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Voter Religiosity Promoting Party-Voter Congruence on the 'Super Issue' in Turkey

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Abstract: This research was set out to explore empirically party-voter congruence on the 'super issue' of Left-Right (L-R) ideological positioning from a responsiveness perspective in Turkey. It aims to reveal the extent political parties respond to voters' movement in the ideological spectrum and the role of voter religiosity in determining the magnitude of this response. This research covers a period exceeding half a century consisting past eighteen general elections held between 1950 and 2018. It combines party-level and individual-level data acquired from Manifesto Project (MP) and World Values Survey (WVS) datasets respectively. Findings suggest that voter religiosity plays an important role in maintaining party-voter ideological correspondence in Turkey. The level of voter religiosity determines the extent political parties align themselves with their own voters' ideological preference as well as dealign themselves from that of the most voted rival political party voters.

Keywords: Political representation, party-voter congruence, ideology, religiosity, Turkish politics.

Seçmen Dindarlığı Türkiye'de 'Süper Mesele' Üzerindeki Parti-Seçmen Uyumunu Destekliyor


Öz: Bu araştırma Türkiye'de Sol-Sağ ideolojik konumlanma 'süper meselesine' ilişkin parti-seçmen uyumunu cevap verebilirlik perspektifinden ampirik olarak araştırmak için yapılmıştır. Çalışma siyasi partilerin seçmenlerin ideolojik yelpazedeki hareketlerine ne ölçüde cevap verdiğini ve bu cevabın büyüklüğünü belirlemede seçmen dindarlığının rolünü ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu araştırma, 1950 ile 2018 yılları arasında yapılan on sekiz genel seçimden oluşan yarım asrı aşan bir dönemi kapsamaktadır. Araştırma sırasıyla Manifesto Projesi ve Dünya Değerler Araştırması veri setlerinden elde edilen parti düzeyinde ve bireysel düzeydeki verileri birleştirmektedir. Bulgular Türkiye'de parti-seçmen ideolojik uyumunun sağlanmasında seçmen dindarlığının önemli bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir. Seçmen dindarlığı düzeyi siyasi partilerin kendi seçmenlerinin ideolojik tercihlerine ne ölçüde uyum sağladığını ve aynı zamanda en çok oy alan rakip siyasi parti seçmenlerinininkinden ne ölçüde uyumsuzlaştığını belirlemektedir.


Anahtar Kelimeler: Siyasi temsil, parti-seçmen uyumu, ideoloji, dindarlık, Türk siyaseti.

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I. Introduction

Representativeness is a dominant feature of contemporary democratic systems. Today, it is impossible to think of a modern democratic entity without thinking of it. According to Spatial Theories of Representation, party-voter congruence is a reliable indicator of representativeness. Although a considerable amount of scholarly attention has been paid to the congruence topic, mechanisms underlying it have not yet been fully understood. Aiming to fulfil this need, this research investigates the role of voter religiosity on party-voter ideological consonance from responsiveness perspective in Turkey. The findings of this research contribute to the literature in several ways. First, as an important novelty, this research does not only compare parties' L-R positions with those of their own voters, but also with those of their most voted rival party voters. In other words, this research extends the traditional congruence understanding that is between L-R positions of the parties and that of their own voters to a point which consists of (in)congruence between L-R positions of the parties and that of their most voted rival party voters. Second, despite the fact that the importance of religiosity on voter preference has been largely recognized in the literature, there remains a paucity of evidence regarding the effect of religiosity on party-voter congruence. To my knowledge, this study is the first research attempt to investigate this effect. It shows that voters' attendance at religious services bolsters ideological representation in Turkey. Third, as one of the first scholarly attempts being conducted on responsiveness of Turkish political parties, the findings of this research help understanding the representation equation in Turkey. Turkey is an interesting case to study congruence and religiosity as its determinant. Political congruence is a highly ignored topic in Turkish political science circles. Far too little scholarly attention has been paid to understanding the congruence phenomenon. Literature is limited to thermometer studies providing descriptive findings, but the existing accounts fail to resolve relationships behind the numbers. Only a limited number of scholarly studies investigated the topic which have accused Turkish political parties of not being congruent to voter preferences (İnan, 2020). Yet, the aetiology of inconsonance awaits to be revealed. Thus, this research can be read by the audience as one of the early attempts to structure the model to handle this disaccord.

Not much different than in many corners of the world, yet perhaps recently emerging as an even more powerful factor than it is in other countries, religion has always had an important role in Turkish politics. Turkish population is a religious one in general. More than 90% of people in Turkey state that they believe in God, Afterlife and Hell/Heaven (Çarkoğlu & Kalaycıoğlu, 2009). Between the years 1999 and 2007, Turkish people became more religious and people's advocacy of the idea that religion can be utilized as a means of politics has increased. Yet, this should not be regarded as an alarming situation for Turkish democracy since the majority of the public neither opposes a secular state system nor support a theocratical one. On the contrary, the rate of people supporting a state system which is based on theocratical law is decreasing. Sharia state supporters declined from 21% to 9% between the years 1999 and 2007 (Keyman, 2007; Çarkoğlu & Toprak, 2007). In Turkey, periodical discontinuities of the political system, decreased confidence in then-incumbent centre left and right parties following the 1999 Earthquake and the 2001 economic crisis as well as pro-Islamist parties' (Welfare and Felicity) endeavour to service in municipalities have attracted voters' attention to these newly emerged parties. Following the empowerment of these parties in the local elections of

1990s and especially Justice and Development Party's (JDP) coming to power in early 2000s, it has become extremely difficult to ignore the role of religion in voting behaviour of the Turkish electorate. In the year 2002, a new phase was opened in Turkish politics. Starting with the first legislative election in 2002, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's JDP won the plurality of the vote in six elections in a row following its foundation. The JDP played its political game quite differently from its forerunner parties. It strongly supported the EU membership, reforming the human rights system, civil, and economic rights and liberties, and further liberalization of the economy especially in the early years of its government. Yet, the party failed to establish contact with many segments of the society, including secular, educated, white-collar individuals living in metropolitan city centres, youngsters and artists. The JDP was frequently blamed by its opponents for increasing the role of religion in Turkish politics and using it to seize electoral support.

As the role of religiosity in Turkish politics is in the academic spotlight recently, this research was conducted to this body of knowledge by exploring whether religiosity effects party-voter congruence in Turkey. It is divided into five sections. The following theory section gives a brief overview of topics; representation, congruence, the super issue of L-R political positioning and the role of religiosity in Turkish political system. The third section introduces the data and the methodology of the research. The fourth section presents the results of the analysis of the data. The fifth section discusses and justifies the findings in a greater theoretical perspective.

II. Party-Voter Congruence and Religiosity

Congruence is a central term for representation. It represents an accord between the representatives and the represented. Spatial Theories of Representation suggest that voters tend to vote for representatives whom holds ideas which are closest to their own. On the other hand, Responsible Party Model argues that representatives tend to take voters' preferences into consideration in policy making processes (Achen, 1978; Converse & Pierce, 1986; Dalton, 1985; Miller et al., 1999; Schmitt & Thomassen, 1999; Downs, 1957; Riker & Ordershook, 1968; Budge, 1994; McDonald & Budge, 2005). Empirical literature followed two major roads to investigate congruence. While students of descriptive representation, which is also known as vote-seat or mirror representation, focused on correspondence between race, ethnic and religious backgrounds, social class, gender and etc. of voters and of their representatives (Rae, 1967); studies of substantial representation measured concert between behaviours, attitudes and preferences of voters and policy preferences of their representatives (Miller & Stokes 1963; Mansbridge, 1999; Powell, 2004; 2006). In the congruence literature, different lines of research focused on voter correspondence with different representatives. A line of research focused on correspondence between voters and legislators (Powell & Vanberg, 2000; McDonald & Budge, 2005) another series of studies explored accordance between voters and governments (Huber & Powel, 1994; McDonald, Mendes & Budge, 2004; Powell, 2006; Golder & Stramski, 2007) and a third group of studies concentrated on consonance between voters and parties (Blais & Bodet, 2006; Budge & McDonald 2007; Golder & Stramski, 2010; Huber & Powell, 1994; Klingemann et al., 2006; McDonald et al., 2004; Powell & Vanberg, 2000; Warwick, 2010; Ezrow, 2010; Busch, 2016). Congruence can be gauged by measures of proximity, centrism and responsiveness. While proximity corresponds to convergence of issue positions between voters and representatives, centrism represents the degree of agreement between voters' issue points and that of their representatives and responsiveness gauges the extent political parties respond to

movements to the changes in the position of their voters (Achen, 1978; Brooks & Manza, 2006; Soroka & Wlezien, 2010; Wlezien, 2004).

In the studies of substantial representation, one key approach is to compare voters and their representatives in terms of their ideological placement on a continuum ranging from far left to far right. On this continuum, far left and far right are situated in the opposite poles of a two-dimensional ideological axis and central political position is represented by the middle point. For its usefulness to summarize a wide range of issues in one single dimension, left-right continuum is suggested as an instrument reflecting the primary dimension of political conflict (Huber & Inglehart, 1995) and has been used frequently in quantitative studies of representation (Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976; Huber & Inglehart, 1995; Dalton, 1985; Huber, 1989; Laver & Budge, 1992; Gabel & Huber, 2000; Budge et al., 2001). One of the most important reasons why ideological continuum is useful is that it is understood quite similarly by elites and masses in many countries of the world which allows carrying out comparative studies (Powell & Vanberg, 2000; Huber & Powell, 1994). The left and right concepts are intrinsic to the Western thinking of democracy and thus well understood by the publics of the Western countries. The concepts are useful for helping voters, especially those with low level of political knowledge and sophistication, to understand complex, multifaceted and cross-cutting policy platforms of parties and candidates as well as for providing parties and candidates ideological justification (Geser, 2008; Benoit & Laver, 2006). Research on the correspondence between L-R continuum and substantial matters reveal that at least ten main issues of politics could be linked to the concepts of left and right (Huber & Inglehart, 1995). Nevertheless, the appropriateness of using L-R continuum in congruence studies does not remain free of criticism. It was suggested that the meaning of the concepts left and right differ both temporarily and spatially (Benoit & Laver, 2006). Some studies reported minor differences between the elite and mass understandings of the left-right system (Rivero, 2004). It was also shown that all the respondents do not always perceive the continuum in the same way. Political cognition and political participation in the form of voting are known to effect correct understanding of concepts left and right significantly (Aldrich, 1977; Palfrey & Poole, 1987; Badescu & Sum, 2005; Benoit & Laver, 2006). The L-R continuum was also criticized on the grounds that the scale predicts the matters of the left dimension better than those of the right dimension (Geser, 2008). Despite these critics, it should be noted that the L-R thinking still continues to shape our understanding of the political divide in many countries of the world. Turkey is no exception in this regard. The usage of concepts of left and right is similar in Turkey to the usage in economically advanced democracies of the West. For long, the Turkish political environment has been depicted by the instrumentality of Centre-Periphery axis (Mardin, 1973). On this axis while Centre represents well-organized, secular, pro-Western civil and military bureaucrats, who founded the Republic; Periphery represents unorganized, traditional, religious large masses. In this model, Centre and Periphery are depicted as two mutually-exclusive concepts and the Centre as being in the claim of modernizing the Periphery. The balance of power is suggested being in favour of the former and this imbalance is further strengthened by strong state tradition and weak society in Turkey (Sayarı, 1978; Keyman & İçduygu, 2005). Obviously, as it was heavily inspired from 'The Great Dichotomy' of the Classical Modernization theory, the Centre and the Periphery were suggested to be opposing in many regards (Lerner, 1958; Lipset, 1961; Inkeles & Smith 1975). The model was praised by many students of Turkish politics so far (Özbudun, 1975; 1981;

Heper, 1985) but recently, it has been argued that L-R distinction is becoming a more powerful instrument to understand Turkish political cleavage than Mardinian Centre-Periphery divide (Çarkoğlu, 1998). It could be argued that the main axis of Turkish politics now is formed between left wing pro-European, secular political parties mostly supported by well-educated and pro-Western voters who adopt a secular way of living and right-wing traditional and conservative political parties mostly supported by pious voters. While the Republican Peoples' Party (RPP), the Social Democracy Party (SODEP), the Social Democratic Populist Party (SPP), the Democratic Left Party (DLP) represent different major shades of the first political line; the Democratic Party (DP), the Justice Party (JP), the True Path Party (TPP), the Motherland Party (MP), the Virtue Party (VP) and the Justice and Development Party (JDP) can be counted as some prominent member parties of the latter political tradition (Kalaycıoğlu, 2008).

But where does religiosity stand in this two-dimensional contrast? Religiosity has been broadly studied in the literature as a factor underlying voting behaviour (Raymond, 2011, Gibbs, 2005). Its effect on voting behaviour has also been confirmed in Turkish politics. It is now well established from a variety of studies that religiosity effects many political attitudes and behaviour in Turkey. The main finding of these research attempts was to assess the importance of secularist/pro-Islamist divide to understand politics in Turkey. Supporters of right-wing parties in Turkey are more religious than supporters of left-wing parties (Çarkoğlu & Hinnich 2006; Çarkoğlu 2007; 2012; Çarkoğlu & Toprak, 2007; Akarca & Tansel, 2007; Kalaycıoğlu, 2008; Çarkoğlu & Kalaycıoğlu, 2009). In some of these studies, religiosity was suggested bolstering the L-R distinction. The religion-sauced L-R divide was even given a name, 'a` la Turca L-R' (Çarkoğlu & Hinnich, 2006, p. 24). Thus, if religiosity is a strong distinguishing feature of L-R distinction, it would not be surprising to achieve empirical support for a religiosity effect on party-voter congruence. This is a topic that surprisingly have not attracted sufficient empirical attention. For that reason, a need for an investigation gauging relationship operating from religiosity to representativeness of political parties in Turkey is clear. To meet this need and communicate with the above theoretical debate, this research will ask following research questions and suggest following hypotheses corresponding to them in order to analytically investigate the representativeness of Turkish political parties in Turkey and the role of religiosity in this regard.

RQ: Do political parties respond to their own voters' as well as their most voted rival political party voters' moves on the ideological spectrum and is this response affected by the presence of voter religiosity in the equation?

The first hypothesis suggests that political parties' change of ideological positioning is positively and statistically significantly affected by their own voters' change of ideological positioning.

H1: *Political parties give significant consenting response to their own voters' move on the ideological continuum.*

The additional hypothesis to the first hypothesis suggests that when religiosity of the voters is included in the equation, the positive and significant effect of own voter move on party move becomes nil.

H1_1: *Political parties' significant consenting response to their voters' ideological move becomes insignificant when voter religiosity is controlled.*

As discussed above, this research aims to explore party-rival party voter congruence sphere too. In parallel to this objective, the second hypothesis suggests that political parties' change of ideological positioning is negatively and statistically significantly associated with their rival political party voters' change of ideological positioning.

H2: *Political parties give significant dissenting response to their rival political party voters' move on the ideological continuum.*

The additional hypothesis to the second hypothesis suggests that when religiosity of the voters is included in the equation, the negative and significant effect of rival party voter move on party move becomes nil.

H2_1: *Political parties' significant dissenting response to their rival political party voters' ideological move becomes insignificant when voter religiosity is controlled.*

III. Data and Methods

A great deal of previous research focuses on party-voter congruence by matching parties' and their voters' left-right ideological positions. The ideological positions are assessed quantitatively using party-level and aggregated voter-level issue points (Laver & Budge, 1992; Poole & Rosenthal, 1985; Gabel & Huber, 2000; Blais & Bodet, 2006; Powell, 2009; Golder & Stramski, 2010; Bakker, Jolly & Polk 2012; Powell & Vanberg 2000; Van der Eijk, 2001; İnan, 2020). Following the same analytical strategy, the current research matches parties' L-R positions with those of their voters'. Additionally, it also matches, party L-R positions with their most voted rival party voters' L-R positions. By doing so, this research extends the congruence problem to the rival party voter sphere. This research also involves the religiosity of voters on the representation equation and shows that voters' attendance at religious services promotes ideological representation in Turkey.

In the congruence literature, there are three basic ways of measuring party positions: content analysis of party manifestos and other party documents (Kim & Fording, 1998; 2002; 2003; McDonald, Mendes & Budge, 2004; Budge et al., 1987), the analysis of voter survey data on party positions (Huber, 1989; Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976) and the analysis of political expert or politician survey data by means of expert-coded or computer-coded content analysis (Benoit & Laver, 2006; Laver, Benoit & Garry, 2003). The superiority of any measure to the others has been searched previously. Some results showed that manifesto documents are reliable sources of political orientations. Parties tend to fulfil the majority of their promises they state in their manifesto documents (Budge & Hofferbert, 1990; Budge et al., 1987). Some critics of this view argued that the expert perception of party positions seems to be more accurate than scales produced based on manifesto documents because they contain smaller measurement error (Benoit & Laver, 2006). Another criticism levelled for the use of manifesto documents while evaluating party positions was that voters do not read manifesto documents before voting (Kim & Fording, 1998). Nevertheless, most measures reveal similar results in showing party positions. Yet, matching them with voter positions requires attention. As responsiveness measures to what extent parties move their policy positions in response to moves in their voters' preferences, it is clear that the former needs to be the dependent and the latter the independent variable (Brooks & Manza, 2006; Soroka & Wleziën, 2010; Wleziën, 2004).

Quantitative methods were used in this paper. Quantitative methods are useful in order to analyse parties' ideological responses to voters' ideological moves. As the dependent variable of this research is a continuous one, Ordinary Least Square (OLS) technique was employed as the method of our analysis. This research combines two data sources to achieve the final dataset. The first one, the WVS, is collected by the World Values Survey Association in order to observe changes in societal values, political attitudes and orientations, attitudes towards religion, etc. in around 100 countries of the world which holds almost 90% of the world population. The WVS has started in 1981 and since then six rounds of surveys has been completed (Inglehart et al., 2020). Here, the final dataset was obtained from six legs of the Turkish Values Survey that were conducted between the years 1990 and 2012. Surveys collected data from respondents aged 18 and over. The 'no answer' and 'don't know' answers were set to missing and all the cases holding missing values for any variable of interest were deleted. The final dataset holds 2,273 cases. Answers given to the question that asks 'which party would you vote for if there were a national election tomorrow?' and to the question asking about the respondents' birth year were together used for aggregating respondents according to their political party preferences at the time of each election. Subtracting eighteen, which is the legal voting age in Turkey from the election year, an election-year dyad was assigned to each voter. Those who were at the age of 18 and over in the election year and voted for one of the two most voted political parties in that election were labelled as the voter of the relevant party for the relevant election year. The third question that was used from the WVS is the one inquiring how often voters attend to religious services on a seven-point scale. It was treated as a continuous variable and aggregated on the relevant party-election year dyad.

Traditionally, voter positions are assessed either by the mean or median. Although mean is very practical in determining grassroots positions, a major problem with the mean is related to weight. While taking the mean political position of a party's constituency, those who fall beyond the average are being represented by greater weights. In other words, mean gives greater weight to issue positions of whom are far from the majority (Achen, 1978). However, in democratic theory, it is assumed that the power of each vote is equal while determining the shape of government. The median is regarded as a plausible alternative to overcome this problem since the median voters' position is the only position which cannot be defeated by any majority (Huber & Powell, 1994; Powell & Vanberg, 2000). Nevertheless, in this research mean is used to assess voter positions. The reason underlying selection of the mean over the median is that especially for grassroots value aggregation, when the number of cases is huge, mean gives more appropriate scores than the median. In a research in which party policy positions are identified with non-integer numbers, identifying citizen positions in a similar way provides more robust results (Golder & Stramski, 2010; Costello, Thomassen & Rosema, 2012; Belchior, 2013; Önnudóttir, 2014).

The second data source, Manifesto Project Data was collected by the Manifesto Research Group by scanning manifestos of about a thousand political parties from over 50 countries from 1945 until today in order to assign their policy positions on a wide range of fields. Manifesto Project analyses party manifestos from one election to another on a sentence-by-sentence basis and by using expert coders quantify parties' substantive positions on a broad range of issues (Laver & Garry, 2000). Data for two most voted Turkish political parties of all relevant elections were recruited from this dataset. Party supporters' survey data and expert evaluations of party manifestos were matched to

illustrate the extent policy positions of the parties line up with the policy preferences of the electorate.

For the analysis of this research, nine variables were constructed using the two datasets. While six individual-level variables were obtained from the WVS data, three party-level variables were recruited from the MP one. (1) Voter L-R, (2) voter attendance at religious services (3) voter education level (4) voter income level (5) voter age and (6) female ratio in the relevant constituency were taken from the WVS and aggregated to the party-election year dyad. Three party-level variables that are (1) election year, and (2) party L-R positioning (3) most voted rival party L-R positioning were culled from the MP data.

As the individual and party level variables are at hand now, we can turn to explain the selection of dependent, independent and control variables. As explained above, this research aims to understand to what extent ideological positioning of parties responds to that of the voters. As can be understood, an appropriate empirical strategy to employ here is to use party ideological position as the dependent and voter ideological position as the key independent variable. Following identifying these two elements of the equation then comes the attendance to religious attendance variable which was used as a proxy for religiosity. It will be observed in terms of its impact on the relationship between independent and dependent variables. It is known that attendance at religious services is not always a good indicator of religiosity as young respondents are to follow school curricula and cannot follow prayers regularly even if they would like to or old respondents could be suffering from physical problems or women who do not traditionally go to the mosques for five-time prayers in Turkey. Nevertheless, it is still the best available measurement at hand as it measures a behaviour. As expected, variables like education, income, age and gender are known to be significant factors of voter preference in Turkey (Çarkoğlu, 2012; Kalaycıoğlu, 1994) which need to be controlled to identify pure effects of the variables of interest on the dependent variable.

Some final data-specific modifications were made before reaching the final data set which was made up of 36 election year-party dyads. The first political election of modern Turkey was opted out from the dataset since the results of that election are generally considered untrustworthy. Another modification was that the Democratic Party (DP) and Justice Party (JP) supporters' values were assigned by using older supporters of the True Path Party (TPP) who were eligible to vote during the years of elections that these parties took part. Democratic Party (DP) and Justice Party (JP) were powerful parties in the elections took place between 1950 and 1973 but in the years when the WVS surveys were conducted both parties were closed and their political legacy was inherited by True Path Party (TPP). The same procedure was applied for Social Democracy Party (SODEP) for which Social Democratic Populist Party (SDPP) constituency values were used.

IV. Findings

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the first and the second most voted parties and their voters in 18 general elections in Turkey

Birthyear(<	Election Year	Party Rank	Party Abb.	Vote Share (%)	Party L-R	Voter L-R	Voter Att. Rel. Serv.	Voter Education	Voter Income Level	Voter Age	Voter Gender Distribution (% of females)
1932	1950	1	DP	52.67	44.60	8.00	5.44	2.55	3.50	69.27	50
1932	1950	2	RPP	39.45	-5.10	3.53	3.50	4.30	4.19	74.11	34
1936	1954	1	DP	57.61	44.60	7.81	5.21	2.37	3.43	66.59	21
1936	1954	2	RPP	35.35	2.80	3.54	3.64	4.09	4.12	72.67	38
1939	1957	1	DP	47.87	44.60	7.70	5.29	2.51	3.48	64.72	23
1939	1957	2	RPP	41.09	21.20	3.58	3.73	3.95	4.14	71.02	41
1943	1961	1	RPP	36.72	-3.60	4.03	5.29	3.54	4.10	69.12	41
1943	1961	2	JP	34.78	-8.90	7.62	5.28	2.44	3.50	61.13	25
1947	1965	1	JP	52.87	-14.90	7.53	5.23	2.36	3.50	59.30	32
1947	1965	2	RPP	28.75	-15.80	4.15	3.55	3.68	3.98	66.86	44
1951	1969	1	JP	46.53	2.50	7.40	5.12	2.41	3.54	56.43	35
1951	1969	2	RPP	27.36	-2.60	4.00	3.41	3.86	4.30	63.38	40
1955	1973	1	RPP	33.29	-19.50	4.02	3.38	3.91	4.25	59.97	38
1955	1973	2	JP	29.82	0.60	7.43	4.96	2.37	3.43	53.94	39
1959	1977	1	RPP	41.38	-19.10	3.88	3.18	4.08	4.38	56.57	40
1959	1977	2	JP	36.87	31.40	7.43	4.83	2.43	3.43	50.45	43
1965	1983	1	MP	45.14	6.50	6.70	4.03	3.06	3.81	45.31	54
1965	1983	2	PP	30.46	-13.60	3.62	3.10	4.36	4.56	51.33	40
1969	1987	1	MP	36.31	5.20	6.65	3.95	3.11	3.82	43.09	54
1969	1987	2	SDP	24.74	-4.50	3.98	2.75	3.52	4.11	38.25	50
1973	1991	1	TPP	27.03	14.49	7.17	4.56	2.73	3.43	42.35	48
1973	1991	2	MP	24.01	8.63	6.53	3.78	3.15	3.80	40.08	58
1977	1995	1	WP	21.38	33.48	7.75	5.48	2.87	3.57	37.64	45
1977	1995	2	MP	19.65	29.94	6.50	3.71	3.25	3.84	38.41	60
1981	1999	1	DLP	22.19	19.32	4.17	3.31	3.70	3.96	38.42	44
1981	1999	2	NAP	17.98	28.14	7.69	4.42	3.92	3.77	36.44	36
1984	2002	1	JDP	34.28	5.19	7.48	4.61	3.48	4.50	42.05	46
1984	2002	2	RPP	19.41	-6.77	3.66	2.81	4.77	4.77	40.72	47
1989	2007	1	JDP	46.66	4.20	7.43	4.53	3.77	4.57	38.95	47
1989	2007	2	RPP	20.85	-1.18	3.73	2.81	4.91	4.85	39.17	47
1993	2011	1	JDP	49.83	-8.97	7.41	4.51	3.86	4.62	37.91	46
1993	2011	2	RPP	25.98	-19.75	3.70	2.79	4.98	4.95	38.12	47
1997	2015	1	JDP	40.87	-7.79	7.41	4.50	3.88	4.63	37.77	46
1997	2015	2	RPP	24.95	-21.49	3.71	2.79	4.98	4.96	38.02	47
2000	2018	1	JDP	42.49	-6.78	7.41	4.50	3.88	4.63	37.77	46
2000	2018	2	RPP	25.32	-29.46	3.71	2.79	4.98	4.96	38.02	47

Table 1 illustrates descriptive statistics for political parties and their voters, which ranked the first and the second in eighteen past elections in Turkey. In the table, both party-level (i.e. vote share and party L-R) and individual-level (i.e. Voter L-R, religiosity and voter education/income/age/gender) data are presented. First, it should be noted that since this is a measurement of congruence from responsiveness approach, the variables of focus, party L-R and voter L-R are not necessarily needed to be on the same scale. They were not originally on the same scale so left unchanged and not standardized. As can be seen from the table, the party voters' self-positioning on a 1-10 L-R scale fits very well with expectations. The supporters of the parties that are known to be right-wing located themselves on the right end of the L-R continuum. Voters' self-ideological positioning is also correct for the supporters of the parties that are known to be left-wing. This indicates that the concepts of left and right are well understood by the Turkish electorate. An interesting finding is that parties that are traditionally known as right-wing, sometimes sway to the left side of the continuum, yet, this ideological inappropriate position-holding seldom happens to the left-wing parties. Another outcome that can be observed from the table is that there is a significant difference between the first and the second parties' supporters' level of attendance at religious services. In line with expectations, right-wing parties' supporters are more likely to attend religious services than their left-wing counterparts.

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Table 2: Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Models Predicting Parties' L-R Position by their Own Voter's L-R position, religiosity and education/income/age/gender

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Own Voter L-R	5.89 (1.59)**	3.06 (2.87)	7.03 (2.90)*	5.75(4.23)
Own Voter Att. to Rel. Serv.		-6.75 (5.74)		3.25 (7.71)
Own Voter Education			23.74 (11.24)*	24.53 (11.55)*
Own Voter Income			-45.83 (14.05)**	-46.57 (14.35)**
Own Voter Age			0.24 (0.31)	0.16 (0.36)
Own Voter Gender (% of females)			0.33 (0.37)	0.35 (0.38)
Intercept	-30.22 (9.63)**	-41.42 (13.50)**	39.93 (57.73)	37.07 (58.93)
Adjusted R ²	0.2661	0.2743	0.4587	0.4434

Data: World Values Survey, rounds: 1990/1996/2001/2007/2011.

Number of observations: 36

Significance levels: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.

Note: Entries are coefficient scores with standard error values in parentheses.

Table 2 shows the results of four OLS regression models predicting ideological political positioning of the first and the second political parties of the past eighteen elections in Turkey by their own supporters' political positioning. The first model shows the results of a simple linear regression analysis that predicts the party position by a single variable which is the mean value of the ideological political positioning of the party's own supporters. The coefficient score indicates that each unit of move on average in the voters' mean-aggregated political positioning brings about average 5.89 unit move in the parties' political position ($\rho=0.001$). The sign of the coefficient value and the significance indicator shows that the relationship is positive and statistically significant at the 99 % level. In the second model in addition to each parties' supporters' mean self-political positioning, a variable measuring their mean frequency of attendance at religious services was added to the analysis. As related coefficient scores and significance level indicators illustrate, adding voters' attendance at religious services attenuated the power of the effect of the variable gauging the effect of voters' mean political positioning which became now insignificant ($\rho=0.295$). In the second model, voters' mean political positioning does not any more appear as a significant predictor of the parties' political positioning. To diagnose a potential multicollinearity between the voter L-R and voter religiosity variables Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) were computed and the mean VIF score appeared as 3.31. The score below 4.00 indicated that there is no multicollinearity between these two variables. Model 3 depicts the effects of several control variables on party L-R position. It is seen that only voter education ($\rho=0.043$) and voter income ($\rho=0.003$) variables exert significant effect on party ideological position while voter age ($\rho=0.441$) and voter gender (mean female %) ($\rho=0.381$) seem to have no significant effect. Yet, unlike in the second model, own voter's position is still a significant determinant of the party's position. All the socioeconomic variables together are not able to exert as a comparably powerful distorting effect as does the Own Voter Att. to Rel. Ser. on Party L-R. The next model shows the results of the full model. It now seems that voter ideological position turns again, not to exert a significant effect on the outcome variable ($\rho=0.185$). This is the same for age ($\rho=0.654$) and gender ($\rho=0.359$) while education ($\rho=0.042$) and income ($\rho=0.003$) seem to remain having significant effects.

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Table3: Ordinary Least Square(OLS) Models Predicting Parties' L-R Position by their Rival Party Voter's L-R position, religiosity and education/income/age/gender

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Rival Party Voter L-R	-3.74 (1.77)*	-5.59 (3.24)	-0.75 (3.17)	-0.37 (4.64)
Rival Party Voter Att. to Rel. Serv.		4.43 (6.48)		-0.96 (8.46)
Rival Party Voter Education			36.43 (12.30)**	36.20 (12.67)**
Rival Party Voter Income			-59.61 (15.37)**	-59.39 (15.74)**
Rival Party Voter Age			0.15 (0.33)	0.17 (0.39)
Rival Party Voter Gender (% of females)			-0.01 (0.40)	0.01 (0.42)
Intercept	25.44 (10.72)*	18.09 (15.24)	115.61 (63.15)	116.46 (64.64)
Adjusted R ²	0.0898	0.0753	0.3523	0.3303

Data: World Values Survey, rounds: 1990/1996/2001/2007/2011.

Number of observations: 36

Significance levels: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.

Note: Entries are coefficient scores with standard error values in parentheses.

Table 3 shows the results of a series OLS regression analysis aiming to reveal rival party voter's ideological position effect on the party ideological position. In the first model party political positioning is predicted by means of a simple linear regression in which the average self-political positioning of the voters of the rival political party of the same election is the sole independent variable. As the related coefficient scores and signs in the first model reveal, rival party voter's L-R positioning affects a political party's L-R positioning negatively and significantly ($\rho=0.042$). Yet, this effect turns insignificant as the religiosity variable is added in the second model. In this model, the rival party's voters' self-political positioning and frequency of attendance at religious services are used to predict the other party's political positioning. Similar to what was found in the first round of analysis, adding attendance at religious services to the model disappeared the significant predictive effect of the rival party voter's political positioning ($\rho=0.499$) (Expectedly, mean VIF score=3.31 again). Disappearance of the effect can also be observed when the control variables are added in the third model. Among control variables, only education ($\rho=0.006$) and income ($\rho=0.001$) seem to effect party L-R positioning significantly while age ($\rho=0.661$) and gender ($\rho=0.979$) seem not to affect the party ideological positioning significantly. In the full model it is seen that education ($\rho=0.008$) and income ($\rho=0.001$) are only significant determinants of party ideological positioning and religiosity ($\rho=0.910$), age ($\rho=0.667$) and gender ($\rho=0.965$) seem to have no significant effects on it.

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V. Conclusion and Discussion

This research found that party's L-R political positioning is predicted significantly in the expected directions by both their own supporters' and their rival party supporters' left-right self-political positioning. This finding supports *H1* and *H2* respectively. While parties' own supporters' average L-R self-political positioning has a positive impact, that of rival supporters has a negative one on political parties' L-R political positions. Nevertheless, when religiosity effect is controlled, it was observed that both became insignificant as suggested in *H1_1* and *H2_1*. This could mean that religiosity plays a significant role in maintaining ideological representativeness in Turkish politics between the parties and their own supporters. Voters' religiosity helps parties to ideologically align themselves with their voters. When religiosity is controlled for, political positioning of the parties does not seem to be responding to political positioning of their voters. This is also true for the negative relationship between political parties and their rival political parties' supporters. Before religiosity is controlled the rival political parties' voters' average self-political positioning was a negative and significant determinant of the parties' political positioning. When the average religiosity of the rival party supporters was controlled, so that religiosity effect was taken out of the congruence game, the significant and negative effect of rival parties' supporters' average self-ideological positioning becomes insignificant. The distorting effect of religiosity on party-voter congruence is more powerful than that of all the socioeconomic variables when the own voter position effect is considered. From these findings, it could be argued that when religiosity is in the party-voter congruence equation, voters' own parties are more congruent and rival parties are more incongruent to the voters' ideological move. On the contrary, when its effect is controlled neither own, nor rival party seem to be responsive anymore to voter ideological move. Based on this finding, further studies could easily hypothesize that religiosity brings further polarization between the parties and the voters of the parties from the opposite ideological side of the political continuum. Alternatively, other societal values could be investigated for their effect on party-voter congruence.

By having these findings at hand, it could be concluded that religiosity provides more ideological congruence between parties and their voters in Turkish political system. Interpretatively, this finding could also be telling to those searching for an answer to the question why some parties use religious arguments while trying to strengthen their loose ideological bonds with their supporters. As religion-sauced *a` la Turca* L-R suggested by Çarikoğlu & Hinnich (2006) was empirically approved in our analysis by showing that voter religiosity forces, political parties to be more responsive ideologically, falling on a side opposite to that of their voters is perhaps relatively costlier for political parties in Turkey than a similar mis-falling of those parties operating in a political environment based largely on economic matters. This could explain the increasing instrumentality of religious arguments in Turkish politics.

It should be noted that several assumptions have been made in this research. The first one was that political pledges in the manifesto documents are regarded as representative of the parties' political positioning. This may not be the case all the time though. Although it is known that political parties tend to fulfil their pledges given in the manifestos following the election, this issue seems to become more complicated when it

comes to political positioning since no party pledges an ideological ‘field-goal range’ to hold. Second assumption was that respondents of surveys understand the concepts of left and right identically. It can be argued that this assumption was proven right largely by the data though. Our descriptive findings showed that voters of both the right and left-wing parties are quite aware of their ideological side at least in a binary sense. Third assumption was that citizens and the parties view 1-10 scale the same, so a potential Differential Item Functioning (DIF) problem was simply ignored. Fourth assumption was based on the spatial theories of voting, which suggests that voters vote for the party that is closest to their own position and they vote sincerely which naturally eliminates the option for strategic voting (Powell & Vanberg, 2000). Accepting L-R political positioning as an indicator of the ideology of the voters can be regarded as the final assumption of this research (Kim & Fording, 1998). This research was not in the claim of sorting the overall representativeness problem with measuring the ideological response of parties to voters despite that the left-right political positioning is regarded widely as the ‘supper issue’, a latent variable embodying many dimensions of voter as well as party preferences (Achen, 1978; Gabel & Huber, 2000).

It should also be noted here that there are at least three problematic points in the analytical strategy adopted here. First of all, the final data are biased against senior voters who voted in earlier elections. Since the WVS surveys were conducted between the years 1990 and 2012, those seniors who took part in earlier elections may have passed away much before the survey was conducted and so not represented in the data. The second problem is that those respondents who said that if there is a national election tomorrow they would vote for a certain party were regarded as the voters of the same party in an election that was held decades ago. It is impossible to know whether these people really voted for the party they named in the survey or a different one. As understood, voter desertion is simply ignored here. Nevertheless, the party they would vote for appears to be the most educated estimation here. Maybe a relatively minor one, but the third problem with the data is that since the exact birth date of the respondents were not asked we are not able to know whether those respondents were 18 years old or a few months younger than 18, so eligible to vote, in the exact election day. With the data at hand it is impossible to overcome these three problems. However, owing to the large sample size, it is assumed that these biases will affect the reliability of the dataset minimally.

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