

**THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE IMPORTANCE OF  
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT  
PARTY<sup>1</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT**

The Justice and Development Party, which has a long term power process in Turkish political life, has brought many changes and transformations to Turkish politics. In this context, the role and impact of political participation in terms of the importance of political development is analysed in this study, and the Justice and Development Party is chosen as the sample. The aim of this study is to evaluate the Justice and Development Party's perspective on political participation, its moves in this direction and the policies it has realised in terms of the level of political development. There are many criterias indicating the level of political development in a society. In order to talk about the level of political development, only the existence of political participation is not a sufficient criteria. The components of the level of political development can be listed as a developed democracy, a developed economy, pluralistic cultural understanding, gender equality, fundamental rights and freedoms, acceptance of different identities and cultures, integration of state and society, participation in decision-making processes and social integration. It is possible to state that the Justice and Development Party has made positive developments in many areas in line with the aforementioned issues. Accordingly, the characteristics of the political development level of the Justice and Development Party, its identification dimension and the developments it has made in this field are taken as a basis for the analysis.

**Keywords:** Political Development, Political Participation, Justice and Development Party.

**ÖZET**

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Türk siyasal hayatında uzun erimli bir iktidar sürecine sahip olan Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Türkiye siyasetine birçok deęişim ve dönüşümü getirmiştir. Bu bağlamda, siyasal gelişmenin önemi açısından siyasal katılımın rolü ve etkisinin incelendięi bu çalışmada, örneklem olarak Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi seçilmiştir. Çalışmanın amacı; Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin siyasal katılıma olan perspektifi, bu doğrultudaki hamleleri ve hayata geçirdięi politikaları siyasal gelişmişlik düzeyinden değerlendirmektir. Bir toplumda, siyasal gelişmişlik düzeyini gösteren birçok kıstas mevcuttur. Siyasal gelişmişlik düzeyinden bahsedilmek için

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sadece siyasal katılımın varlığı yeterli bir ölçüt değildir. Siyasal gelişmişlik düzeyinin bileşenleri; gelişmiş bir demokrasi, gelişmiş bir ekonomi, çoğulcu kültür anlayışı, toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği, temel hak ve hürriyetler, farklı kimlik ve kültürlerin kabulü, devlet ve toplum bütünleşmesi, karar alma süreçlerine katılım ve toplumsal bütünleşme gibi parametreler sayıp dökülebilecek kriterler arasında gösterilebilir. Bahsi zikredilen hususlar doğrultusunda, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin birçok alanda pozitif yönlü gelişmeler kaydettiğini ifade edebilmek mümkündür. Bu kapsamda, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin siyasal gelişmişlik düzeyi karakteristikleri ile özdeşleşme boyutu ve bu alanda kaydettiği gelişmeler incelemeye esas alınmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Siyasal Gelişme, Siyasal Katılım, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of political development, whose main argument is political participation, came to the agenda in the context of democratization movements after World War II. Along with this agenda emergence, the concepts of political stability and social development have started to be considered together. Political development is not a phenomenon that can only be measured by political participation. There are many parameters that can be evaluated and measured in this context. These can be listed as democracy, political participation, social integration, economic development, pluralistic culture and consensual political understanding. The intensity, level and means of political participation may constitute the criteria of political development in some aspects. In societies where the culture of democracy is established, the differences are not denied. The differences are considered within the framework of an understanding of richness and social integration. Today, political participation should not be considered only as voting. The introduction of the understanding of pluralism instead of the understanding of the power of the majority calms the conflict environment. The tendency to ensure participation, manage and direct the process at many stages of decision-making processes are variables of political development. In an environment where the system is managed in a balanced and rational manner, social integration and political development will be ensured in which all segments of society are represented and participated. Strong political institutions have important effects on political development and modernization. In a society where political institutionalization is achieved, the concept of state has basic functions. These functions can be counted as balancing and regulating the social-political-economic spheres, distributing in order to eliminate inequalities within the society, regulating the laws for the maintenance of social order and continuity, and protecting against internal and external threats. As political development is a comprehensive concept, the existence of development in this sense incorporates many criteria. Namely, in order to be able to talk about the level of political development in a society, components such as modernization, economic growth, increase in the level of education, urbanization, social and economic mobility, political participation, social integration and the existence of strong political institutions should be at a parallel level and progress in a positive direction. This corresponds to a positive change towards the objectives of the political system. Since it is not enough to define political development in terms of internal dynamics, it is also important to consider external influences. As a matter of fact, political development can only be maintained with autonomous political institutions free from coercive elements. Political participation is the efforts and actions of citizens to influence the decisions and practices of the state. The development of a democracy is measured by the abundance and effectiveness of political participation. The inclusion of citizens

in decision-making processes and the existence of opportunities for participation lead to a minimum level of social conflict and thus contribute to social integration. Therefore, political participation is an indispensable element of political development.

This study draws attention to the importance of political participation in terms of the significance of political development. The Justice and Development Party's understanding of political participation, its developments in this field and its level of overlap with the criteria of political development have been analysed. It is possible to state that the party has achieved a positive momentum in terms of political development. Parliamentary Group Meeting speeches that within the scope of the 2003-2008/2018-2023 periods were taken as the basis for the examination by classification. Selected texts have been analyzed by examining from a semantic point of view, the linguistic meanings of words and sentences all the semantic relationships inside and outside the discourse. Considering the government programs, executions, policies and actions of the party, it is a political party with a pluralist cultural understanding in terms of political participation. The differences are seen as cultural richness. It is noteworthy that every Turkish citizen, regardless of ethnic origin, language, religion, sect and race, has equal rights and is included in decision-making processes. Efforts and actions to include women and young people in public and political life show the importance attached to political participation. The expansion of the scope of democracy, fundamental rights and freedoms (freedom of broadcasting in different languages, headscarf, etc.) and their legitimization at the legal level indicate positive developments in the level of political development. In terms of economic development, which is one of the main arguments of the concept of political development, it is possible to state that the Justice and Development Party is identified with many parameters that are the criteria of political development, although it is seen that from time-to-time success is achieved in the economic field and from time-to-time fragilities continue to increase and success is not achieved.

### **THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Following World War II, efforts within the scope of democratization movements brought the concept of political development to the agenda. At the point where the concepts of social development and political stability started to be considered together, different approaches to the concept of political development have been developed by some scholars. System-functionalists have adopted an approach consisting of system theory and structural function. Political process approach scholars have aimed to establish a relationship between political behaviour, political processes, social processes such as urbanisation, industrialization and increasing mass communication channels through comparative quantitative analyses. Comparative history scholars have developed a traditional approach to the concept. These approaches have been seen as a reference for the concept of political development and have made a difference (Güngör, 2019: 192).

Political development is an aspect of modernisation processes and a phenomenon closely related to this process. Modernisation affects the whole of a society. The political dimensions of this situation are called political development. The multidimensionality of political development shows that the level of political development cannot be evaluated with a single criteria. These criterias can be listed as modernisation, rationalisation, participation, social integration and democratisation. Increased participation in decision-making processes in a society differentiates modern politics from traditional politics. In traditional politics, there is isolation from the centre. Kinship relations predominate. It is not based on participation. In modern politics, there is a

political culture based on participation. Political development involves a process of politicisation. This process corresponds to the inclusion of citizens in the decisions and activities of the government and the increase in participation (Huntington and Dominguez, 1975: 58-59). The level of political development of a country is closely related to parameters such as the development of political institutions, legal system, representative institutions, legalisation of elections, economic development, level of urbanisation and education (Cutright, 1963: 253). Political development is not a phenomenon that can be explained only by internal dynamics. External factors can be a dominant factor on individuals and groups. This situation may create dependency. Dependency, on the other hand, can affect development in every field. At the point where dependency increases, domination and colonisation by foreign powers may occur. Therefore, it is not possible to talk about political development in an environment of increased dependency (Huntington and Dominguez, 1975: 59).

Three features of the concept of political development have been underlined: concern for equality, concern about the capacity of the political system and concern about the differentiation or specialisation of social organisations. These features are related to the visible aspects of the concept. These are political culture equivalence, capacity problems for authoritarian governmental structures and the problem of differentiation for non-authoritarian structures. In this context, attention was drawn to the problems shaped around political culture, authoritarian structures and the general political process as obstacles to political development (Pye, 1963: 253). Political development demands more comprehensive capabilities within the political system. It expects political structures and processes to be more specialised in managing national activities and reacting to the environment. It demands a specialised political structure in terms of the concentration of power within the state. In this framework, basic political functions are performed through complex, organised political institutions such as the legislature, the executive branch, political parties and pressure groups. Citizens develop a strong identity with the state within the political system. The political system has a broad scope. It is expected to be more effective in responding to demands and in protecting the environment. Its organisation is more stable and harmonious. Its activities serve its goals and objectives more effectively (Güngör, 2019: 193). Political development is closely related to democracy. Progress towards democracy and the development of democracy are generally identified with the process of economic development. It can be stated that the developments in the twentieth century were effective in the concept of democracy gaining its current meaning as liberal democracy. In the twentieth century, democratic governments were introduced and regimes such as Italian Fascism and German Nazism disintegrated before the second half of the century. In the last quarter of the century, the socialist regime disintegrated. In parallel with these developments, it is seen that democracy has opened a space for itself and strengthened with liberalism, democracy has been supported at the social level, universal and equal suffrage has gradually expanded, and women and minority groups have been included in the scope of universal suffrage (Heywood, 2017: 172-173). Considering the relations of individuals with the bureaucracy in representative democracies, it is seen that public officials are positioned as practitioners and citizens as voters (Tilly, 2011: 55). Democracy models such as Radical Democracy, Participatory Democracy and Deliberative Democracy have come to the agenda and have been the subject of debates. Radical democracy defended the legitimacy of differences and brought identity politics to the agenda from the perspective of pluralist politics. Deliberative democracy is an understanding that accepts differences and recognises differences as the richness of society (Yılmaz, 2001: 40-49). In today's world, representative democracies are struggling with problems such as the rigid

hierarchical structure, the development of the technical aspects of politics, and the recognition and demands of different identities. Discussions on the legitimacy of representative democracies focus on issues such as the dissemination of horizontal democracy examples in society, increasing participation, putting the individual at the centre and meeting the demands of different identities. In line with the institutionalisation of democracy, alternative models such as radical democracy, strong democracy and deliberative democracy have been proposed as direct democracy practices (Mankan, 2020: 128). It can be said that democracy is generally based on two fundamental values: freedom and equality. It is not possible to talk about the existence of democracy in any political environment where individual freedom and equality cannot be ensured and legally guaranteed.

In the literature that can be classified as political development research, Huntington and Domínguez argue that political development is used in four different ways. The geographical one of these means to briefly explain the political processes of developing countries. Derivatively, political development expresses political aspects and consequences of the comprehensive modernization process. According to this figure, modernization includes industrialization, urbanization, increased literacy and mass communication receptivity. Economic growth includes greater social and occupational mobility and related processes. Purposeful political development refers to the purpose or purpose of the political system. Functionally, political development was seen as a change in the direction of a process to a modern industrial society. Huntington and Dominguez stated that political development should focus on development problem. Thus, the emphasis is on the development of political democracy and political stability in their respective aspects (Güngör, 2019: 4). Political development is generally considered as the progress of the political development process towards democracy. The development of democracy is often associated with the process of economic development. In the historical process, Lipset distinguishes between the existence of democratic institutions and high levels of economic development that revealed data containing a strong correlation. Russet and Dahl, presented additional evidence proving this relationship. The stability of a democracy depends on the effectiveness and legitimacy of the political system as well as on economic development. Lipset defines effectiveness as the success of the system. He relates to legitimacy as strong political institutions. Political development associated with legal system and representation institutions. Therefore, it was concluded that level of political development associated with communication, economic development, education and urbanization largely (Lipset, 1994: 2-4).

## **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

Political participation is the efforts and actions of individuals to influence the decisions and practices of the state at various levels. The level of development of political democracies is measured by the number and effectiveness of political participation. Political participation is important in terms of maintaining stability, minimising social conflict and ensuring social integration. Therefore, it is an indispensable element of political development. The level of political participation varies according to each society. The forms of participation are different. However, in general terms, individual and organisational activities such as voting, participating in elections, trying to influence decision-makers are similar. In the process of political development, it is stated that modern societies are more participatory than traditional societies (Huntington and Dominguez, 1975: 43). Political participation follows a parallel course with economic development, urbanisation and industrialisation. Higher income levels, higher social status and higher levels of education will trigger more active participation in the decisions to be

taken. In this environment, the number of rights defenders and participants in decision-making processes will increase. While the number of members of these organisations will be a pressure factor, the conflict, competition and the race for social status among these organisations will be triggered. Thus, all segments of the society will be inclined towards politics. In another aspect, national consciousness is considered as a reference for economic development. This perspective imposes certain rights, duties and responsibilities on individuals and increases their participation. In an environment where social demands and political rulers are determined, it will be possible for the system to change over time in a consensual manner through political participation. Thus, the political system and social order will renew itself in the face of changing conditions. Different forces will be integrated into the system, in other words, social integration will be achieved. A society in which social integration is achieved is the basic reference for the functioning of political democracy with all its rules. In other words, political democracy involves a culture of compromise and consensus (Erkal, 1999:269).

Political integration is the ability of the system to ensure the continuity of its integrity. It is an endeavour to bring together different groups within the society with the idea of creating a national self. In pluralist societies, there is no separation of elements such as different languages, ethnic origins and religions. In an environment where there is no segregation, social consciousness will be formed and an emotional bond will be established between the individual and the society. In pluralistic societies, national integration can be threatened and fragmented by developments in different areas. Local integration is the demonstration of the power of the centre over the local units subordinate to it. At the point where the ruler and the ruled cannot integrate, the communication between the authority and the society will break down. Social cohesion is a necessary condition for sustainability. A common goal has a key importance in ensuring integration and unity (Huntington and Dominguez, 1975). In pluralistic societies, religion has an integrative, guiding and influential effect on cultures. Religion has played a dominant role in the history of humanity until today (Mehmedoğlu and Aygün, 2006: 119). Considering these characteristics of the concept of religion, it is possible to see religious referenced formations and political parties today. When political integration takes on a national identity, some of the social problems are ignored. In pluralistic societies, it is important that political institutions come to the forefront with solutions and provide a culture of reconciliation in order for social cohesion to be sustainable. Indeed, social integration is realised through these means (Huntington and Dominguez, 1975: 85). In this context, in order to be able to talk about the existence of political development, it is important that the elements such as political democracy, political participation, developed political institutions, economic development and social integration are at a parallel level.

### **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY GOVERNMENT**

The philosophy on which the Justice and Development Party bases its democracy discourse is conservative democracy. It has explained this identity with its discourse; “*a modernity that does not exclude tradition, a universality that accepts localism, a rationality that does not reject meaning, a change that is not fundamentalist*” (Erdoğan, 2004: 9-10). This discourse, which rejects social engineering, is positioned in the “national will” tradition of the right with its conservative-modernist aspect.

The conservative democratic identity of the Justice and Development Party is described in sentences;

*The AK Party emphasises a modern conservatism open to innovation instead of the conservatism based on the status quo of the past. The AK Party advocates an evolutionary or gradual change based on social transformation that operates in its natural process. The AK Party's understanding of conservatism is not the preservation of existing institutions and relations, but the preservation of certain values and achievements. (...) No one should attempt to direct and mould societies from a desk. Our conservative democratic identity is opposed to all kinds of social and political engineering. (...) The AK Party, while reserving the need to protect individual preferences and assumptions within the framework of human rights and freedoms, believes that sensitivity should be shown to practices that would undermine the institution of "family". The AK Party believes that a discourse and forms of organisation that distinguish between "us and others", that make a single sect, ethnic element or religious understanding the main body of its politics, and that oppose other options, will be exclusionary and discriminatory. These are the red lines of our party (Erdoğan, 2004: 13).*

It is seen that the conservative democratic identity does not contain major differences in terms of overlapping with the specific codes of conservatism. The AK Party, which adopts a political approach based on a culture of consensus and advocating pluralistic democracy, defines its conservative democratic identity based on a limited state thought;

*Authoritarian and totalitarian approaches that become imposing and oppressive are not accepted. What makes democracy acceptable is its ability to include social and cultural differences and demands in politics and to protect the established order from imposing excesses. In addition, the state's confinement to a dogmatic sphere with an ideological preference is criticised, and a small, but dynamic and effective state, which has retreated to its essential functions, should serve as a state that is defined, controlled and shaped by its citizens, rather than defining, shaping and imposing preferences on them (Akdoğan, 2004: 16-17).*

The Justice and Development Party, aware that the Islamist approach of the National Vision tradition faced problems, pursued a different strategy and emphasised its conservative democratic identity. In order to survive in the political arena, the cadre of the Justice and Development Party differentiated their discourse from the National Vision Movement and frequently emphasised that they had changed with the phrase 'we took off the shirt of national vision'. The Justice and Development Party, which has rationalised its Islamist characteristic, has used the concepts of 'conservatism' and 'democracy' together. It gave importance to religious values in daily life and stated that they were a new political movement that harmonised with modern political values without denying the past (Akgün, 2006: 26). With its conservative democratic identity, it aimed to transform centre-periphery relations and distanced itself from the National Vision politics. The Justice and Development Party, which sought a smooth and legitimate identity instead of the National Vision identity, adopted a compromise and democratic identity (Safi, 2007: 294). It is reductionist to see the democratic identity of the Justice and Development Party as a transforming dimension of political Islam. The Justice and Development Party, with its conservative democratic identity and moderate politics, has aimed to overlap with the demands of the society in terms of reaching the masses and balancing the existing sensitivities, while staying away from confrontational politics (Komsuoğlu and Eskisar, 2009: 34). The conservative democracy discourse, which does not accept the label of Islamism

identified with the National Vision, reflects the will to assert itself. The party, which draws the framework of conservatism as reproducing conservative politics in universal standards beyond local values, portrays conservative democracy as an area of compromise. While interpreting differences as richness, it puts the concept of ‘national will’ on the basis of politics and authority. It envisages that politics should be based on integration rather than polarisation (Akdoğan, 2004: 16). The Justice and Development Party, which conceptualized conservative democracy and assigned itself the mission of cleansing politics from polarization and normalizing it in an all-encompassing manner, aimed to overcome the economic crises left over from the February 28 process, to establish economic liberalism, to enter a development drive and to democratize in line with EU norms (Davutoğlu, 2008: 79-80). The Justice and Development Party, which synthesised conservative, nationalist, Islamist and Western accumulations, which are the main veins of Turkish politics, adopted secularism in its Anglo-Saxon form, while giving importance to meeting demands such as religious education and headscarves (Yalvaç, 2012: 166-167). When the conceptualisation of civilisation came to light, the basis of national values was envisaged. The word nation, whether in the form of “our civilisation” or “local-national”, was defined as an encompassing, not ethnicist, unity. The Justice and Development Party sees freedom beyond legal and political norms. Conservatism's approach to freedom differs from that of the enlightenmentists in that criteria such as tradition, religion and morality are decisive in defining the sphere of freedom. Fundamental freedoms are considered inviolable. An understanding of excessive freedom that violates the space of others is not accepted by the conservative approach (Akdoğan, 2004: 46-47). When the discourses of the Justice and Development Party are analysed, it is seen that it frequently uses emphases such as pluralism and socialism. It recognises social values, traditions, history and religion as fundamental elements. The political line of the Justice and Development Party, which is in line with the National Vision, is based on the concept of establishing harmony between conservative values and the contemporary, between the local and the universal. In this context, as stated in the government programme, the conservative democratic identity of the Justice and Development Party has a dimension that reproduces local and universal values with reference to its own tradition of thought. It is emphasised that a new conservative identity will be produced in accordance with the characteristics of the conservative tradition, with a political style that leans on tradition, not with a borrowed structure, but by taking into account the original dynamics (Justice and Development Party General Election Declaration 2002).

The Justice and Development Party has explained its understanding of democracy in the following words;

*We aimed to build grounds where individuals and different segments of the society can freely express themselves in all aspects with a pluralist and libertarian understanding of democracy. We did not impose a lifestyle on anyone, we adopted respect for all beliefs and lifestyles as a principle. Our main goal in the third term is to establish democracy with all its institutions and rules and to ensure a full transition from incomplete democracy to advanced democracy (61<sup>st</sup> Government Programme).*

Individuals' belief that their rights and freedoms are respected has been described as the most important element of trust in a society. The need to reach universal standards in fundamental rights and freedoms is emphasised. It is underlined that the national will can be dominant in an environment where political rights are freely exercised. The necessity of establishing a pluralist, participatory and free democracy is stated. It is stated that the European



Union should be supported as an element of development. The principle of the rule of law is emphasised as a fundamental principle. An understanding of politics that embraces all elements of the society based on the understanding that diversity should be accepted as an integrative rather than a divisive factor has been adopted. The importance of a civil constitution was emphasised (Justice and Development Party General Election Declaration 2002).

The Justice and Development Party has stated that identity-based demands in the relationship between ethnic and cultural structure are compatible with the nature of democracy. It defends the understanding that divisive politics based on the dominance of a single identity, sect or ethnic element can harm social peace. Akdoğan, one of the theoreticians of the Justice and Development Party, explained the impact of divisive politics on social peace in the following words: “*The issue is to have a political style and structure that can accommodate many identities without disrespecting any of them. The main thing is not to focus on identities, but on a discourse in which identities can find the opportunity to exist in peace and reconciliation*” (2004: 71).

The Justice and Development Party, which links the emphasis on national will and national values to unity and solidarity, has explained this perspective with an emphasis on unity and solidarity covering all ethnic elements;

*It is our fundamental duty to protect the values that make us who we are, that make us a nation. Otherwise, we will remain without foundation and roots. Without our values, without sacrificially protecting them, we cannot hold the title deed of this country in our hands. Is it politics, for God's sake, to belittle and ignore the will of the nation, to deny the values of the people, and to try to render the national will powerless and disabled? Is it politics to call what the people say white black and not to share the people's joy?* (Tığ et al., 2010: 214-215).

When the party programmes, actions and policies of the Justice and Development Party, which came to power in 2002, are examined, it is possible to state that it has achieved a positive momentum in terms of political development and made it sustainable. That is to say, when the party's perspective on democracy and its practices in this direction are evaluated together, we come across a directly proportional result. The democratisation discourse, which has been on the rise since the beginning of his rule, is perhaps the most important aspect that distinguishes him from the previous governments. In this context, the reforms made in the field of fundamental rights and freedoms, the emphasis on issues such as the coexistence of different cultures, the way the Kurdish issue is handled, the importance given to the women's issue and the regulations support this claim. As a matter of fact, the government has taken new steps in the fight against terrorism, developed policies and made institutional regulations. The fact that the fight against terrorism and democratisation efforts continued unabated while emphasising unity and solidarity can be explained by the liberal conservative identity of the Justice and Development Party with reference to the moderate aspect of its political line (Kayıral, 2024: 227). When these developments are evaluated together with the criteria of strengthening political institutions, democratisation, participation and social integration, they have a close relationship with political development. It is possible to talk about more non-nationalist values of the Justice and Development Party, such as an embracing political approach, respect for different identities, diversity and beliefs, in reference to its prominent “conservative democrat” identity. It emphasises freedom of belief and freedom of expression in general, and all segments of society are seen as equal. The importance given to the freedom of individuals and different segments of

society to express themselves freely in all aspects, based on a pluralist and libertarian understanding of democracy, reflects the party's perspective on the issue (Kayıral, 2024: 227). When evaluated in terms of political participation, the Justice and Development Party government emphasises that everyone living within the borders of the nation state should be recognised and respected regardless of ethnicity, origin, identity and belief. The women's entrepreneurship programme, which was established to increase women's participation in public life and employment, aims to enable women to benefit both their families and their country. It does not ignore the concept of "Western World" in the axis of efforts to adapt to EU standards. In this context, it has addressed a wide range of women's problems such as violence, education, inclusion in public life and political participation and has set solution targets. In the AK Party's liberal understanding of women's issues, non-governmental organisations were supported and women were included in public life. Women's active participation in politics was enabled, various mechanisms (such as the organisation of women's branches) were established, and it became possible for women to take an active role in internal party activities (Kayıral, 2024: 222). In summary, it is possible to state that the Justice and Development Party has reached a certain level in terms of political development. It is possible to say that it attaches importance to national integration and political participation based on its understanding of unity and reconciliation culture.

Democracy will be manifested in our country in a very clear and concrete way with this practice, in the sense of the people participating in and supervising the administration. This is trust in society. As the Government, we have no fears or concerns about the administration becoming transparent and auditable. Our basic understanding is to give back to our people what we received from the people, and to show that we trust our nation, which trusts us, to the end. There is a subject that I have been emphasizing a lot lately: Bureaucratic oligarchy. When I say this, I do not and cannot intend to offend any public official. What we mean is that some people or mentalities that are attracted to our state or benefit from it have found the right to say "I am the state" in this country (Justice and Development Party Parliamentary Group Speech 10.06.2003).

With this transfer, Erdoğan preferred narrative patterns such as "trust" and "transparency" and based the rhetoric of the text on a political polarization around the opposition of us and them. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who attributed the reason for the abolition of the specially authorized State Security Courts to the importance of creating simplified processes in the judiciary and eradicating double-headedness in the judiciary, positioned himself as the government on the side of us, and preferred a provocative semantic positioning style by referring to the military administration as them. Emphasizing that his priority is to give to the people what he received from the people, with the image of a reliable statesman, Erdoğan explained the rhetoric of the text in a one-dimensional semantic axis on the axis of the opposition of us and them, with the expression "some people or mentalities who are attracted to our state, or benefit from the state, find the right to say 'I am the state' in this country." subjected to closure. While the text rhetorically demonstrates the use of a language built on oppositions, the opposition in question is reinforced with a veiled reference to those responsible without giving any details in terms of background-context information. Synthetically, a semantic frame built with active sentences was

preferred with the narrative of "we, as the government, have no fear of the administration becoming transparent and auditable".

We have had a busy legislative year under this roof, and we continue to do so. In the coming days, regulations regarding the Family Institution and the Status of Women will also be discussed in the Parliament. All these legal studies will shape the future of Turkey and are the studies we need for the progress of our country. I know that you pay the necessary importance and attention to each article of these regulations and that you make great efforts for this great change that will bring Turkey to a modern legal structure (Justice and Development Party Parliamentary Group Speech 25.05.2004).

Erdoğan's use of the words "woman", "family" and "law" in this transfer shows the importance he attaches to the women's problem through the concept of family. In the discourse of the text, it is seen that an emphasis is made on the role of women in the family institution with the expression "legal regulations that will shape the future of Turkey". In terms of semantics, a semantic framework built with active-structured sentences, has been preferred without providing background-context information with quotes such as "It will bring Turkey to a modern legal structure."

This society, this nation demands universal standards of democracy, law and freedoms. Again, this nation never accepts the shadowy definitions of democracy, law and freedoms. As the AK Party, our job is to solve problems, not to feed on the crisis. We defend and will defend democratic politics and legal legitimacy to the end, knowing that the solution to the problems depends on genuine politics and that there will be no legitimate solution other than democratic politics. We are doing this (Justice and Development Party Parliamentary Group Speech 08.08.2008).

In this transfer, Erdoğan's choice of word patterns such as "society", "nation", "democracy", "legal legitimacy" means that he wants to draw attention to the fact that the society's demand for democratic politics will be resolved based on legal legitimacy. In the discourse of the text he constructed in a liberal language, Erdoğan made a veiled reference to his opponents and produced a negative rhetoric with the statement "this nation never accepts the shadowy definitions of democracy, law and freedoms". In terms of semantics, with the expression "As the AK Party, our job is to solve problems, not to feed on the crisis", background-context information was not given and the use of active sentences was preferred.

We developed an employment-based economy. Thanks God, Turkey has grown 3.5 times. We never became complacent or discouraged. We have never shied away from democratic competition. We went before the nation 12 times and were always ready to answer to our nation. We placed Turkey on the line of trust and stability. The Justice and Development Party's 16-year report card is full of good things (Justice and Development Party Parliamentary Group Speech 03.05.2018).

In this transfer, Erdoğan's preference for narrative patterns such as "Turkey", "growth", "16 years of good report card" shows that he wants to draw attention to the fact that Turkey has reached the line of trust and stability with the Justice and Development Party government. Erdoğan has produced a development-centered economic discourse with the expression "employment-based economy". In terms of semantics, it is seen that syntactically active sentences are used in the text where background-context information is not given.

We will mobilize all means to provide a better life for all members of this country, men, women, young and old, and to make their dreams come true. Because we love this country. Because we are in love with this nation. There is no knot that love cannot solve, no obstacle that love cannot overcome. There is

no stopping or resting for us until we reach the destination of this blessed journey that we walk with you (Justice and Development Party Parliamentary Group Speech 25.06.2019).

It shows that you use language, when this composition is examined, the use of narrative patterns such as "the country", "all individuals", "mobilized" is a solidarist style that draws attention to the importance of unity of every individual with ideas, knowledge and effort in order to build a country at the level of contemporary civilizations. In terms of semantics, it is seen that a semantic frame built with syntactically active sentences, without background-context information, is preferred with the expression "There is no stopping or resting for us until we reach the blessed journey to its destination".

Every time we set out to improve our constitution and laws, democracy, rights and freedoms with steps that would support our struggle for development, we always looked for a solution here, not elsewhere. Keeping our belief that fundamental rights should not be a constitutional issue, we have prepared our own proposal to prevent the sufferings our country has experienced from past to present to be repeated (Justice and Development Party Parliamentary Group Speech 01.02.2023).

Erdoğan's preference for narrative patterns such as "solution", "there is no other way", "we searched here" in the discourse of the text shows that he wants to draw attention to the relationship between fundamental rights and the constitution as a statesman who is confident in himself and his actions. In the discourse of the text from a rhetorical point of view which is not exactly based on the axis of oppositions and is constructed in a liberal language, a reference is made to the main opposition in a veiled manner with the narrative of "not repeating the pain from the past to the present". In terms of semantics, with the sentence "...we prepared our own proposal", no background-context information was given, and syntactically active sentences were used.

## CONCLUSION

In a social structure, as long as there are demands, resistances, conflicts and non-social interactions, change and development are inevitable. In order to talk about development in a social structure, a certain level must be achieved in certain fields such as education, health, economy and politics. In today's world, political development makes itself visible with the level of democratisation. The awareness of democracy in a society and its administrators, the attitude towards different thoughts and identities, and the achievement of social integration are indicators of political development. The fact that individuals from all segments and classes are included in decision-making processes on issues concerning themselves and the society, and that their opinions and actions are taken into consideration indicates a high level of political participation. It is possible to evaluate these reflections on the axis of social integrity. Since democracy is seen as the main reference in political development, a political process in which participation is limited or in which compulsory options are offered does not indicate a fully democratic functioning and process. As political development is seen as the level of income, democracy, strong political institutions, constitutional order, political culture, political participation, social integration and economic development, political structures and processes are expected to be more specialised and effective in managing national activities and responding to the environment. Political development depends not only on democracy and economic development, but also on the stability of the political system. In this respect, the existence of strong political institutions, the independence of political organisations and procedures from peers, and methods of behaviour indicate the degree of independence. The political institutions of a developed

political system have integrity, are isolated to a certain extent from the influence of non-political groups and are not open to external pressures and influences. In a political system without autonomy, political organisations and the system remain passive under the pressure of social power. Therefore, it is not possible to talk about political development in an environment where political institutions are passivated. In developed political systems, the system is autonomous and the political system is protected by mechanisms that alleviate the pressure of social power.

From the perspective of political development, the programmes, actions and policies of the Justice and Development Party have been examined. The analysis reveals that the reforms and practices of the Justice and Development Party in the fields such as democracy, fundamental rights and freedoms, political participation, women's effective participation in political and public life, and its efforts to spread its compromise politics approach to the national and international level point to the existence of positive developments in terms of political development. In terms of economic development, which is one of the main references of political development, it is observed that from time to time there are fragilities and failures in the economic field, where success has been achieved from time to time. The pluralistic understanding of culture and the perspective that accepts differences as richness can be shown as a reference to the understanding of conciliatory and moderate politics. Indicators such as women's participation in political life, encouragement and participation of young people in politics in the context of the importance it attaches to political participation are signs that it has made significant progress in this sense. To summarise, when the policies and practices of the Justice and Development Party government are evaluated from the perspective of political development, it is highly probable that there is a positive improvement in the level of political development in Turkish politics. Predicted outcome from the study; The findings and results obtained will be an important resource for comparison with future projects and studies. In widespread effect; It is aimed to benefit more people by presenting conceptual evaluations and obtained results in scientific events.

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