space for expressing their views and participating in various events, and for providing information about politics or public relations (Kim, 2011: 971).

Social media can influence collective action (Valenzuela, 2013: 921), such as the mobilization of information and news that is not available in other media channels, facilitating coordination of demonstrations, allowing users to participate in political problems, and creating opportunities for exchange of views with other people. In this context, in today's new media environment, the public is becoming increasingly connected with political groups through new media technologies (Housholder and LaMarre, 2015: 138), while social media are used as a mechanism to spread interesting campaign messages and increase candidate support for key stakeholder groups. In addition, the transition from web 1.0 to web 2.0 in particular has brought new possibilities to the field of political communication, making it a functional tool for election campaigns in social media. For example, in 2008 US presidential elections, all candidates' aggressively using communication technologies such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube and others is a fairly new phenomenon (Attia et al., 2011: 370; Vesnic-Alujevic, 2012: 466).

This feature, which is recognized by the social media, can be said to be politically open to use in two basic types. The first one of these are the political parties, the political movements and the politicians' political marketing efforts through social media. It can be said that these efforts include structured transmissions intended for a specific purpose. The second is the personal political views that can result in important and widespread communication effects, even if they are the result of first-type communications, or even if they are produced as an end result of individual communication activities.

When considered on the basis of first use, social media has significant opportunities for organized political communications. According to Newnham and Bell (2012), Facebook (social networking site), Twitter (microblogging site) and YouTube (video sharing site) are

three major social media tools that are actively used by political activists with remarkable success. For example, Facebook users have been able to express themselves in a variety of ways, such as donating online, encouraging their friends to vote, posting political attitudes and graphic or status updates that express their views. Twitter is used by both candidates and voters to comment, share information and promote participation in social and political matters. YouTube can serve as an important tool for political activists through the ability to share audio and video across the world, allowing users to upload videos that are clearly visible to everyone. As it can be seen, all three media platforms are powerful tools that can be used by political activists and radicals (Kushin and Yamamoto, 2010: 613, Newnham and Bell, 2012: 38). These sites can reduce political learning costs by sending information to individual users and allowing them to interact individually or in groups with others (Baumgartner and Morris, 2010: 24) and can motivate individuals to participate more often in social or political problems (Valenzuela, 2013: 924 ). Social media also helps people get more information about events, parties and other social functions (Cheung and Lee, 2010: 24). As the popularity of social media sites playing an important role in people's communication and socialization increased (Moore and McElroy, 2012: 267), people from all political perspectives quickly realized the value of this new source (Newnham and Bell, 2012: 37). Along with the emergence of new technologies (Kushin and Yamamoto, 2010: 609) that allow individuals to participate in the rich online media communities organized around the change and formation of media content, especially during the 2006 and 2008 elections, it is seen that social media tools and practices are used in social movements and political activism (Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia, 2014: 366). For example, in the 2008 US presidential election, Obama successfully created an online network site "my.barackobama.com" to collect campaign volunteers across the country (De Zuniga et al., 2012: 319). In addition, President Obama has been able to access virtually any segment of the population, especially young people, using social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as an active and successful means of communication (Bakker ve de Vreese, 2011: 452).

The second use is the sharing and dissemination of social content by individual users in political content that is not (or is not thought to be) originated from a political organization. When considered on the basis of individual political exchanges, it can be said that the use of social media for this purpose is a kind of political participation. Because social media sites also create online communities based on user contributions (Brandtzæg and Heim, 2009: 143). Individuals representing civil society in these communities are able to express themselves in the social media on the basis of democratic identities, in accordance with the principles of freedom and equality (Yegen, 2013). This expression can take place in the form of sharing of individual opinions or in the spread of the organized communities in political structures, as well as participation in such virtual communication groups. There are some recent examples that not only confirm this situation, but also justify it and prove how great the effect is. At the end of 2010, social media played an important role in the social movements known as "Arab Spring" in Tunisia and Egypt. In fact, given the new media role, the political transformation process in Tunisia and Egypt is called Facebook or Twitter revolutions (Skinner, 2011: 3, Tufekci and Wilson, 2012: 2; Wolfsfeld et al., 2013: 118). Similarly, the "Gezi Events" that took place in our country in 2013 were announced to the public and the world through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter

(Benhabib, 2013: 2-5, Babacan, 2014: 148). It has also been experienced recently that those who participate in these and similar events are organized through social media. As it can be seen, in our country and around the world the social media tools have a very new past but can have a significant impact on important social events with different application possibilities (Babacan et al., 2011: 66) and widespread communication effect.

Both WOMM terminology and practices and political usage of social media, although not defined, political WOMM over social media be mentioned. When addressed from a marketing perspective, it is also important to determine how social media users, who are the target of communication, perceive such communications and how they behave based on their perceptions.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

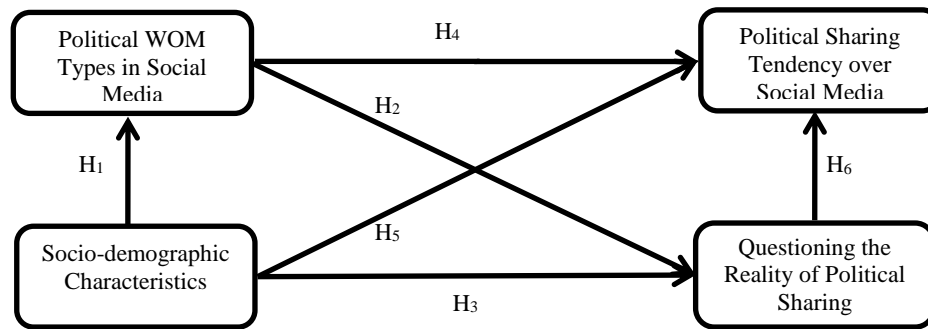
#### **3.1. Purpose, Scope and Importance**

The aim of this study is to determine the attitudes and behaviors of social media users toward the political content that is shared through social media. In line with this overall goal; a) grouping of message exchanges according to shared political content, b) measurement of the tendency of communication with the political context of WOM communication, c) the measurement of the controlling of the content of the political shares for validity and reliability by the social media user d) the determination of the relationship between these identified basic variables, and finally e) the determination of the characteristics of the social media users (social media use characteristics and political activities participation) are aimed.

For this purpose, a quantitative research has been designed and the results have been tried to be analyzed with the help of the obtained data. The research includes the tendency of sharing political messages, the type of sharing political messages by content, questioning the reality of shared contents, social media users' social media and internet usage features and politics. Through the findings obtained from the study, it will be tried to show what is influential in the sharing of the messages which are subject to sharing in the social media for political WOMM.

#### **3.2. Research Hypotheses and Model**

The research model that takes the research hypothesis as a whole is given in Figure-1. The variables in this model are *Political WOM Types in Social Media* ; users tend to share what kinds of messages (with positive and negative content to take account of their own political views and counter-political views) in political WOM communication, *Political Sharing Tendency over Social Media*; the tendency of users to share political messages via social channels, *Socio-Demographic Characteristics*; socio-demographic variables such as age, income, education, as well as the internet usage characteristics of the persons and the level of relations with politics (participation in politics and political tendency), *Questioning the Reality of Political Sharing*; whether the shared content's reality is controlled via the internet or not.



**Figure 1.** Research Hypotheses

In addition to the Internet usage features (Bickart and Schindler, 2001: 31-32), research on the subject revealed that social media usage characteristics, which are one of the internet applications, differ according to socio-demographic characteristics (Boyd and Ellison, 2008: 211, Mangold and Faulds, Morgan et al., 2012: 5244, Ryan and Xenos, 2011: 1658). Similarly, the hypothesis that "H<sub>1</sub>: Political WOM over social media is influenced by socio-demographic characteristics" has been developed with the anticipation that people will be influenced by the socio-demographic characteristics of reactions that people will show to political WOM communication. Likewise, the behavior and attitudes of individuals differentiate towards both WOM sharings (Sun et al., 2006: 1107; Brown et al., 2007: 3; Wu and Wang, 2011: 451; Chu and Kim, 2011: 48) and political communication (Thorson and Rodgers, 2006: 35). Apart from these findings, it is possible to make similar determinations with a simple observation on the use of social-media. In addition to these results and findings, it is possible to observe that people have liked and/or shared and/or commented on these messages without having anxiety (despite having a functional tool for research under their hands such as the internet) about the reliability of messages, content, pictures and comments shared over social media.

Two hypotheses have been added to the research that the question of political sharing through social media, which in fact is supposed to be a problematic situation, will be influenced both by socio-demographic characteristics as well as by political oral marketing: "H<sub>2</sub>: Political WOM over the social media influences questioning the reality of political sharing." "H<sub>3</sub>: Socio-demographic characteristics influence questioning the reality of political sharing."

Considering that the tendency of political WOM communication is influenced both from the socio-demographic characteristics, from questioning the reality of the contents and from the communication types of the political WOM, the following three hypotheses were added to the study and a research model was created:

H<sub>4</sub>: Political sharing tendency over social media is affected by Political WOM over the social media.

H<sub>5</sub>: Political sharing tendency in social media is affected by socio-demographic characteristics.

H<sub>6</sub>: Political sharing tendency in the social media is affected by questioning the content of political sharing.



### **3.3. Data Collection, Sampling and Analysis Methods**

The questionnaire was used to collect data in the quantitative research. The questionnaire consists of 4 parts. In the first part, 12 questions were asked to determine participants' demographic characteristics, social media usage patterns and levels of relationship with politics (parties, political tendencies and political activism levels they defined). In the second part, there were 13 questions that will determine the participants' Political Sharing Tendency in Social Media. 5 out of 13 questions were adapted from Walker's (2001) study. The remaining 8 questions were added to the study by researchers to use a more descriptive scale. In the third part, it was tried to determine the types of political communication in social media using a scale adapted to the two measures of WOM (positive and negative) to measure the baseline (Goyette et al., 2010). In the fourth and last part, five questions were included in order to determine the tendency to investigate whether the shared message was true/correct. The WOM content scales (Goyette et al., 2010) were used to identify variables in last part. Necessary arrangements / adjustments have been made in the questionnaire form by pre-tested with convenience sampling method on a group of 50 people.

The research universe consists of individuals who share political messages through social media in our country. It is not possible to determine the size of the research universe and the members involved in. Therefore, there is no way to determine the number and the sample, which is the ability to represent the main mass at a certain confidence level in order to determine the research sample. However, it has been tried to obtain data with snowball sampling considering that the use of social media has spread to a large part of the society and that the users may take place in groups with very different socio-demographic and socio-cultural characteristics. The questionnaire, which was uploaded to an online questionnaire, was conducted by snowball sampling and spreading the answers of individuals who have different socio-cultural and socio-demographic characteristics through e-mail and social media connections. The survey was conducted in March-April 2015 period. It is known that 92% of internet users use social media in our country with 2014 figures according to the global internet, mobile and social media statistics of the "wearesocial.com" website of 2014 (Global Internet, Mobile And Social Media Statistics, 2014). It was calculated that the sample size should be at least 314 with social media usage rate (92%), 95% confidence level and 3% sampling error (Burns ve Bush, 2010). In the determined period, 314 numbers were exceeded and 650 internet users answered the questionnaire and 618 of them were found to be suitable for analysis as a result of the examination of the questionnaires obtained. Cronbach Alpha value and confirmatory factor analysis were used for reliability and structural validity testing of scales used primarily with the help of data.

### **3.4. Limits and Constraints of the Study**

In the research, political message sharing through social media are handled in the WOM window. In addition to the socio-demographic variables that are thought to affect the message sharing, relationship with politics and level of participation in politics are included in the research. One of the most important constraints of the research is the ban of Twitter access which is applied in our country during the period when the research is applied. This ban has led to the fact that the sample reached has become a Facebook user intensely. Since no previous work has been done on the topic, the use of these scales can also be regarded as

a constraint which are used in the measurement of classical WOMM to measure communication in the mouth via social media.

#### 4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Socio-demographic characteristics of the research sample are given in Table-1.

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Research Sample

Gender	n	%	Monthly Family Income	n	%
Female	242	39.2	Less than 1000 TL	75	12.1
Male	376	60.8	1001-2000 TL	142	23.0
<b>Age</b>			2001-3000 TL	176	28.5
Younger than 20	22	3.6	3001-4000TL	103	16.7
20-29	410	66.3	4001-5000 TL	45	7.3
30-39	114	18.4	More than 5001 TL	77	12.5
40-49	55	8.9	<b>Daily Social Media Usage Time</b>		
50-59	12	1.9	1-15 min.	49	7.9
Older than 60	5	.8	16-30 min.	62	10.0
<b>Education</b>			31-45 min.	85	13.8
Primary	11	1.8	46-59 min.	71	11.5
Secondary	64	10.4	1-2 hours	184	29.8
Associate Degree	63	10.2	Over 2 hours	167	27.0
Undergraduate	340	55.0			
MSc.	140	22.7			
Daily Average Time to Stay Connected: 4.06 Hours					

When the demographic characteristics of the research sample are examined, it is seen that about 60% of the sample is female and 40% of the sample is male, and 66.3% of the respondents are between the ages of 20-29. And when examined according to the sample of education, it is seen that approximately half (55%) of the sample is undergraduate. When the income is analyzed over the total family income, 23% of them have income of 1001-2000 TL while the proportion of those who have a monthly income of 2001-3000 TL is 28.5%. Approximately 30% of the sample was allocated 1-2 hours per day to social media and 27% of them spent more than 2 hours on social media.

**Table 2.** Facebook and Twitter Usage Features of the Sample

Active Usage Status and Form	Facebook			Twitter		
	n	% <sup>a</sup>	% <sup>b</sup>	n	% <sup>a</sup>	% <sup>c</sup>
Active Users	540	87.4		235	38.0	
Communication with friends and relatives	78	12.6	14.4	58	9.4	24.7
Games and entertainment	138	22.3	25.5	14	2.3	5.9
Follow-up of social / cultural / economic developments	320	51.8	59.2	174	28.1	74.0
Personal pictures and current activity sharing	235	38.0	43.5	54	8.7	23.0
Comments and information sharing for non-political topics	128	20.7	23.7	63	10.2	26.8
Share comments and information for politics related topics	119	19.2	22.0	102	16.5	43.4
Message sharing about different social problems	146	23.6	27.0	93	15.0	39.6

<sup>a</sup> Share in the entire sample

<sup>b</sup> Share in Facebook Users

<sup>c</sup> Share in Twitter Users

While 87.4 % of the respondents indicated that they use Facebook, about 38% stated that they use Twitter<sup>3</sup>. It has been determined that 51.8% of the participants in the survey followed social / cultural and artistic developments via Facebook. This is followed by personal picture and activity sharing via Facebook (38.0%). When the usage patterns of Facebook and Twitter users in their groups are examined, it has been determined that Facebook users use Facebook for social / cultural / economic developments intensively, followed by personal picture and activity sharing (43.5%). It is to pursue social / cultural / economic developments similar to Twitter's highest usage purpose / shape (74.0%) and follow the political issues (43.4%). Even if the use of Twitter in the sharing of political topics is high, the rate of political sharing via Facebook is also high (22.0%) which is too high to be overlooked. As a result, it is seen that the sample is oriented towards political sharing through social media.

Since the topic is political WOM communication, the data related to the topic of the sample are included in the Table-3 by being included in the scope of the research in relation to politics of the participants.

**Table 3.** Level of the Political Relationship of the Research Sample

<b>Relationship Level with Politics</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Stating the Political Party</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Official Registered Member of a Political Party <sup>a,b</sup>	31	5.0	Stated	249	40.3
Even if not Registered Member, Tied up with Affection to a Political Party <sup>a,b</sup>	131	21.2	Not Stated	369	59.7
A Sympathizer of a Political Party <sup>a,b</sup>	32	5.2			
A Person Who Has a Political View But Follows Politics in a Passive Form <sup>a</sup>	258	41.7			
A Person Who Gives Direction to Their Political Preferences Through the Influence of Their Neighborhoods <sup>a</sup>	7	1.1			
A Person Who is Far From Politics for not Believing and not Trusting <sup>a</sup>	82	13.3			
A Person Who Has No Indifference Toward Politics <sup>c</sup>	77	12.5			
<b>Politics Participation (Activism) Level</b>	<b>Political Activity</b>				
I Attend Actively All Activities <sup>d</sup>	15	2.4	Active (total <sup>d</sup> )	143	23.1
I Attend Some of the Activities <sup>d</sup>	64	10.4	Passive (total <sup>e</sup> )	475	76.9
I Rarely Participate in Activities <sup>d</sup>	64	10.4			
I am not Participating but Supporting from Heart <sup>e</sup>	173	28.0			
I am completely Passive in Political Activities <sup>e</sup>	300	48.5			
No Responded	2	0.3			
<sup>a</sup> People Related to politics (in total 77,5%)					
<sup>b</sup> Political Party Member/ sympathian (in total 31,4%)					
<sup>c</sup> People not Related to politics (in total 12,5%)					
<sup>d</sup> Active in Politics ( in total 23,1%)					
<sup>e</sup> Passive in Politics (in total 76,9 %)					

When the level of involvement of research participants in politics is examined, it is seen that about 87% of the sample is related to politics and about 31% of them are a political party member / sympathian. With the question posed to test the level of political participation, it is determined that about 49% of the sample is completely passive in political terms and 28% supported voluntarily without participating in the actions. When considered from the point

<sup>3</sup> In the period of the research, our country has disabled access to Twitter.

of view of active activity, this ratio is seen to be 23%. Notwithstanding both actively active and relationship rates to politics, 60% are not answered in response to the question "Who do you feel close to the party?". Political activity and the rates of not specifying political parties are noteworthy and so it has been decided to use these data for later analysis as a socio-demographic variable.

#### 4.2. Validity and Reliability of Research Scales

The reliability and structural validity of the each scales used for data summation and therefore analysis are tested separately. The reliability and validity values of the scale used for political WOM measurement via social media are given in Table-4.

**Table 4.** Reliability and Validity of the Political WOM in the Social Media Scale

	Eigen- value	Vairance (%)	Cronbach Alpha	Mean*	S. d.
<b>Factor 1: Active and Aggressive</b>	4.453	27.139	.861	2.22	1.017
I share positive thoughts and opinions about ideas and events in the direction of political opinion.				2.58	1.385
I do not avoid praise sharing about thoughts, ideas and events in the direction of political opinion.				2.30	1.334
I react to opposing political opinion sharing which will be in opposite to mine.				2.14	1.229
I Generally share negative thoughts and opinions related to opposing political views				1.96	1.165
I make critical sharing about the thoughts, ideas and events in the direction of opposing political views				2.13	1.220
<b>Factor 2: Passive and Responsive</b>	1.831	19.938	.726	2.56	0.970
I don make critical sharings about the thoughts, ideas and events in the direction of my political views				2.47	1.386
I do not take into consideration the opposing political views that would be contrary to my own thoughts, ideas and preferences.				2.44	1.385
I refrain from sharing critiques of positive ideas, opinions and events about the opposing political opinion				2.63	1.486
I do not take into consideration to the negative sharings based on the opposing political views and ideas				2.13	1.220
I do not react to negative sharings based on the opposing political thoughts and ideas				2.42	1.310
<b>Factor 3: Relevant-Neutral</b>	1.086	14.335	.768	3.39	1.160
I read sharings about thoughts, ideas and events that are on the same direction of my political point of view				3.50	1.285
I read sharings about thoughts, ideas and events that are Criticizing the opposing political view				3.28	1.293
Cronbach Alpha (for total of scale)			.834		
Total Varinace %		61.412			
KMO		.854			
Barlett Test					
Chi-square ( d.f.=66)		2631.118			
Sig		0.001			

\* 5 pointed scale were used in the interval of Always to Never

Although many studies have been adapted using a similar WOM scale, it has been determined that the scale is composed of 3 dimensions, different from the predicted and WOM literature. It has been confirmed in many studies that word-of-mouth is positive and negative. However, it can be considered that this result is normal when the issue is taken into account in terms of politics and in terms of political attitudes of the individuals. Because the

perception of the content of the message subject that shared in positive or negative direction may differ according to the political tendency. When the expressions under the factors and the factors included in the scale are examined, it is seen that there is political bias in sharing and three types of behavior/attitude are exhibited. The tendency of the sharing of political messages with high likelihood of sharing in favor of their own political ideas or attitudes against them is defined by the "Active-Aggressive" factor. The second attitude is also influenced by the political tendency, but it has a softer and less aggressive attitude. This attitude is defined by the factor called "Passive-Sensitive". The third aspect of behavior/attitude is that the operational dimension consists only of interest and reading without regard to political opinion, and the factor is called "Relevant-Neutral". According to the total variance explained by the factors, it is determined that these three behaviors/attitudes can explain 61.412% of the change in Political WOM over social media. When the average value of the factors is examined, it is determined that the "Relevant-Neutral" value of the sample is the highest (3.59), followed by the behavioral attitudes of "Avoiding-Sensitive" (2.56) and "Active-Aggressive" (2.22).

The reliability and structural validity values of the scale used to determine the sharing of political messages over social media are given in Table-5.

**Table 5.** Reliability and Validity of the Political Message Sharing Tendency Scale over Social Media

	Eigen- value	Vairance (%)	Cronbach Alpha	Mean*	S. d.
<b>Political Message Sharing Tendency</b>	3.786	54.092	.852	2.51	.939
In social media, I make more sharings about politics than other topics.				2.24	1.197
I can participate in any political debate through social media.				2.06	1.190
I do not hesitate to share after reading the share of political parties and political party members.				2.28	1.291
I communicate with different people about politics through social media.				1.99	1.192
I pay more attention to the sharing of political issues in social media than other issues				2.94	1.421
I read the sharings of political parties and political party members.				3.21	1.234
I clearly react the poeple whose sharings are biased and unconvincing through social media.				2.89	1.477
KMO		.874			
Barlett Testi					
Chi-square ( d.f.=21)		1659.284			
Sig		0.001			
* 5 pointed scale were used in the interval of Always to Never					

Though 13 variable scales have been used to measure the tendency to share political messages over social media, some of the variables have been eliminated as a result of factors such as lowering the reliability values and/or factor loadings. In the analysis results, the tendency to share political messages over social media is measured with a scale of 7 variables and has 54.092% explanatory capacities. The average value of the tendency to share political messages is 2.51. It can be considered that this value should be higher than it is measured. However, the fact that those involved in the research are heavily Facebook users can be

considered as the cause of this situation. Because, as revealed in this research, usage towards social, cultural, economic and political issues is higher on Twitter.

The reliability and validity values of the scale used to measure the level of testing the reality of the content of political messages shared via social media are given in Table-6.

**Table 6.** Reliability and Validity Values of the Scale of Questioning the Reality of Political Sharing

	Eigen- value	Vairance (%)	Cronbach Alpha	Mean*	S. d.
<b>Questioning the Reality of Political Messages</b>	3.497	69.941	.852	3.69	1.220
I question the reality of political messages I receive				3.87	1.395
I consider social, cultural and economic influences of the information shared in political messages.				3.80	1.351
Take into account who is the source of the political messages I receive.				3.61	1.464
I search the Internet for the accuracy of shared political messages.				3.52	1.426
If I do not find convincing political messages I do not share.				3.67	1.682
KMO		.860			
Barlett Testi					
Chi-square ( d.f.=21)		1734.529			
Sig		0.001			
* 5 pointed scale were used in the interval of Always to Never					

As a result of the factor analysis, it is determined that a 5-variable scale named "questioning the reality of political messages", which explains 69.941% of variance and with a sufficient level of reliability (Cronbach Alpha = 0.860) is can be used in following analyzes.

### 4.3. Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis “H<sub>1</sub>: Political WOM over social media is influenced by socio-demographic characteristics” has been analyzed separately for three different types of word-of-mouth for political message sharing and the results for Active-Aggressive attitude / behavior are given in Table-7.

**Table 7.** Effect of Socio-Demographic Characteristics on Active-Aggressive Word-of-Mouth Communication

Model Summary						
R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adj.	F	p	Durbin-Watson	
.402	.161	.150	14.631	.000	1.906	
Model Statistics						
		$\beta$	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		1.402	5.822	.000		
<b>Gender (Male)</b>		.247	3.143	<b>.002</b>	.971	1.030
Age		.077	1.619	.106	.902	1.109
Education		-.041	-.962	.336	.889	1.125
Income		.037	1.334	.183	.830	1.205
Daily Internet Usage Time		.006	.536	.592	.876	1.141
<b>Daily Social Media Usage Time</b>		<b>.105</b>	4.123	<b>.000</b>	.853	1.172
<b>Stating the Political Party (Not Stated)</b>		<b>-.174</b>	-2.216	<b>.027</b>	.963	1.039
<b>Political Activism (Active)</b>		<b>.667</b>	7.372	<b>.000</b>	.976	1.024
<i>Dependent Variable: Active-Aggressive</i>						
<i>Tested for the significance level of p&lt; .05</i>						

The basic assumptions of the regression analysis are checked by determining that the variables in the analysis have normal distribution over the Durbin-Watson value and that there are multicollinearity problems of the variables over the VIF values.

According to the test results of the first regression model for testing H<sub>1</sub>, the change in Active-Aggressive Political WOM message sharing is explained by 15% of the independent variables in the model and the model is significant as a whole. H<sub>1</sub>: "Political WOM over social media is influenced by socio-demographic characteristics" is accepted for the variables of gender, duration of daily social media use, stating the political party that is supported and political activism because the variables in the model are found to affect Active-Aggressive political message sharing. When evaluating on the basis of independent variables, it is determined that males tend to share more Active-Aggressive Political WOM by 24.7% than females over the gender variable in the model as a dummy variable. As the time of daily internet usage increases, the tendency of active-aggressive communication increases. It is determined that the stating the political party and political activity variables, which are included in the analysis as dummy variables, are influential on the dependent variable change. It is determined that those who did not report the political party that they supported have a 17.4% less active-aggressive attitude toward communication from the political WOM and political activists showed 66.7% more active-aggressive than non-active ones.

The results of the regression model in which the first hypothesis is tested for the Passive-Sensitive Political WOM dependent variables are given in Table-8.

**Table 8.** Impact of Socio-Demographic Characteristics on Avoiding-Sensitive Political WOM

Model Summary						
R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adj.	F	p	Durbin-Watson	
.155 <sup>a</sup>	.024	.011	1.877	.061	1.939	
Model Statistics						
		β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	1.895	7.648	.000		
	Gender (Male)	.056	.694	.488	.971	1.030
	Age	.066	1.346	.179	.902	1.109
	Education	.067	1.528	.127	.889	1.125
	Income	.036	1.276	.203	.830	1.205
	Daily Internet Usage Time	.007	.669	.504	.876	1.141
	Daily Social Media Usage Time	.020	.769	.442	.853	1.172
	Stating the Political Party (Not Stated)	-.079	-.981	.327	.963	1.039
	Political Activism (Active)	.120	1.289	.198	.976	1.024
<i>Dependent Variable: Passive-Sensitive</i>						
<i>Tested for the significance level of p&lt; .05</i>						

H<sub>1</sub>: "Political WOM over social media is influenced by socio-demographic characteristics" hypothesis is rejected because the regression model tested for the dependent variable Passive-Sensitive Political WOM Communication is totally insignificant (p=0.061). Therefore, Passive-Sensitive Political WOM Communication Tendency is not influenced by the independent variables included in the analysis; in other words, it is not statistically significant because the independent variables included in the analysis do not explain the change in the dependent variable.

The regression model examining the interaction of the Relevant-Neutral Political WOM Communication tendency with the socio-demographic characteristics is given in Table-9.

**Table 9.** Effect of Socio-Demographic Characteristics on Relative-Neutral Political WOM Communication

Model Summary						
R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F	p	Durbin-Watson	
.337	.113	.102	9.744	.000	2.000	
Model Statistics						
		$\beta$	t	p	Tolerans	VIF
(Constant)		2.375	8.438	.000		
Gender (Male)		-.149	-1.617	.106	.971	1.030
Age		.043	.774	.439	.902	1.109
Education		.092	1.851	.065	.891	1.123
<b>Income</b>		<b>.071</b>	2.194	<b>.029</b>	.831	1.204
Daily Internet Usage Time		.022	1.763	.078	.877	1.140
<b>Daily Social Media Usage Time</b>		<b>.073</b>	2.448	<b>.015</b>	.853	1.172
<b>Stating the Political Party (Not Stated)</b>		<b>-.212</b>	-2.299	<b>.022</b>	.963	1.039
<b>Political Activism (Active)</b>		<b>.614</b>	5.775	<b>.000</b>	.976	1.024
<i>Dependent Variable: Relevant-Neutral</i>						
<i>Tested for the significance level of <math>p &lt; .05</math>.</i>						

H<sub>1</sub>: “Political WOM over social media is influenced by socio-demographic characteristics” hypothesis tested with the Relevant-Neutral dependent variable is accepted for variables of income, duration of daily social media usage, Stating the Political Party and political activity; but it is rejected for the variables of gender, age, education status and daily internet usage. Independent variables in the model according to the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value explain 10.2% of the change in Political WOM Communication. When the effects of independent variables confirming the hypothesis are examined; as income and duration of daily social media usage increase, it is seen that the dependent variable also increases. And when the effects of the dummy variables are examined, those who do not state political parties exhibit the lower tendency of Political WOM Communication by 21.2%. Politically active people are found to have 61.4% more Relative-Neutral Communication tendencies when compared to those who were inactive.

One of the key points of the research is which factors influenced the level of examination of the reality of the contents which is the subject of political communication via social media. Concerning this, the results of the regression model developed for testing the 2nd and 3rd hypotheses are given in Table-10.



**Table 10.** Factors Affecting the Questionability of Political Content

Model Summary						
R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adj.	F	p	Durbin-Watson	
.702 <sup>a</sup>	.493	.483	53.413	.000	2.063	
Model Statistics						
		β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	.394	1.619	.106	.106	
	Gender (Male)	.063	.842	.400	.400	.937
	Age	-.075	-1.677	.094	.094	.897
	<b>Education</b>	<b>.172</b>	<b>4.262</b>	<b>.000</b>	.000	.875
	Income	-.006	-.249	.804	.804	.823
	Daily Internet Usage Time	-.015	-1.544	.123	.123	.871
	Daily Social Media Usage Time	.030	1.242	.215	.215	.829
	<b>Stating the Political Party (Not Stated)</b>	-.008	-.105	.916	.916	.952
	Political Activity (Active)	.090	1.006	.315	.315	.883
	Active- Aggressive	.042	.952	.342	.342	.628
	<b>Passive-Sensitive</b>	<b>.262</b>	<b>6.622</b>	<b>.000</b>	.000	.850
	<b>Relative-Neutral</b>	<b>.577</b>	<b>15.543</b>	<b>.000</b>	.000	.672

*Dependent Variable: Questioning the Reality of Political Sharing*  
*Tested for the significance level of p<..05.*

H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub> hypotheses have been tested on a single regression model where the dependent variable is questioned on the reality of the content of the political message shared over social media. The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value shows that the independent variables included in the regression model account for 48.3% of the change in the tendency to question the reality of the content. H<sub>2</sub>: "Political WOM over the social media influences questioning the reality of political sharing" hypothesis is rejected for the "Active-Aggressive" communication type while being accepted for "Relative-Neutral" and "Passive-Sensitive" communication types. While an increase in "Relative-Neutral" and in "Passive-Sensitive" communication results in an increase of Questioning the Reality of Political Sharing.

H<sub>3</sub>: "Socio-demographic characteristics influence questioning of the reality of political sharing" is accepted only for the education independent variable, and as the learning situation increases, the tendency to question the reality of the content increases.

Through the variables that are subject to research, the four, five, and six hypotheses developed to determine the factors affecting the tendency to share political messages over Social Media are tested with the regression model included in Table-11.

**Table 11.** Factors Affecting the Tendency to Share Political Communication over Social Media

Model Summary						
R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adj.	F	p	Durbin-Watson	
.839 <sup>a</sup>	.704	.698	119.480	.000	1.894	
Model Stats						
		$\beta$	t	p	Tolerans	VIF
	(Constant)	.162	1.127	.260		
	<b>Gender (Male)</b>	<b>.092</b>	<b>2.092</b>	<b>.037</b>	.936	1.068
	Age	.046	1.765	.078	.893	1.120
	Education	-.041	-1.718	.086	.849	1.178
	Income	-.007	-.440	.660	.823	1.215
	Daily Internet Usage Time	-.002	-.318	.751	.868	1.152
	<b>Daily Social Media Usage Time</b>	<b>.044</b>	<b>3.105</b>	<b>.002</b>	.827	1.209
	Stating the Political Party (Not Stated)	-.002	-.042	.967	.952	1.051
	<b>Political Activity (Active)</b>	<b>.342</b>	<b>6.509</b>	<b>.000</b>	.882	1.134
	<b>Active- Aggressive</b>	<b>.459</b>	<b>17.726</b>	<b>.000</b>	.627	1.596
	Passive-Sensitive	-.029	-1.219	.224	.793	1.261
	<b>Relative-Neutral</b>	<b>.199</b>	<b>7.700</b>	<b>.000</b>	.480	2.083
	<b>Questioning the Reality of Content</b>	<b>.132</b>	<b>5.517</b>	<b>.000</b>	.507	1.971
<i>Dependent Variable: Political Sharing Tendency over Social Media</i>						
<i>Tested for the significance level of p&lt;..05.</i>						

The 12 independent variables included in the survey, which are thought to influence the tendency to share political messages over social media, account for 69.8% of the change in the dependent variable. H<sub>4</sub>: "Political sharing tendency over social media is affected by Political WOM over the social media" is accepted because the dependent variable increases as the number of active-aggressive and relative-neutral communication types increases. No effect has been identified by the tendency to change in passive-sensitive communication on the tendency to share political messages on social media. H<sub>5</sub>: "Political Sharing Tendency in Social Media Affected by Socio-demographic Characteristics" hypothesis is accepted only for gender variables, and the tendency to share political messages over social media in men is found to be 9.2% higher than for women. It has been determined that questioning the reality of content shared through social media affects the tendency to share political messages. The impact is positive, so the increase in the tendency to question content increases the tendency to share political messages over social media. As a result, the H<sub>6</sub>: "Political Sharing Tendency in Social Media is affected by the question of the content of Political Sharing" hypothesis is accepted. When the independent variables in the model are analyzed, it has been determined that the most influential variable in the tendency to share political messages over social media is related to Active-Aggressive political message sharing.

The results obtained within the framework of hypotheses tested for a clearer understanding of the research findings are summarized in Table-12.

**Table 12.** Political Word-of-Mouth Communication Forms and Impact Factors on Social Media

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Impact Direction and Level
<i>Tendency to Share Political Communication over Social Media</i>	Active-Aggressive Political Word-of-Mouth Communication	Active-aggressive Political WOM increases as communication trend increases. ( $\beta = 0.459$ )
	Political Activity (Active)	Higher the active than non-active. (rate of 34.42%)
	Relative-Neutral Political Word-of-Mouth Communication	Relevant-Neutral Political WOM increased due to the increasing tendency of Political Communication ( $\beta = 0.199$ )
	Questioning the Reality of Content	More questioning the reality of content, the more it increases ( $\beta = .132$ )
	Gender (Male)	In males, it is higher than females (9.20%)
	Daily Social Media Usage Time	Daily Social Media Usage Time is increasing due to the increase ( $\beta = 0.044$ )
<i>Active-Aggressive Political Word-of-Mouth Communication</i>	Political Activity (Active)	Higher the active than non-active (%66.7)
	Gender (Male)	Higher in males than in females (%24.7)
	Stating the Political Party (Not Stated)	Less than those who do not state the political party that is supported. (17.4%)
	Daily Social Media Usage Time	Daily Social Media Usage Time is increasing due to the increase. ( $\beta = 0.105$ )
<i>Relative-Neutral Political Word-of-Mouth Communication</i>	Political Activity (Active)	Higher the active than non-active (61.4%)
	Stating the Political Party (Not Stated)	Less than those who do not stated the political party that is supported (21.2%)
	Daily Social Media Usage Time	Daily Social Media Usage Time is increasing due to the increase ( $\beta = 0.073$ )
	Income	Increasing with the increase in income. ( $\beta = 0.071$ )
<i>Questioning the Reality of Content</i>	Relative-Neutral Political Word-of-Mouth Communication	Relevant-Neutral Political WOM increased due to the increasing tendency of Political Communication. ( $\beta = 0.577$ )
	Passive-Sensitive Political Word-of-Mouth Communication	Passive -Sensitive Political WOM increased due to the increasing tendency of Political Communication ( $\beta = 0.262$ )
	Education	Increases as the level of education increases. ( $\beta = 0.172$ )

Taking these results into consideration, different profile characteristics for social media users regarding behavior can be determined as follows:

**Users with High Political Message Sharing via Social Media:** It can be said that these users are in active-aggressive content sharing, doing more of this sharing than the Relative-Neutral, politically active, that is, they are directly or indirectly related to a political party, questioning the content of the shared information, but it can be said that this question is limited, composed of more men than women and lower than those who do not use their daily social media usage time.

**Users with High Active-Aggressive WOM Communication:** It is understood that the users in this profile are significantly active from the perspective of political, that is, directly or indirectly linked to a political formation, mostly male, not afraid to declare the political party in which they are involved and can be assumed that the level of daily social media usage of users in this profile is higher than those the Active-Aggressive communication is low.

**Users with High Relative-Neutral WOM Communication:** It is seen that the users in this profile are also significantly active from the perspective of political, that is, directly or indirectly linked to a political formation, and not afraid to declare the political party in which they are involved. Those with low communication tendency for this type have higher social media usage times and higher incomes.

***Users with a High Tendency to Question the Reality of Shared Content:*** These kind of users tendency for Relative-Neutral and for Relative-Neutral communications are higher. On the other hand, it can be argued that the education levels of users who tend to question content are generally higher.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Social media has become one of the integrated parts of our lives every day. In addition to the intense use of social media, an important communication tool for internet users, it is able to offer a wide range of application options for groups of different profiles. This functionality naturally meant the opportunity for political use as well as the marketing efforts of any product or service. From a marketing perspective, this use can be characterized as Political WOM over Social Media.

It is very important to identify the trends of social media users in shared transmissions for Political WOM via social media. In this study, the responses of social media users to these messages are examined through the data obtained by a survey. When compared to Twitter and Facebook, two of the most popular social media applications, this situation, which will be determined by observations, is also embodied by determining that Twitter is used more heavily in following and sharing social, cultural and political issues.

In the study, it is determined that these messages are in different forms from the negative and positive ones as; "Active-Aggressive", "Passive-Sensitive" and "Relevant-Neutral", which are the basic types in the classical WOMM. This can be explained by the influence of individual political preferences of social media users in the perception of political messages. As this finding has been predicted when the study is designed, the political tendency and political activism that can affect the way of responding to the political communication through social media is added to the study. It has also been included in the study to determine whether this political partiality can shape other factors as well as whether the content of the political message has been questioned while sharing.

The results showed that political activism and the tendency to share political messages have an important influence about the tendency to share political word-of-mouth messages over social media. It has been seen that the tendency to share political messages on social media is higher in politically active individuals. In addition, the same tendency is higher in men than in women. These findings, which tend to share political messages through social media, are very valuable but it is noteworthy that the tendency to share "Active-Aggressive" messages in the tendency to share political messages over social media in particular is a significant influence, and the "Relevant-Neutral" message-sharing modality is also effective, but its effect is much lower than previous, and "Passive-Sensitive" communication is not effective at all. Therefore, there is a clear aggressive and active attitude in political message sharing.

Another interesting finding is related to the question of the reality of shared political content. As the "Passive-Sensitive" and "Relevant-Neutral" message sharing increases, the chances of content being questioned are increasing. It has not been determined that there is a relationship between "Active-Aggressive" message sharing and questioning content. Also questioning content increases as education increases. Based on these findings, it is possible to make two basic determinations:

1. WOM messages with political content over social media are not negative and positive, as opposed to structurally contemplated. As political engagement and bias come into play, the share is in fact parallel to the views of social media users. This differentiates attitudes. Therefore, it is less likely to say that sharing is based on neutral and personal experiences that are WOM's basic assumption.
2. The results show that political partiality in political communication has a significant influence. Becoming distant from partiality increases the chance of questioning your content.

Based on these findings and the social influence of social media, it can be found in separate proposals for both political organizations and politicians, and for users who follow political issues via social media, and for researchers who are interested in the issue.

### **1. Suggestions for Politicians and Political Organizations:**

- When used correctly, social media is a very important communication tool for politics and political organizations. Because in the virtual world, it seems that there are volunteers who tend to share content on their own social media accounts in the name of political parties and politics and who do it intensely and without questioning because of the political commitments to do this job. However, this path / method is wrong, biased and abusive, and politicians and political structures may experience the possibility of such use being a victim.
- Politicians and political parties should follow the sharing that their names are mentioned and mislead people when the resources are not themselves and should intervene in problematic exchanges when they deem necessary.
- Politicians and political entities should be sensitive about the reality of the messages they share, because they can spread very quickly without questioning.

### **2. Suggestions for Social Media Users:**

- They may contribute to malicious or directed information sharing and behavior inadvertently if they are not sure about the objectivity and source of shared messages.
- It is important to note that those who share the negative issues, especially those related to the opposing political opinion, are members of a political group and tend to conceal their membership.
- It is important to consider the chance that those who share the messages which need to be passed through the mind filter and need a little research due to the information it contains are not avoiding and sensitive individuals.

### **3. Proposals for Researchers:**

- What is being attempted to be determined in this study is that the attitude of questioning / not questioning the correctness of the content has an important influence on the sharing of political messages from social media. Findings of this study include important clues as to the necessity of new studies on social media usage awareness. When it is politics and the size of the social influence of politics is taken into account, the importance of consciousness emerges more clearly.

- The concept of "Political Word-of-Mouth Marketing over Social Media", which is defined through the sharing of political messages from social media and the new three dimensions revealed in this study are the points to be discussed and investigated.
- The sharing effect of the reality of political messages from social media, an internet-based application, is addressed in this study and the mean values in the measurement made in this regard are higher than expected. This result needs to be reevaluated with new studies.
- It was difficult to reach Twitter users because Twitter access was blocked in our country in a certain part of the period in which this research was carried out. Also, if Twitter users are thought to be more intensively sharing social issues, a new study based on just Twitter users or reflecting the usage rates of Facebook and Twitter in our country might be beneficial.

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