

Analysis And Review Of The Declarations Of Political Parties In The 2024 Local Elections In Turkey In Terms Of Municipality Activities

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the promises and projects of political parties in the 2024 local elections in Turkey in terms of basic municipal activities, social municipalism, and green municipalism. It aims to reveal the prominent municipalism approach and its reasons. The research was designed as descriptive and qualitative. Research design, document analysis, and content analysis were used. The content analysis method examined the election declarations of the AK Party (People's Alliance) and CHP, which have the highest representation rates.

Keywords: CHP, AK Parti, Türkiye, Election

INTRODUCTION

Although the traditional municipality approach is dominant, different municipality approaches may have become widespread recently. These are approaches that emphasize different functions in addition to basic activities such as a social (communal) municipality, green (eco) municipality, and e-municipality (digital). The fact that municipalities are close to the society, the diversification of the needs of the society and the necessity of providing immediate solutions and the inadequacies that may occur in the social state understanding have increased their importance. This has expanded the responsibility and service area of municipalities that currently provide services in different areas. Criteria such as service quality, infrastructure works, social projects and citizen satisfaction in the cities they manage are indicators of the success of their municipalities.

The aim of this study is to analyze the promises and projects of political parties in the 2024 local elections in Turkey in terms of basic municipality activities, social municipality and green municipality. It is aimed to reveal the prominent municipality understanding and its reasons.

The research was designed as a descriptive and qualitative research. Document analysis and content analysis were used in the research design. The election manifestos of the AK Party (The Justice and Development Party) and CHP (Republican People's Party) which have the highest representation rate, were examined using the content analysis method.

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MUNICIPALITY AND TYPES OF MUNICIPALITY

A municipality is a public institution that organizes and maintains the local administration of a specific geographical area (province, district, town) as a form of government that fulfills the service supply of local governments to society. Municipality mostly carries out the provision of activities in order to meet the basic needs of the people, to provide infrastructure services and to support local development.

A municipality is defined as a public legal entity established to meet the local and common needs of the region and the residents of the region and whose decision-making body is elected by the voters and has administrative and financial autonomy (Tortop et al. 2006; 150). Municipalities are political administrative units and their reason for existence is local preference. The established election mechanism gives municipalities a political identity (Tiyek, 2012; 62).

To solve the increasing problems and meet the needs over time, the responsibilities of local governments have been expanded and basic social aid and services such as unemployment, poverty, education, housing, and health have also begun to be provided by municipalities (Berkün, 2017:584). Municipalities are official institutions that provide public services at the city, district or town level as local government units. Municipalities in Turkey operate by the Municipality Law No. 5393 and undertake the following basic duties:

Table 1: Municipal Services

Infrastructure Services	Road, water, sewer, cleaning and waste management.
Environmental Planning and settlement	Maintenance of parks, gardens and green areas.
Social and Cultural Services	Cultural centers, libraries, sports facilities and social assistance activities.
Development and Urban Planning	Building permits, zoning plans and urban transformation projects.
Transportation and Traffic	Public transportation and traffic regulations
Health and Education Support	Public health programs, nurseries and vocational courses.

Today, municipalities play an important role in improving the quality of life of their communities through effective and sustainable management, focusing on social welfare and sustainable development. On the other hand, municipalities also have an important function in terms of social peace with the support they provide to individuals or the society as a whole. The perception of the existence of support can change the perception of events that may cause problems (Bulut and Demir, 2022:38). In this context. According to the nature of the services it highlights and offers. There are different types of municipalities;

Classical Municipality (Service Municipality):

- Focuses on providing basic infrastructure and services.
- Includes public services such as water, sewage, roads, cleaning, garbage collection.
- Operates in areas such as city planning, park and garden construction, and market place arrangements.

Social Municipality (Socialist Municipality):

- It focuses on social assistance and solidarity projects.
- It provides social services for the disabled, elderly, women, children and disadvantaged groups.
- It aims for social development by supporting education, culture and art activities.

Participatory Municipality:

- Encourages public participation in decision-making processes.
- Provides transparency through neighborhood meetings, referendums and consultation mechanisms
- Aims for citizens to directly contribute to municipal administration.

Technological Municipality (Smart Municipality):

- Modernizes services using digital and smart technologies.
- E-municipality services, mobile applications, smart transportation system

Green Municipality (Eco Municipality):

- Expresses an environmentally sensitive service approach
- Based on the goal of waste management, recycling and protection of natural resources

RESEARCH

Purpose of the Research

The aim of the research is to analyze the election promises and project targets of political parties and election alliances in the 2024 local elections on the basis of the "municipal approach". For this purpose, the targeted projects were examined in the context of "basic municipality", "social (communal) municipality" and "green municipality" and it was tried to reveal which municipality approach came to the fore in the projects of the relevant parties. In this context, it was aimed to analyze the prominent municipality approach and its reasons.

1. What are the main goals that come to the fore in the election manifestos of the parties?
2. Which understanding of municipality comes to the fore in the election manifestos of the parties?
3. What are the differences and similarities in the election manifestos of the parties?

Method of the Research

The research was designed as a descriptive and qualitative research. The research design used document analysis and content analysis. The election manifestos of the AK Party (People's Alliance) and CHP, which have the highest representation rate, were examined with the content analysis method.

Document analysis was used as the data collection tool in the research. The election manifestos of the political parties included in the research were analyzed using the "content analysis method". The data obtained as a result of the analysis were tabulated by creating themes.

Content analysis allows the researcher to be "close" to the data and is considered quite reliable since it follows systematic steps (Renz, Carrington & Badger, 2018: 825). Content analysis is one of the most common methodologies used to examine a phenomenon in qualitative research. The aim of content analysis is to discover the underlying meaning of the text by quantifying the meaning of the spoken or written language (Krippendorff, 1989). The MAXQDA qualitative analysis program was used in the analysis of the obtained data. MAXQDA is a suitable program for analyzes related to systematic reviews and meta-analysis studies (Kuckartz and Rädiker, 2021, 5). The data obtained were visualized with descriptive and relational/content analysis with the MAXQDA Qualitative Analysis program.

Sample of the Research

In the research, the election manifestos of the AK Party and CHP, which have the highest representation rate, were examined using the content analysis method. The manifestos reflect the local government visions of the parties and the promises they made to the voters.

Findings

The findings obtained as a result of the content analysis are presented in tabular form.

Table 2: Themes and Subcategories

Themes	Subcategories
Basic Municipality	Infrastructure Transportation Cleaning Urban transformation Disaster preparedness
Social Municipality	Social assistance Activities for women Activities for children Activities for the elderly Activities for the young Activities for the disabled Housing-shelter Activities for immigrants
Green Municipality	Waste management Recycling Sustainability Environmentally friendly transportation Protection of water resources and water efficiency
Technological Municipality	Digitalization E-applications

As a result of the content analysis, four types of municipalities came to the fore according to the election manifestos of the parties. Social (communal) municipality is seen as the basic municipality understanding for both parties. Support work aimed at the whole society or disadvantaged groups is more important than targeted and planned activities and projects. The reason for this is the current economic conditions and the fact that the needs of disadvantaged groups are more dramatic and urgent.

AK Party presented its local government vision with the understanding of "Real Municipality for the Cities of the Turkish Century". This vision includes urban planning, infrastructure, urban transformation, smart cities and environmentally sensitive projects. In addition, there are promises under the headings of social municipality, horizontal urbanization, management together with the people and savings-transparency. The construction of cities resistant to

earthquakes and other disasters, open data management and the encouragement of active participation of citizens in local governments were emphasized.

CHP announced its local election manifesto with the slogan "Spring at the End of March". The declaration includes promises under main headings such as democratic and effective governance, local economic development, urban and environmental policies. Among these promises, issues such as participatory governance, combating poverty, agricultural development, services for women, the elderly, the disabled, the youth and children stand out. They promise to provide rational solutions in economic development, environmentally friendly projects and transportation. Both parties have presented solution-oriented approaches to local problems such as equal service, common sense, transparent and quality service, people-oriented social municipality, effective municipality in economic development and environmentally friendly municipality.

Table 3: Word Frequency

Order	The Justice and Development Party	Republican People's Party	Sıra	The Justice and Development Party	Republican People's Party
1	Municipality	<i>Society</i>	11	Society	<i>Development-economy</i>
2	Social	<i>Social</i>	12	Innovator	<i>Production</i>
3	City	<i>Social assistance</i>	13	Economy	<i>City-local</i>
4	Town	<i>Disaster</i>	14	Family	<i>Welfare</i>
5	Human	<i>Urban transformation</i>	15	Green-sustainable	<i>Infrastructure-transport</i>
6	Social assistance	<i>Housing-shelter</i>	16	Local	<i>Sustainable-environmental-green</i>
7	Urban transformation	<i>Urbanism</i>	17	Urbanization	<i>Technology-digitalization</i>
8	Disaster	<i>Women, children, disabled, elderly</i>	18	Women, children, disabled, elderly	<i>Centralized municipality</i>
9	Service	<i>Citizen-nation-people</i>	19	Housing	<i>Justice-democracy</i>
10	Infrastructure	<i>Social Municipality</i>	20	Development	<i>Support-solidarity</i>

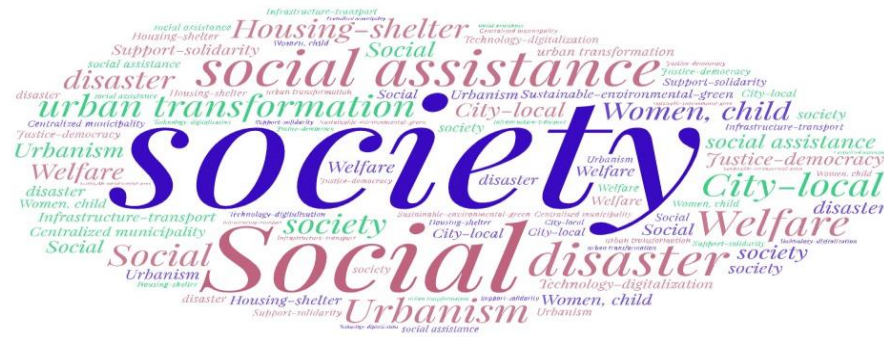
In the word frequency analysis, while the words Municipality, city and social come to the fore for the AK Party, society, disaster and development come to the fore for the CHP.

Figure 1: Justice and Development Party Word



It emphasized issues such as managing cities with digital technologies, disseminating open data management, and encouraging active participation of citizens in local governments.

Figure 2: Republican People's Party Word Cloud



With a socialist approach, principles such as social justice, transparency and participatory democracy were emphasized. In addition to creating disaster-resistant cities and urban transformation, the goal of developing urban economies was also brought to the forefront.

CONCLUSION

Municipal elections in Turkey are important processes in which political parties present their local government visions and projects to voters. Each party comes before voters with various projects and promises regarding the needs of cities. The research has shown that political parties have concrete projects and goals. However, it is seen that political parties do not justify their goals, do not present their basic foundations and feasibility. In this context, the following results are noteworthy;

- It is seen that the projects of political parties are largely similar.
- Political parties have not presented a concrete understanding of municipality.
- Political parties have not displayed an understanding that takes into account geographical differences and local (regional) characteristics within the country while determining their projects. However, the declarations have formed the basis for the candidate's (local) project creation process.
- Short and long term classification and prioritization have not been made while presenting the projects.

- The feature of associating the projects with problems or inadequacies is not discussed.
 - Green municipality and social municipality have come to the forefront in terms of municipality understanding. AK Party stands out in green municipality, CHP in social municipality.
 - The basic municipality area is insufficient. Basic municipality is continuous, and in this context, there are limited projects.
 - Parties have not created and explained stakeholders and collaborations while determining their projects.
 - Parties have tended to classify in the context of demographic institutions while creating their projects. In this context, young people and the elderly have come to the fore.
 - Projects mainly target service delivery, production and resource generation are not included.
- In the election manifestos, the most used words were municipality, city, social and urban. It is seen that the parties aim to serve with a social municipality approach, and that transparency, accountability and a management approach that is intertwined with the public are highlighted in municipality. However, each party's manifesto should be evaluated within itself and by considering the long-term effects of the local government vision.

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