



Individual's Personality Traits and Political Party Membership the Moderating Role of Voter Interest in the Impact of Voter Turnout

Bireyin Kişilik Özelliklerinin Siyasal Partilere Üyelik Üzerindeki Etkisinde Seçmen İlgileniminin Düzenleyici Rolü

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Abstract

This study investigates the moderating role of voter involvement in the relationship between personality traits and political party membership. The main assumption is that personality traits influence voter involvement in political participation. The study was conducted with 477 participants aged 18 and over in Türkiye. The findings show that voter involvement is positively associated with extraversion, openness, and political membership, while neuroticism has no significant effect. Extroverted and open-minded individuals tend to be more interested in political processes, and politically active individuals show greater political interest. Political party membership is negatively related to agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness, suggesting that more cooperative, responsible, or open-minded individuals are less likely to join political organizations. In addition, political membership moderates the effects of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness on voter involvement, whereas neuroticism does not play a moderating role. These personality traits reduce voter involvement at low and medium levels of political membership. However, as political membership increases, their influence weakens and eventually becomes insignificant.

Öz

Bu çalışmanın odak noktası, bireyin kişilik özelliklerinin siyasal partilere üyelik üzerindeki etkisinde seçmen ilgileniminin düzenleyici rolünü araştırmaktır. Çalışmanın temel varsayımı bireyin kişilik özelliklerinin siyasal partilere üyelik üzerinde seçmen ilgilenimin düzenleyici bir rolünün olduğu yönündedir. Bu amaçla, Türkiye genelinde 18 yaş üstü 477 (N: 477) katılımcı üzerinde bir araştırma yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın bulgularına göre seçmen ilgilenimi en çok dışadönüklük, açıklık ve siyasal üyelik ile pozitif ilişkilidir, nevroziklik anlamlı bulunmamıştır. Dışadönük ve açık fikirli bireyler, politik süreçlere daha fazla ilgi gösterirken, siyasal olarak aktif kişiler de politikayla daha fazla ilgilenmektedir. Siyasal üyelik ise uyumluluk, sorumluluk ve açıklık ile negatif ilişkilidir. Bu bulgu, daha uyumlu, sorumlu veya açık fikirli bireylerin siyasal örgütlere katılma olasılığının daha düşük olduğunu göstermektedir. Siyasal üyelik durumu, dışadönüklük, uyumluluk, sorumluluk ve açıklık gibi özelliklerin seçmen ilgilenimi üzerindeki etkisini modüle ettiğini, ancak nevrozikliğin bu tür bir etkiye sahip olmadığını göstermektedir. Bu durum, bu kişilik özelliklerinin siyasal üyeliğin düşük ve orta seviyelerinde seçmen ilgilenimini azalttığını göstermektedir. Siyasal üyelik düzeyinin artmasıyla kişilik özelliklerinin seçmen ilgilenimi üzerindeki etkisinin azaldığını ve sonunda anlamsız hale gelmektedir.

1. INTRODUCTION

From the past to the present, many definitions and classifications have been made about personality to understand and recognize people. In the development process of psychiatry, each theory has defined and evaluated personality from its perspective (Taymur and Türkçapar, 2012: 154). Personality is the characteristics and tendencies that determine the differences in individuals' psychological reactions, such as thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and cannot be explained only by the moment experienced, the current biological state, or the social environment (Linda, 1999; Başarıcı, 2024; Millon, Grossman and Millon, 2021: 3). In this sense, personality includes relatively important and permanent aspects of psychological reactions. According to many theorists, personality encompasses almost every aspect of the individual, including mental, emotional, social, and physical (Ewen, 2009). Personality can also be defined as a set of characteristics that distinguish an individual from others, make him/her unique, and reflect all his/her characteristics. In other words, personality is a set of characteristics that differentiate people from others, making them "individuals" and making each person a "separate world." In short, personality appears as the sum of the characteristics that make the individual himself/herself (Tutar, 2013; Polatçı and Sobacı, 2014: 64).

Political participation has gained importance, especially since the middle of the 20th century. With the acceptance and spread of democratic forms of government based on popular sovereignty, the importance of this concept has increased and attracted the attention of political scientists (Sönmez, 2013: 404). Political participation can be defined as the process by which individuals determine and influence the government. In other words, political participation is a concept that expresses citizens' "status, attitudes and behaviors in the face of the political system" (Kapani, 1997: 130-131).

The most common classification of the forms and types of political participation behavior belongs to Milbraith. According to Milbraith, political participation can be handled in three stages. These can be categorized as observers, intermediaries, and actions toward political struggle (as cited in Çam, 2011: 172-173).

Observer actions: Voting, being open to political warnings, participating in political debates, convincing others of one's views, encouraging others to vote in a favorable way, and wearing a party badge.

Intermediary actions: Establishing a relationship with a political leader or political figures, standing as a candidate for a party or providing financial support to a candidate, attending rallies with political content.

Acts aimed at political struggle: Actions such as active party membership, participating in election campaign activities, raising money for political funds, attending strategy-setting meetings, and running for a political office are included in this category.

This study aims to examine the effect and relationship of the regulatory role of voter interest on the effect of the individual's personality traits on political party membership, which is a type of political participation and can be considered in the category of actions toward political struggle. In this sense, our hypotheses in this study are as follows.

H1: Extraversion in personality traits positively predicts voter interest.

H2: Agreeableness among personality traits positively predicts voter interest.

H3: Responsibility among personality traits positively predicts voter interest.

H4: Openness among personality traits positively predicts voter interest.

H5: Neuroticism among personality traits negatively predicts voter interest.

H6: Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness are personality traits that hurt voter interest at membership levels.

H7: Neuroticism among personality traits does not significantly affect voter interest at political membership levels.

H8: Personality traits such as extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, and agreeableness positively predict political participation.

H9: Neuroticism among personality traits negatively predicts political participation.

The relationship and effect of an individual's personality traits on political participation is one of the issues that researchers are curious about. However, studies on this subject are limited in general. Similar and close research to this study is as follows.

Mondak and Halperin (2008) concluded that all dimensions of the five-factor personality traits are important for individuals' political participation and affect almost all dimensions.

Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, and Shang (2010) investigated how the association between Five-Factor personality traits and political attitudes varies according to individuals' political knowledge and contextual influences, such as the social and environmental settings that shape the interpretation of political stimuli. Their findings indicate that personality traits influence economic and social attitudes in distinct ways. Furthermore, the study suggests that these traits are as influential as traditional predictors – such as education and socioeconomic status – in shaping individuals' ideological orientations.

In another study, Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, Connor and Shang (2011) examined the relationship between personality traits and election participation rates and other types of participation. The results revealed that personality traits cause diversity in the political activities in which people participate and that such participation may differ depending on personality traits.

Blais and Vincent (2011) focused on personality traits that may affect political participation factors, such as political interest, sense of citizenship, and voting behavior. The study's findings show that some personality traits indirectly affect voting behavior through political interest and a sense of citizenship.

Hibbing, Ritchie, and Anderson (2011) examined how personality traits influence the context of political debates, the relationships of political debaters, and debaters' views of their partners. The study demonstrated the many effects of personality on political debates and revealed that personal characteristics are critical to consider in such debates.

Gerber, Huber, Doherty, and Dowling (2012) found that three personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, and openness) are related to the level of party identification. This relationship does not change when individuals' ideologies and views on political issues are controlled.

Gallego and Oberski (2012) showed that personality traits have a measurable but indirect effect on participation in elections and protests. They determined that this relationship is mediated through attitudinal factors.

Shang, Seokho and Se (2013) found significant relationships between personality traits and types of political participation other than elections. For example, the openness personality trait has a positive relationship with participating in protests and rallies, communicating with

news media, and participating in online political activities. On the other hand, agreeableness has a negative relationship with participating in signature campaigns in addition to these types of participation. The responsibility factor positively relates to individual activities, such as communicating with elected politicians and news media. In contrast, it negatively relates to collective activities, such as rallies and protests. This study found no significant relationship between personality traits and election participation.

Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling and Panagopoulos (2013) showed that five-factor personality traits shape responses to Get Out the Vote (GOTV) messages. These messages are used in the US by Non-politically affiliated organizations or electoral candidates encourage voters to go to the polls. In countries where voting is not compulsory, such messages increase turnout. The fact that there are personality differences in the (positive/negative) reactions to these messages strengthens the effect of personality traits on the reactions to political stimuli. Considering that personality traits can affect voters' reactions to political messages during campaign periods, these data can play an important role in developing campaign strategies. More effective communication can be established with the target audience by adapting campaign messages according to demographics and personality traits.

Ha, Kim, and Jo (2013) investigated the relationship between personality traits and various forms of political participation in South Korea, utilizing data from a nationally representative survey conducted in 2009. Drawing on the Five Factor Model of personality, the study identified statistically significant associations between specific personality dimensions and non-electoral forms of political engagement. The trait of Openness was positively correlated with several types of participatory behaviour, including protest attendance, participation in rallies, financial contributions to political causes, engagement with news media, and online political activity. In contrast, the trait of Compliance exhibited negative correlations with these five forms of participation as well as with petition signing. Responsibility was found to be positively associated with individual-level political actions – such as contacting the media or elected officials and making political donations – while showing a negative association with collective actions like participation in rallies. Notably, the study found no significant relationship between any personality trait and voter turnout.

Weinschenk and Panagopoulos (2014) examined the extent to which individuals with varying personality traits respond differently to negative political messaging. Their findings indicate that individuals scoring high in agreeableness were less likely to express intentions to engage in political participation following exposure to oppositional political messages, compared to their counterparts. Conversely, those with high levels of extraversion were more inclined to report an intention to participate politically under similar conditions. The study further revealed that agreeableness moderates the effect of message negativity on individuals' political participation intentions.

Erdinç (2018) concluded that there is a bidirectional and moderate relationship between personality traits and dimensions of political participation. In addition, as a result of the canonical correlation analysis, three canonical variable pairs emerged. These variable pairs represent the strongest statistically significant associations between political participation and personality traits. The first pair – agreeableness and political action – suggests that individuals who are more cooperative and in harmony with their social environment tend to be more engaged in political activities. The second pair – extraversion and political interest – indicates that extroverted individuals demonstrate a higher level of interest in political matters. The third pair – openness and political membership – shows that individuals involved in youth branches of political parties tend to exhibit greater openness to new experiences.

Lindell and Strandberg (2018) examined whether personality traits are related to views and participation in participatory or consultative political participation. They found that personality traits are more likely to influence actual participation in participatory and consultative activities than having favourable views. He concluded that extraversion and openness are positively linked to participation in participatory and consultative activities. Agreeableness and emotional stability are negatively related. It is concluded that personality traits have more potent effects in predicting views and participation in consultative activities than participatory ones. Therefore, the results clearly show that the influence of personality on participation should not be ignored.

Wang, Weng and Tsai (2019) explore the role of personality traits in shaping political participation in Taiwan. Their study finds that personality traits do not have a direct effect on either individual voter turnout or participation in protests. However, these traits influence political participation indirectly by mediating the effects of attitudinal variables. In particular, political interest mediates the relationship between extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness and both voter turnout and protest participation. Furthermore, the strength of partisanship is also found to mediate the effects of certain personality traits on voter turnout.

Blais, Mungall and Pruysers (2024) examined the impact of personality traits on political ideology and partisanship in Canada. The study found that Canadians who positioned themselves ideologically on the right were lower in openness to experience, honesty-humility, and impulsivity, but higher in extraversion, narcissism, and antisocial tendencies.

The study also finds that the strength of partisanship mediates the relationship between extraversion and agreeableness and voter turnout. Unlike findings in other national contexts, the authors conclude that political efficacy does not serve as a mediating factor between personality traits and political participation in Taiwan. These results highlight the significance of mediation mechanisms in understanding how personality traits influence political behaviour and suggest that the effects of personality on political participation may vary across different cultural and political environments.

In conclusion, the findings obtained from these studies show that the five-factor personality model has various effects on political participation, political attitudes, and political activities. These studies reveal that personality traits directly or indirectly affect political participation and create effects that differ according to cultural and contextual factors. Personality traits are an important factor affecting the personalization of election campaign strategies, reactions to political messages, and individuals' participation in political events.

2. MODEL AND METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This research was designed according to the relational survey model. The relational survey model is one of the descriptive research methods used to determine the relationships between two or more variables (Karasar, 2012: 81). Convenience sampling method was applied in the research, and all participants were included in the research. This method is appropriate for research conducted over the Internet (Altunışık, Çoşkun, Bayraktaroğlu and Yıldırım 2002: 63).

2.1. Data Collection and Ethical Process

All the rules specified in the "Directive on Scientific Research and Publication Ethics of Higher Education Institutions" were followed in this study. None of the actions specified under the second part of the Directive, "Actions Contrary to Scientific Research and Publication Ethics," have been carried out. Ethical approval for the research was obtained from

Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee (Date/Decision No: 12.03.2024/01-51). After obtaining ethical approval, all data collection tools were converted online using the Google Drive application. The online link to the data collection tool was directed to the participants, and their participation was ensured. The data collection process was carried out between 01.06.2024 and 15.09.2024.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

2.2.1. Personal-Social Information Form

In the study, a question consisting of 11 statements was asked to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants.

In order to measure personality traits, the 44-item "Five Factor Personality Inventory" developed by Benet-Martinez and John (1998) was used. The scale comprises five sub-dimensions: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability (neuroticism), and openness to experience. A total of 16 statements were reverse-coded. The scale was adapted into Turkish by Sümer and Sümer (2005).

For the political membership dimension of the participants, the political membership dimension of the political participation scale developed by Topbaş (2009) was used. The dimension consists of three statements.

In order to determine the level of interest of the participants in politics, voter interest scales adapted by Özbek and Mergener (2019) from O'Cass and Pecotich (2005) were used. The voter interest scale consists of six statements. The scales were prepared in Five-point Likert type. Necessary permissions were obtained from the owners of the scales used in the study.

2.3. Population and Sample of the Study

The target population of this research is individuals aged 18 and over living in Turkey. However, since it is not practically possible to reach all of this population one by one, 477 individuals were selected by convenience sampling method among individuals with various socio-cultural and demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and education level that can represent the population constituted the sample group of the research. The demographic characteristics of the participants are as follows.

Table 1: Demographic and Socio-cultural Information of the Participants

| Variable | Category | N | % |
|--|---|-----|------|
| Gender | Woman | 322 | 67.5 |
| | Male | 155 | 32.5 |
| Age | 18-30 | 156 | 32.7 |
| | 31-45 | 210 | 44.0 |
| | 46-60 | 102 | 21.4 |
| | 61- and above | 9 | 1.9 |
| | | | |
| Income | 7002 TL and Below | 48 | 10.1 |
| | 17003 - 30000 TL | 44 | 9.2 |
| | 30001-40000 TL | 62 | 13.0 |
| | 40001-50000 TL | 109 | 22.9 |
| | 50001-60000 TL | 60 | 12.6 |
| | 60001 TL and above | 154 | 32.3 |
| Education | Primary/Secondary School | 30 | 6.3 |
| | High School | 43 | 9.0 |
| | Associate Degree | 270 | 56.6 |
| | Licence | 77 | 16.1 |
| | Master's degree | 54 | 11.3 |
| | PhD | 3 | 0.6 |
| Profession | Officer | 94 | 19.7 |
| | Labourer | 281 | 58.9 |
| | Unemployed | 36 | 7.5 |
| | Tradesmen | 5 | 1.0 |
| | Student | 33 | 6.9 |
| | Private sector | 13 | 2.7 |
| | Other | 15 | 3.1 |
| | | | |
| Political and Cultural Identification | Conservative/Religious | 71 | 14.9 |
| | National Visionary | 90 | 18.9 |
| | Nationalist | 46 | 9.6 |
| | Ataturkist | 126 | 26.4 |
| | Socialist | 14 | 2.9 |
| | Social Democrat | 56 | 11.7 |
| | Liberal | 18 | 3.8 |
| | Kurdish Nationalist | 27 | 5.7 |
| Apolitical | 29 | 6.1 | |
| Does the Candidate Preference of the | Yes | 359 | 75.3 |
| | No. | 68 | 14.3 |
| Parties Affect Your Voting Behaviour? | Undecided | 50 | 10.4 |
| If you do not like your party's candidate. would you vote for another party? | Yes | 284 | 59.5 |
| | No. | 109 | 22.9 |
| | Undecided | 84 | 17.6 |
| Which is more important for you when voting? | Leader | 245 | 51.4 |
| | Party | 133 | 27.9 |
| | Candidate | 61 | 12.7 |
| | Other | 38 | 8.0 |
| When does your voting decision become clear? | After the Candidates are Determined | 66 | 13.8 |
| | The party I will vote for is always clear | 277 | 58.1 |
| | After Following the Election Campaigns | 78 | 16.4 |

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|------|
| | One or two days before the election | 26 | 5.5 |
| | At the Ballot Box | 30 | 6.2 |
| Are you a member of any political party or non-governmental organisation? | Yes | 61 | 12.8 |
| | No. | 416 _{87.2} | |
| Total | | 477 | 100 |

Table 1 shows that 67.5 percent of the respondents are female, and 32.5 percent are male. This indicates that women are more likely to participate in the survey or that women are more represented in the sample. 44% of the respondents are in the 31-45 age group, which shows that the middle age group contributed significantly to the survey. 32.7 percent of respondents are between 18-30 years of age. Thus, a significant proportion of young adults are represented. Respondents aged between 46-60 years were represented in the survey with 21.4 percent, while those aged 61 and over were represented by a tiny proportion (1.9 percent). This indicates that younger and middle-aged groups are more dominant in the survey. 32.3% of the respondents belong to the income group of 60001 TL and above, which indicates that the highest income bracket is the most represented group. The second largest income group is the respondents in the 40001-50000 TL income range, with 22.9%. The proportion of respondents in lower income groups is as low as 10.1% (17002 TL and below) and 9.2% (17003-30000 TL). This situation shows more middle and high-income individuals among the respondents. The majority of the respondents (56.6%) have an associate's degree, 16.1% have a bachelor's degree, and fewer have a master's degree (11.3%) and a doctorate (0.6%). Primary/secondary school graduates (6.3 percent) and high school graduates (9 percent) were underrepresented. This shows that the questionnaire is mainly addressed to a highly educated group. 58.9% of the respondents are laborers, and 19.7% are civil servants. The proportion of unemployed is

7.5 percent, students is 6.9 percent, while tradesmen (1 percent) and private sector employees (2.7 percent). The category labeled as "other" was represented by 3.1%. The most significant proportion of the participants stated that they were Atatürkists, with 26.4%. This shows that Kemalist ideology is widespread among this group. National Visionists are the second largest group, with 18.9%, followed by conservative/religious respondents, with 14.9%. Apolitical respondents make up 6.1%, while nationalist (9.6%), social democratic (11.7%) and liberal (3.8%) groups have lower rates. Kurdish nationalists and socialists are represented at lower rates of 5.7% and 2.9%, respectively. 75.3% of the respondents stated that the candidate preferences of the parties affect their voting behavior. This shows that

Candidates have a significant impact on voters. 14.3% of the respondents did not care about this situation, while 10.4% were undecided. 59.5% of the respondents stated that they would vote for another party if they did not adopt their party's candidate. This shows that most participants may change parties according to the candidate's preference. 22.9% stated they are determined and loyal to their party, while 17.6% were undecided. 51.4% of the participants stated that the leader is more important when voting. This shows that the leader is the most important factor in voter behavior. Party (27.9%) and candidate (12.7%) are further behind in the ranking of importance. 58.1% of the respondents stated that they always decide on the party they will vote for in advance. This shows that the majority of voters are decisive in their party preferences. 16.4% make their decision after following the election campaigns, while 13.8% make their decision after the candidates are determined. While 6.2% decide at the polls, 5.5% decide one or two days before the election. 87.2% of the respondents stated they are not members of any political party or civil society organization. Only 12.8 percent are

members. This indicates that party membership or participation in civil society organizations is low.

This table shows that the respondents' demographic characteristics and political preferences are diverse. Women and individuals in the young-middle age group participated more in the survey. Education levels are generally high, and income distribution is concentrated among the middle and upper-income groups. Politically, Atatürkist and National Visionist groups have a larger share, while the leader-orientated voting tendency is prominent. The majority of the participants stated that the candidate preferences of the parties affect their voting behaviour. Voting preferences are generally predetermined, and party loyalty is high.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1. Normality Test

A normality test was performed to evaluate whether the data obtained in the study were usually distributed. Skewness and kurtosis values were taken into consideration in this test. Skewness and kurtosis values between -2 and +2 indicate the data's normal distribution (George and Mallery, 2010). Table 2 presents the mean perceptions of the participants about the variables subject to the research and the skewness and kurtosis values of these scales.

Table 2: Arithmetic Averages and Normality Test Results

| | Mean | S.S | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|----------------------|------|-------|----------|----------|
| Political membership | 1.66 | 1.08 | 1.403 | 0.936 |
| Extraversion | 3.87 | 0.891 | -0.941 | 0.191 |
| Compatibility | 4.11 | 0.881 | -1.702 | 1.890 |
| Responsibility | 4.11 | 1.02 | -1.118 | -0.133 |
| Openness | 3.90 | 0.892 | -1.237 | 0.866 |
| Emotional balance | 3.50 | 1.034 | -0.194 | -1.438 |
| Voter Interest | 2.33 | 0.984 | 0.579 | -0.546 |

When Table 2 is analysed, it is understood that the participant's knowledge and interest in politics is at a medium level. The fact that the skewness and kurtosis values are in the range of -2 and +2 indicates that the data are normally distributed, and therefore, it is appropriate to apply parametric tests.

3.2. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach Alpha test was conducted to determine the reliability of the scales used in the study. The values obtained from the analysis are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Reliability Test Results of Political Membership Dimension of Political Participation Scale

| Scales | Article Number | Cronbach Alpha |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Political membership | 3 | 0.90 |

The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the political membership dimension of the scale is 0.96. In the study, it was determined as 90. According to this result, it was determined that the scale used was reliable.

Table 4: Five Factor Personality Scale Reliability Test Results

| Scales | Article Number | Cronbach Alpha |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| | 44 | 0.96 |
| Five factor personality scale Extraversion | 8 | 0.92 |
| Compatibility Responsibility Emotional balance | 9 | 0.93 |
| Openness | 9 | 0.95 |
| | 8 | 0.93 |
| | 10 | 0.93 |

The reliability values of the five-factor personality dimensions of the scale vary between .64 and 0.77 (Sümer, Lajunen and Özkan, 2005). The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the five-factor personality scale used in the study was found to be 0.96. The reliability test results of the dimensions of the scale vary between 92 and 95. According to these results, it was determined that the scale used was reliable.

Table 5: Voter Interest Scale Reliability Test Results

| Scales | Article Number | Cronbach Alpha |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Selection Interest Scale | 6 | 0.87 |

Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.92. In the study, it was found to be 0.87.

Table 6: Findings Related to Correlation Analysis

| | Voter Engagement | Extraversion | Compatibility | Responsibility | Openness | Neuroticism | Political Membership |
|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|----------|-------------|----------------------|
| Voter Engagement | 1 | | | | | | |
| Extraversion | 0.162** | 1 | | | | | |
| Compatibility | 0.103* | 0.595** | 1 | | | | |
| Responsibility | 0.101* | 0.498** | 0.500** | 1 | | | |
| Openness | 0.191** | 0.602** | 0.611** | 0.515** | 1 | | |
| Neuroticism (Emotional balance) | 0.111* | 0.180** | 0.243** | 0.240** | 0.296** | 1 | |
| Political Membership | 0.166** | -0.084 | -0.173** | -0.102* | -0.181** | -0.035 | 1 |

** p<01, * p<05

A positive and significant relationship exists between voter interest and extraversion ($r = 0.162$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that extroverted individuals have higher voter interest. Sociable and energetic people may be more interested in political processes. A weak but significant positive relationship exists between voter interest and agreeableness ($r = 0.103$, $p < 0.05$). More agreeable individuals may approach politics as voters more moderately and positively. A weak positive relationship exists between voter interest and responsibility ($r = 0.101$, $p < 0.05$). Responsible individuals show a slight increase in voter interest; this can be explained by political consciousness and a sense of responsibility. A moderate positive relationship was observed between voter interest and openness ($r = 0.191$, $p < 0.01$). Open-minded individuals may be more interested in politics as they are more inclined to explore new ideas and perspectives. A weak positive relationship exists between voter interest and neuroticism ($r = 0.111$, $p < 0.05$). Individuals with neurotic characteristics may show interest in political processes due to their anxiety, but this relationship is relatively weak. A positive relationship exists between voter interest and political membership ($r = 0.166$, $p < 0.01$). Individuals with political membership have higher voter interest, i.e., politically active individuals show more interest in political processes.

There is a weak negative correlation between political membership and extraversion ($r = -0.84$), but not significant. This suggests that extroverted individuals do not have a significant relationship with political membership. A negative and significant relationship exists between political membership and agreeableness ($r = -0.173$, $p < 0.01$). More agreeable individuals may avoid political membership. This is attributed to the fact that compliant individuals avoid conflicts. A negative and significant relationship exists between political membership and responsibility ($r = -0.102$, $p < 0.05$). Responsible individuals may be more reluctant to participate in political organizations. A negative and significant relationship exists between political membership and openness ($r = -0.181$, $p < 0.01$). Open-minded individuals may be less enthusiastic about political membership. These individuals may evaluate different ideas and stay away from organizational commitment. A very weak negative, non-significant relationship exists between political membership and neuroticism ($r = -0.035$). This shows that neurotic personality traits have no significant relationship with political membership.

As a result, voter interest is most positively related to extraversion, openness, and political membership. Extroverted and open-minded individuals are more interested in political processes, while politically active individuals are more interested in politics. Political membership is negatively related to agreeableness, responsibility, and openness. This finding suggests that more agreeable, responsible, or open-minded individuals are less likely to join political organizations.

4. THE MODERATING ROLE OF VOTER INTEREST IN THE EFFECT OF FIVE-FACTOR PERSONALITY ON POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP

In order to examine the moderating role of voter interest in the effect of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism dimensions of five-factor personality traits on political membership, regression analysis was performed in the SPSS PROCESS program. Model 1, proposed by Preacher and Hayes, was used in the analysis (Preacher and Hayes, 2008: 883). However, since Preacher and Hayes' model does not include more than one independent variable, each independent variable was analysed separately, and the moderating role of voter interest in its effect on political membership was examined. For example, after analysing the

The moderating role of voter interest in the effect of extraversion on political knowledge and the moderating role of voter interest in the effect of agreeableness on political knowledge were examined. In this way, each independent variable was analysed individually, and its effects were examined separately. The effects of independent variables on political membership are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: The Effect of Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable

| Independent Variable | Dependent Variable | B | t | S.H. | Lower Limit | Upper Limit | P |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------|---------|------|-------------|-------------|------|
| Extraversion | Voter Engagement | -0.49 | -3.5598 | 0.14 | -0.7687 | -0.2219 | 0.00 |
| Compatibility | | -0.52 | -3.7025 | 0.14 | -0.8030 | -0.2462 | 0.00 |
| Responsibility | | -0.41 | -3.2942 | 0.12 | -0.6589 | -0.1665 | 0.00 |
| Openness | | -0.54 | -4.0402 | 0.13 | -0.8049 | -0.2781 | 0.00 |
| Neuroticism | | -0.14 | -1.1830 | 0.13 | -0.3985 | 0.0990 | 0.24 |

When Table 7 is analysed, it is seen that extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism dimensions negatively affect political membership ($p < 0.05$). The neuroticism dimension does not significantly affect political membership ($p > 0.05$). After

analysing the effects of the five-factor personality inventory dimensions on political membership, the moderating effect of voter interest on the effect of these dimensions on political membership was examined. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Regularisation Analysis Results

| Independent Variable | Regulatory Variable | Dependent Variable | R ² | F | p |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------|------|
| Extraversion | Voter Engagement | Political Membership | 0.0156 | 7.8171 | 0.00 |
| Compatibility | | | 0.0095 | 4.8507 | 0.03 |
| Responsibility | | | 0.0122 | 6.0873 | 0.01 |
| Openness | | | 0.0097 | 4.9973 | 0.02 |
| Neuroticism | | | 0.0013 | 0.6365 | 0.42 |

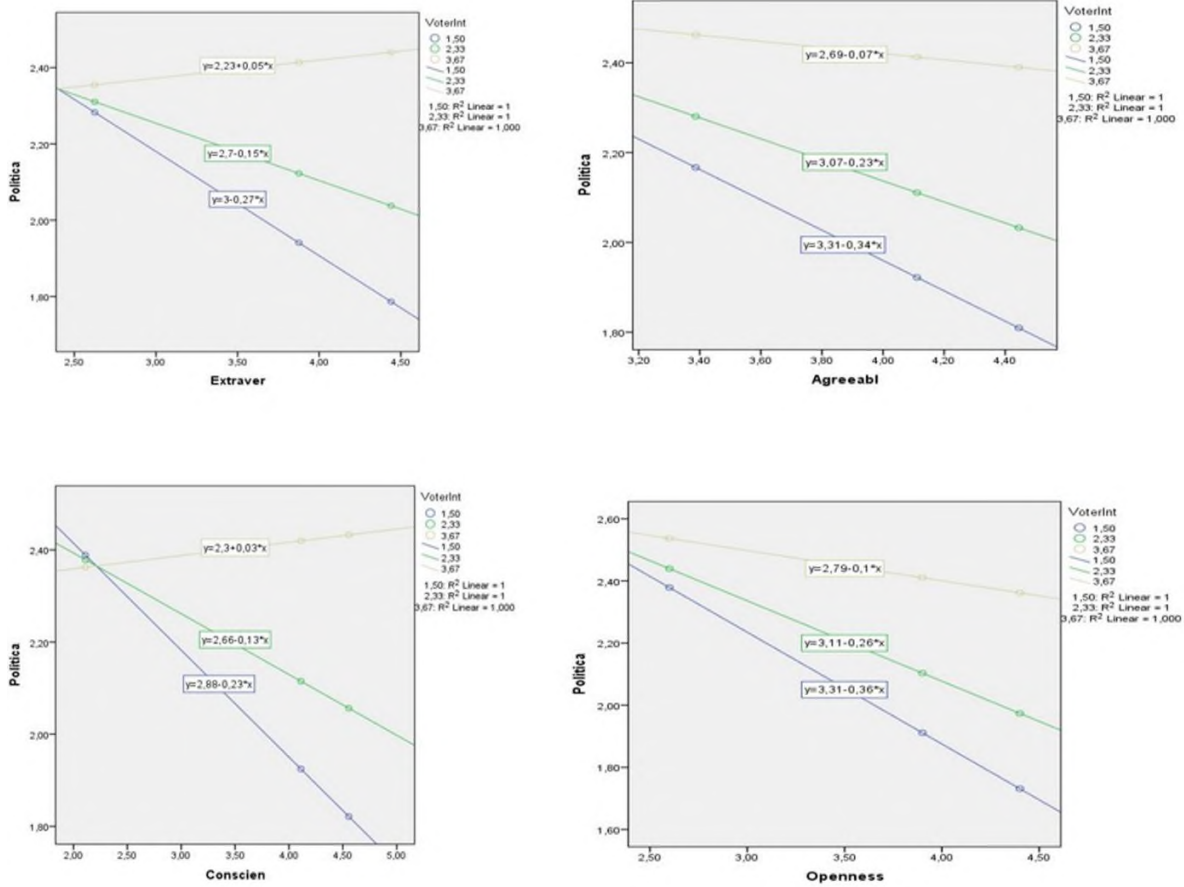
When Table 8 is analysed, it is seen that voter interest has a moderating role in the relationship between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness, and political membership ($p < 0,05$). There is no moderating role in the relationship between neuroticism and political membership ($p > 0,05$). In the next stage, the direction and magnitude of the moderating role were analysed. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Direction of the Regulatory Effect of Voter Interest

| Extraversion-Voter Interest-Political Affiliation | | | | | |
|--|--------|------|------|-------------|-------------|
| Extraversion | Impact | s.h. | p | Lower Limit | Upper Limit |
| 1.50 | -0.27 | 0.07 | 0.00 | -0.4175 | -0.1293 |
| 2.33 | -0.15 | 0.05 | 0.01 | -0.2586 | -0.0416 |
| 3.67 | 0.05 | 0.09 | 0.58 | -0.1221 | 0.2163 |
| Compatibility-Voter Interest-Political Affiliation | | | | | |
| Compatibility | Impact | s.h. | p | Lower Limit | Upper Limit |
| 1.50 | -0.34 | 0.07 | 0.00 | -0.4784 | -0.1976 |
| 2.33 | -0.23 | 0.05 | 0.00 | -0.3418 | -0.1268 |
| 3.67 | -0.07 | 0.09 | 0.47 | -0.2531 | 0.1162 |
| Responsibility-Voter Interest-Political Affiliation | | | | | |
| Responsibility | Impact | s.h. | p | Lower Limit | Upper Limit |
| 1.50 | -0.23 | 0.06 | 0.00 | -0.3577 | -0.1066 |
| 2.33 | -0.13 | 0.05 | 0.00 | -0.2252 | -0.0384 |
| 3.67 | 0.03 | 0.08 | 0.72 | -0.1263 | 0.1837 |
| Openness-Voter Interest-Political Affiliation | | | | | |
| Openness | Impact | s.h. | p | Lower Limit | Upper Limit |
| 1.50 | -0.36 | 0.07 | 0.00 | -0.4939 | -0.2256 |
| 2.33 | -0.26 | 0.05 | 0.00 | -0.3661 | -0.1515 |
| 3.67 | -0.10 | 0.09 | 0.30 | -0.2814 | 0.0869 |

When Table 9 is analysed, as voter interest increases, the negative effect of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness on political membership decreases and disappears. The moderating effect of voter interest is also shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Regulatory Impact



In other words, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness significantly negatively affect voter interest at low and medium levels of political membership. This shows that these personality traits decrease voter interest at low and medium levels of political membership. For all personality traits, the effects are no longer significant. In other words, personality traits have no significant effect on voter interest at high levels of political membership. These results show that the effect of personality traits. Voter interest decreases and eventually becomes insignificant as political membership increases.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, the effects of various personality traits were analysed in the context of the relationship between voter interest and political membership in a political group or party, which is one of the actions toward political struggle among the types of political participation. The results show that voter interest is positively and significantly related to certain personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness). Extraverted, agreeable, responsible, and open-minded individuals are more interested in political processes. Social and open-minded tendencies such as extraversion, agreeableness, and openness may increase individuals' interest in politics. In contrast, personality traits such as conscientiousness and agreeableness positively contribute to the political process. In this sense, these findings of the study support hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H6 and H7. On the other hand, a significant but weak positive relationship was found between neuroticism and voter interest, which indicates that neurotic individuals have low interest in politics due to their anxiety. This finding does not support the hypothesis H5.

When the relationship between political membership and various personality traits is examined, it is seen that traits such as agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness hurt political membership; that is, individuals with these traits tend to avoid political organizations. This finding does not support hypothesis H8 except extraversion. However, extraversion and neuroticism have no significant relationship with political membership. This finding also supports hypothesis H9 in a sense. In other words, significant negative relationships have been observed between political membership and some personality traits; agreement, conscientiousness, and openness have come to the fore as traits that decrease political membership tendencies. Moreover, as the level of political membership increases, the effect of personality traits on voter interest decreases, indicating that political participation can become independent of individuals' characteristics. This situation suggests that high levels of political participation bring individuals to a more homogenous level of interest. In a sense, these findings of the study are similar to Mondak and Halperin (2008), Gallego et al. (2012), Gerber et al. (2012), Shang et al. (2013), Ha et al. (2013), Weinschenk et al. (2014), Erdinç (2018), Lindell et al. (2018), who concluded that personality traits affect all dimensions of political participation

Another study result shows that political affiliation modulates the effect of traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness on voter interest, but neuroticism does not have such an effect.

When the moderating role of voter interest is analysed, it is observed that the adverse effects of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness on political membership decrease as voter interest increases, and these effects become insignificant at high levels of voter interest. This finding suggests that high voter interest may increase political membership independent of individuals' personality traits. These results show that the effect of personality traits on voter interest decreases and eventually becomes insignificant as the level of political membership increases. This indicates that individuals can stabilize their voter interest independent of their personality traits as political membership increases. This result of the study is similar to the results of Wang et al. (2019), who emphasize that political interest and partisanship play a mediating role in the relationship between personality traits and turnout. As a result, it is revealed that personality traits and political membership are effective in political interest and participation processes, but the effect of personality weakens with increasing political membership.

This study has some limitations. Although using online questionnaires enables researchers to reach a broader range of participants, it only allows access to individuals with internet access. Even if the sample size is at a level that can represent the research population, it is impossible to say that the results obtained reflect the country in general. In addition, since participants may encounter many distractions during online surveys, it may be difficult for them to pay sufficient attention and care to the survey questions. Online surveys are also prone to misinformation, and it is difficult to determine the accuracy of the demographic information provided by the respondents. For these reasons, the margin of error associated with the method may be high.

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