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POVERTY, SOCIAL AID AND ELECTORAL CLIENTELISM IN TURKEY: THE CASE OF ZEYTINBURNU

Cemre Özdemir

118674013

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cemil Boyraz

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Poverty, Social Aid and Electoral Clientelism in Turkey: The Case of Zeytinburnu

Yoksulluk, Sosyal Yardım ve Seçim Klientalizm: Zeytinburnu Örneği

Cemre Özdemir

118674013

Tez Danışmanı: Doç. Dr.Cemil Boyraz (İmza):……
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi

Jüri Üyesi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şadan İnan Rüma (İmza):……
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi

Doç.Dr. Elif Karaçimen (İmza):……
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniversitesi

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LIST OF ABBREVATIONS

AKP: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/ Justice and Development Party

ANAP: Anavatan Partisi/Motherland Party

BAĞ-KUR: Social Security System

CHP: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi/ Republican People's Party

COVID-19: Coronavirus disease pandemic

DISK: Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey/
Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikalar Konfederasyonu

DP: Democratic Party/Demokrat Parti

DYP: Doğru Yol Partisi/ True Path Party

EU: European Union

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GNI: Gross National Income

HDI: Human Development Index

HPI: Human Poverty Index

IMF: International Monetary Fund

JIM: Joint Inclusion Memorandum

OECD: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PRI: Partido Revolucionario Institucional/ Institutional Revolutionary Party

PRONASOL: Mexico's National Solidarity Program

RP: Refah Partisi/Welfare Party

SHF: Sosyaldemokrat Halk Fırkası/ Social Democratic People's Party

TKYİ: Toplu Konut ve Yatırım İdaresi/ Housing Development Administration of the Republic of Turkey

TURKSTAT /TUIK: Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu/Turkish Statistical Institute

TUSIAD: Turkish Industry&Business Association

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

WB: World Bank

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ABSTRACT

In political sociology, voter behavior and the reasons and consequences that affect the decisions and preferences of the voters are of great importance. The most important reason for this is that voter behavior is as important as the political party behavior in determining the political power. The “voting” tool is used as the most effective tool of participatory democracy in Turkey. In this way, it is determined by which party the country will be ruled and to whom the administration will be handed over. It is known that many reasons affect voter behavior and preferences. There are arguments that poverty has an impact on voter elections.

Poverty is one of the most important problems of all time. Like all developed, underdeveloped and developing countries, poverty has persisted in all periods in Turkey. Turkey has been affected by the wave of change in the world conjuncture that started in the 1980s. While poverty is getting deeper with the effect of neo-liberalization; the radical changes in workers' communities, the rise of conservative-right parties and the Islamic discourse, which has increased, has influenced the new working poor, especially in the cities.

When the conservative AKP government, which adopted the neo-liberal ideology, came to power in 2002, poverty in Turkey reached a very serious level and became one of the most important internal problems that the government should find solutions to. The AKP was fighting poverty with regulations at both national and local level. Its most important power in this struggle was provided by its strong local organization, the communities, foundations and associations with which it established close relations. In addition, it increased its power thanks to the social aid made with the emphasis on charity associated by a conservative discourse. The biggest criticisms of AKP's anti-poverty policies are as follows: While these social aids resulted in the reproduction of poverty rather than fighting poverty, they established a patron-client relationship between the poor people receiving aid and the government.

In this thesis, it has been examined how the clientelist relationship established between the new poor mass in cities and the AKP government through social assistance affects voter behavior. This study was conducted within the scope of Zeytinburnu district of Istanbul, which has a large population, socio-cultural and socio-economic diversity and has been governed by the mayors of the AKP for 19 years. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in the research. A survey was conducted with 80 volunteer participants in May 2021 in the district. In December 2021, as a continuation of the study, face-to-face interviews were held with 3 male and 3 female volunteer participants who also participated in the survey study. In this way, the relationship between social assistance and voting behavior was examined.

Keywords: Poverty, Voter behavior, clientelism, patronage relationship, social assistance

ÖZET

Siyaset sosyolojisinde, seçmen davranışı ile seçmenlerin karar ve tercihlerini etkileyen nedenler ve sonuçlar büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bunun en önemli nedeni siyasal iktidarın belirlenmesinde siyasal parti davranışı kadar seçmen davranışının da önemli bir etken olmasıdır. Türkiye'de de mevcut katılımcı demokrasinin en etkin aracı olarak 'oy verme' aracı kullanılmaktadır. Bu sayede ülkenin hangi parti tarafından yönetileceği ve yönetimin kime teslim edileceği belirlenmektedir. Seçmen davranışlarını ve tercihlerini birçok nedenin etkilediği bilinmektedir. Yoksulluğun da seçmen tercihleri üzerinde etkisi vardır.

Yoksulluk tüm zamanların en önemli sorunlarından biridir. Gelişmiş, az gelişmiş ve gelişmekte olan tüm ülkeler gibi Türkiye'de de yoksulluk her dönemde önemini korumuştur.1980'ler itibariyle başlayan dünya konjonktürünün değişim dalgasından Türkiye de etkilenmiştir. Neo-liberalleşmenin de etkisiyle yoksulluk daha da derinleşirken; emek piyasasındaki köklü değişimler, muhafazakar-sağ partilerin yükselişe geçmesiyle artan İslami söylem, özellikle şehirlerdeki çalışan yeni yoksulları etkisine altına almıştır.

2002 yılında neo-liberal ideolojiyi benimseyen muhafazakar AKP hükümeti iktidara geldiğinde Türkiye'de yoksulluk çok ciddi boyutlara ulaşmış ve iktidarın çözüm bulması gereken en önemli iç sorunlardan biri haline gelmiştir. AKP, hem ulusal hem de yerel düzeydeki düzenlemelerle birlikte yoksullukla mücadele ederken, en önemli gücünü hem kendi güçlü yerel örgütlenmesi hem de yakın ilişki kurduğu cemaat, vakıf ve dernekler tarafından muhafazakar söylemin getirdiği hayırseverlik vurgusuyla yapılan sosyal yardımlardan almıştır. Bu sosyal yardımlar yoksullukla mücadeleden daha çok yoksulluğun yeniden üretilmesine neden olurken, yardım alan yoksul insanlar ve iktidar arasında patron-müşteri ilişkisi kurmuştur.

Bu tezde, özellikle şehirlerdeki yeni yoksul kitle ile AKP iktidarı arasında sosyal yardımlar üzerinden kurulan klientalist ilişkisinin seçmen davranışına nasıl etki ettiği incelenmiştir. Bu inceleme, İstanbul'un nüfus olarak kalabalık, sosyo-kültürel ve sosyo-ekonomik çeşitliliği fazla olan ve 19 yıldır AKP'li belediye başkanları tarafından yönetilen Zeytinburnu ilçesi kapsamında yapılmıştır.Araştırmada kalitatif ve kantitatif araştırma yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. İlçede Mayıs 2021 tarihinde 80 gönüllü katılımcıyla anket çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Aralık 2021 tarihinde de çalışmanın devamı niteliğinde, anket çalışmasına da katılmış 3 erkek 3 kadın gönüllü katılımcı ile yüzyüze görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bu sayede sosyal yardımlar ve oy verme davranışı arasındaki ilişki incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler, Yoksulluk, seçmen davranışı, klientalizm, patronaj ilişkisi, sosyal yardım.

INTRODUCTION

There are variety of factors affecting voter behavior and the poverty is one of them. In many countries, political actors maintain a relationship of mutual interest by benefiting from the poor through a variety of methods and means through a clientelist relationship. In Turkey, this clientelist relationship is mostly built through poverty relief or social aid.

The AKP, which came to power in 2002 after poverty reached a noticeable level, came to power with a politico-ideological stance that can be conceptualized as neo-liberal, neo-conservative and neo-populist (Koray & Çelik, 2017). The party, which stands out with its strong local organization, redefined the phenomenon of "poverty" and "social assistance" in the globalization process. In this context, criticisms are made that the party both managed poverty and gained votes by providing political rent, thanks to the clientelist relations it established with the poor. In this thesis, an answer will be sought for the question of how the boss-client relationship that the AKP government has established with the urban poor in the last 19 years affects voter preferences.

Poverty is always a major problem for both developed and developing countries. While the Western European experience its golden age after the Second World War, unevenness increased particularly after the neoliberal globalization (Şenses, 2001). It is predicted that poverty in the world will increase further with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of globalization and neo-liberalization, the commodification of labor leads to an unequal distribution of income, an increase in indebtedness and a deepening of wider workers poverty. However, there is no indication that poverty will decrease or end in the short term.

Besides poverty being such a visible and important problem, there is no common definition of poverty. Poverty is mostly defined by economic indicators. However, as of the mid-1970s, the transformation in economy-politics in the world conjuncture has also changed the perception of poverty. Approaches that evaluate poverty only on economic indicators have been replaced by approaches that show

that poverty is multidimensional. In this context, social and human aspects of poverty had been widely discussed in the literature. Adam Smith draws attention to the social dimension of poverty and defines poverty as “being able to come out into society without shame”. With reference to Smith, Amartya Sen defines poverty not only as income deprivation, but as being far from basic capabilities (Sen, 1999). Poverty, defined by Sen through 'capabilities', is also the basis of UNDP's many modern definitions of poverty, such as human poverty and multidimensional poverty. In this study, while poverty is handled as a human rights problem, the “poor” group, under the effect of neo-liberalization, are insecure, low-paid workers in informal sectors, in other words, whose are the working poor.

The fight against poverty requires active state participation in providing public facilities such as health, education and infrastructure investments. Redistribution to individuals and families through income supplements, direct assistance, pensions and tax subsidies is also envisaged for poverty reduction. Often, supports and public services are not effectively delivered to the poor due to corruption, abuse of power, rent seeking, and erroneous political incentives and bad governance in dysfunctional or weak public institutions (Diaz-Cayeros, Magaloni, & Estévez, 2016).

Especially in countries that have been democratized late, have a weak market economy, have limited public organization, and have party states, social aids come to the fore to combat poverty. These aids are generally organized by a network of clientelist relations. While the most political parties around the world rely on policy platforms and ideological appeals to influence voters, other parties offer benefits in exchange for direct election support. In many countries, there is evidence that political actors engage a relationship of mutual interest by benefiting the poor through various methods and tools within the framework of clientelist relations. Although there are not many sources in the literature on this subject, it is possible to reach studies that examine voter preferences in clientelist networks, especially in Latin American countries such as Brazil and Mexico. In the studies on favoritism in Turkey, there are discussions about the fact that favoritism was used as a

conscious policy in the post-1980 period, especially in the last 10 years, and that favoritism systems and relations increased in resource allocation to political circles. (Karadoğan, 2018). Clientelism does not only affect voting behavior. Additionally, it is used to transfer resources to political circles. For example, the social aid boxes distributed both affect the voting behavior of the voters and cause the institution or organization that distributes aid to share its resources with the supporters. In particular, it causes local governments to engage in various clientelist relationships with these companies.

During their rule, the AKP governments made statements that they followed a class politics along with the petty bourgeoisie and the poor politically and ideologically. On the other hand, this period was a period in which subcontracting for the labor market increased, non-unionization was imposed, and working conditions deteriorated. It is seen that the aid to the poor has increased and diversified during the AKP period. However, the AKP government, which has adopted the understanding of eliminating class politics in its fight against poverty, while drawing an image in favor of the poor, on the other hand, kept the poor under control for the continuity and legitimacy of the system and its power, and used social assistance as the most effective weapon in the fight against poverty, 'self-dependent masses' used to create (Koray & Çelik, 2017). In other words, the AKP government has faced criticism of “getting votes” thanks to clientelist relations throughout its power.

It is seen that the party was criticized the most especially during election periods, and the people who received this aid were criticized as “sold the vote for a pack of pasta “,” a packet of coal “. It is seen that the poverty debates in Turkey which are more theoretically focused, such as definitions, measuring poverty, and causes of poverty. In recent years, poverty discussions have started to be handled together with social policies. Research and field studies have been conducted that examine the change and transformation in social policy especially with the AKP period. These studies mostly evaluated the transformations in social policy in terms of education, health, social security and gender, while examining the relations

established by local governments with the voters through social assistance and whether social assistance led to clientelist relations. However, the number of studies in this field in the literature is very limited.

In the pandemic period, poverty changed in Turkey. In the words of Hacer Foggo, 'There is not only poverty but hunger right now' (Gör Beni, 2021). Having spent the last 2 years struggling with the epidemic, Turkey had to face other problems with normalization. The volatile exchange rate, inflation, price increases and the decrease in the purchase level have led to the impoverishment of every segment in Turkey, where almost half of the registered insured workers work with minimum wage**.** In this framework, this thesis will examine how social assistance provided to poor people affects individuals' voting behavior. An indirect answer will be sought to the question of whether individuals receiving social assistance tend to vote for the party for the continuity of the benefits. While looking for an answer to this question, both the academic literature was examined in depth and a field study was carried out in Zeytinburnu district. For this reason, in the first part of the research; the concept of poverty will be studied in general terms and the definition of poverty will be made through neo-liberalization and globalization in the context of this thesis. By defining clientelism; a distinction will be made between electoral and rational clientelism. Again, in this section, the effect of patronage relationship over social assistance on voter behavior will be examined.

The second part of the thesis will examine the change and transformation in Turkey's social policy and poverty perspective, especially in the last 20 years. The relationship between social aid and poverty will be examined, with the understanding of social municipality, the increasing influence of local governments, and the emphasis on “philanthropy” with the effect of a conservative background. In this section, the social policy reforms of the AKP government will not be overlooked one by one, but rather the social policy mentality of the period will be examined.

In the third part, the relationship between poverty and voter behavior will be examined in the context of social assistance, together with the data obtained as a

result of the survey study conducted in Zeytinburnu district of Istanbul. In addition to this survey study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with volunteer participants who participated in the survey. These face-to-face interviews are about the participants' experience of receiving social assistance and how it affects their political choices. In this section, information about the socio-economic characteristics of the district of Zeytinburnu will be given, while the data obtained from the research will be conveyed.

CHAPTER I

1. Poverty and Electoral Behavior

In this chapter, the poverty, social aid and clientelism are explained and its impact on electoral behavior will be discussed with reference to the results of the respective literature survey. In the age of neoliberal globalization, the global prosperity was not observed as promised by the pro-globalist scholars. In fact, this period was a period in which income inequality increased even more and the problem of poverty was discussed all over the world (Şenses, 2001). However, poverty is an issue as old as human history; as Gündoğan states, the history of humanity is, in a sense, the history of combating poverty (Gündoğan, 2008). The problem of poverty is not only a problem of underdeveloped and developing countries but also of developed countries. In other words, the poverty phenomenon; depending on the personal characteristics of some people, natural conditions or problems created by man, it can occur in every period of history and in every society (Buğra, 2008).

Poverty has a multi-layered nature and interdisciplinary work is required. Many countries discuss poverty at sectoral and national levels, as well as at different micro levels such as household and gender. In addition to the national level, poverty also attracts attention at the global level with the contribution of international organizations (Şenses, 2001). This multi-layered structure; it makes it difficult to identify and understand the basic dynamics of poverty. Poverty arises with different dynamics between different social groups of the society. In addition, determining the spatial distribution of poverty is important for understanding the poor population. There are opinions in the literature that the correct distribution of poverty by regions will create a positive effect on resource transfer in combating poverty (Doğan, 2014). Another important point in the definition and measurement of poverty is; it is the debate about whether poverty will be accepted as an indicator of poverty in only economic values or in social and political values in addition to economic values (Şenses, 2001). Until recently, the definition of poverty, made only by measuring economic values, encounters many different components (such

as income, expenditure expenditure). Poverty definition based only on economic criteria ignores other factors.

With this increasing interest, a general definition of poverty has not been made, although it is a prerequisite for the establishment and evaluation of poverty alleviation programs by correctly recognizing the level and profile of poverty (Şenses, 2001). However, the main factor in increasing the success of combating poverty is the definition of who is the poor and which values are used in measuring poverty (Çetin, 2020). Due to the fact that the concepts of poverty and wealth are subjective concepts (Kömürcü, 2014), it is seen that there are different approaches and definitions regarding poverty. While some researchers attribute poverty to social structure and time differences (Bilen, Şan, & Aydın, 2005); others are based on income inequality arising from the structure and functioning of the system (Memiş, 2014). Some researchers, on the other hand, attribute poverty to the individual's own inadequacy and describe it as the inability to benefit from the opportunities that arise due to the low level of individual qualifications and abilities such as lack of education, skills and capacity (Gündoğan, 2008). To sum up; definitions of poverty; the perspective of social structures with different value judgments on poverty and period, may vary (Şenses, 2001).

1.1. Definition of Poverty

In the most general sense, poverty is defined as the situation of staying below a determined level of living standards of the society. However, the scope of poverty; it may differ depending on the spatial, periodic and welfare level changes (Doğan, 2014). Poverty, which is linked to the emergence of capitalism in Europe in the 16th century and which we discuss today as a social problem (Buğra, 2008). Seebohm Ro-wentree in 1901 defines it as “food, clothing, etc. necessary for the continuation of total earnings, biological existence, it is not enough to meet the minimum physical needs” (Es & Güloğlu, 2004). In other words, poverty is the inability of individuals to have enough resources to meet their basic needs (Kumar, Gore, & Sitaramam, 1996). These definitions are mostly material definitions that consider income and expenditure expenditures. Therefore, it measures poverty using income

and expenditure information of individuals or households (Doğan, 2014). The most important reason why poverty is defined only by measuring economic criteria, especially in terms of income and expenses, is that it is more easily quantifiable (Buğra, 2008).

Amartya Sen (1999), on the other hand, brings a different perspective to the definition of poverty and defines poverty as lack of capacity. According to this perspective, poverty should be seen as a lack of basic capacities rather than the standard poverty criterion of income. Although, Sen, sees inadequate income as the most important precondition for a poor life, he does not deny the fact that inadequate income causes a lack of capacity. He also argues that income deprivation will put a disadvantage in converting income into function. For example, factors such as disability and age negatively affect the income earning capacity of the person and the conversion of income into capacity. Because it causes a more sick, older or more disabled person to need more income to gain the same function as another. Relationship between income and capacity may be affected by individuals' age, gender and social roles, family sharing, place of residence, epidemiological atmosphere, and other changes that cannot be controlled by the individual. This situation shows that real poverty, defined in terms of capacity deprivation in Sen's perspective, is more important than income poverty (Sen, 1999).

It assumes that the lack of basic needs such as education and health affect the income deprivation of the individual and makes poverty permanent. Assuming that basic education and health services will increase the income capacity of the individual in addition to increasing the quality of life of the individual, Sen claims that in this way one can overcome potential poverty (Sen, 1999). In other words, Sen defines poverty in terms of skills. In this context, capability is the authority to escape from situations such as hunger, ill health, illiteracy, and bad accommodation that every person would definitely want to escape from. Consequently, poverty emerges as “lack of capability” (Doğan, 2014). In short, one can only say that poverty is too complex a phenomenon to be addressed economically. It is possible to say that poverty covers all dimensions of human life (economy, political and

social participation, education, health, human rights, environment, etc.) (Tireli & Coşkun, 2008).

The concept of “human poverty”, which was first mentioned in the 1997 Human Development Report in accordance with the Human Development Index (HDI) (Şenses, 2001), used by the United Nations since 1990, is also based on the skills approach of Sen. The concept of human poverty is based on the idea that it has economic, social and cultural opportunities besides material opportunities for human development (Doğan, 2014). The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) argues that poverty is not just about lacking the means to provide a livelihood or to pay bills for essential services on time. Thus poverty is a multidimensional issue and more than income: “Poverty isn't just about not having enough money to get by or not being able to pay basic bills on time. Poverty is a multifaceted concept that includes much more than just income” (UNDP, 2018). Poverty is now understood to include the lived reality of people's lives and the various deprivations they face, rather than being interpreted solely in monetary terms. (UNDP&OPHDI 2020).

The OECD's perspective on poverty is not just about having no money in your wallet. Although poverty is narrowly defined as people's lack of economic resources to meet their basic needs, it is much more than that. Many sub-factors such as housing, having nutritious and healthy food, access to services that improve people's quality of life are related to poverty (Keeley, 2015). Poverty is often described in terms of people's financial resources – a lack of money to purchase basic necessities. Indeed, several poverty indices are focused on income levels. Poverty, on the other hand, is characterized by more than a lack of funds in one's pocket. It may also refer to having the necessities of life, such as housing or healthy food; having access to resources that enhance people's lives, such as ways, education, and healthcare; being free from the threat of violence; and being able to participate in decisions that will form your or your community's future.

The World Bank handles the concept of poverty in a multifaceted way. Poverty for the World Bank (WB) is a 'not well' situation. As of the 1990s, the World Bank

abandoned its traditional understanding of poverty based on material income and consumption expenditures. Poverty is not just hunger, lack of opportunities, basic education and health facilities; it is also seen as a risk of exposure to exclusion, violence and exploitation (World Bank, 2000). Although the World Bank's definition of poverty is not economically based, as will be seen in the following sections; it should be stated that the indices it has created for measuring poverty are not very comprehensive.

According to the new liberal poverty discourse, poverty is "the concept used to define temporary problems and to temporarily or permanently not reach market dynamics by accident". Accordingly, the identity of poverty includes everyone who has this problem, and this identity is the common point of people above all kinds of social and class identities. Like low-income people, high-income people may also encounter this situation during transient periods (Bahçe & Köse, 2018).

1.1.1. Absolute Poverty

The most common approach in the definition and measurement of poverty is the "absolute poverty line", originating from the studies conducted in England at the end of the 19th century, based on income and consumption expenditures (Şenses, 2001). In other words, absolute poverty is based on the income and consumption expenditures of the individual or household (Tireli M., 2009). It constitutes the limit of the minimum cost required for the purchase of goods and services that are determined on the basis of the needs agreed upon by the experts to the absolute poverty (Şenses, 2001). Absolute poverty is the inability of individuals to reach the needs required to continue their lives and food comes first among these basic needs (İncedal, 2013). According to another view, absolute poverty is the inability to provide enough food to live in humane conditions, not being able to feed, not having a shelter to protect itself from external factors, not being able to benefit from minimum health services, not being able to receive basic education and not access to clean drinking and potable water (Kabasakal, 1998).

According to this approach, a monetary value is determined to meet the least costly food expenditures required for survival. Individuals below this material value are also considered poor (Şenses, 2001). To put it another way, poverty is often discussed in terms of a poverty line, which is a set daily wage, such as a dollar a day, or an income at which people cannot afford a simple basket of goods and services. Absolute poverty is a term used to describe these types of poverty. Poverty lines of US$3.20 per day and US$5.50 per day were presented by the World Bank in 2018 to represent national poverty lines, in lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries, respectively, showing that difficult poverty eradication. Still a long way to people achieved to upper level, because the extreme poverty level is US$1.90 per day (World Bank, 2020)

Absolute poverty line with income and consumption expenditures at its center contains many conceptual and statistical problems. Because absolute poverty is calculated on the basis of the minimum service and cost of the product that an individual or family needs. Thus, developed, underdeveloped or developing countries are compared. But there is still no international decision regarding these services and products (Keeley, 2015). There are two reasons for the lack of consensus on this issue. The most important reason for these problems is the regional variation of income. The way income is used as the level of welfare, the definition of income and the point of view of poverty may differ from country to country. In addition, apart from the difference in financial income of many countries; the scale of the possibilities created by the state is not the same. Secondly, the definition of income is another problem. Whether the income will be considered as permanent income in a way to cover the whole life in the long term or divided into periods such as monthly or yearly and examined in the short-term causes differences in the results to be obtained (Şenses, 2001).

This definition of poverty is made only through calorie calculation. It ignores all regional and cultural differences and standardizes the poor. In addition, this concept is criticized for being based on evaluations and measurements made outside the poor and ignoring the opinions and evaluations of the poor about themselves.

1.1.2. Relative Poverty

Relative poverty is a concept that emerged as a result of discussions that poverty is not an absolute but a relative concept. According to this concept, poverty is the name given to a phenomenon that emerges as a result of comparing the living conditions of a person or group with a person / group who is better than him (Şenses, 2001). In this definition, an individual / household with income and expenditure below the general level of the society is called poor (Tireli M., 2009).

In other words, poverty is actually the result when an individual compares himself with other members of the society in terms of meeting his needs (İncedal, 2013). Relative poverty not only examines the differences of an individual or a household with other members of the social group in which it belongs, but it can also be the subject of comparing the social group in question with other groups (Tireli M., 2009). According to relative poverty, the poor are individuals who cannot continue their lives in a way that is worthy of human dignity, even though they have a permanent income that can meet their basic needs.

To determine relative poverty, statisticians set a poverty line. There are many ways to determine this poverty line. For example, the OECD first ranks the country's entire income range from lowest to highest to determine this poverty line. This helps identify the groups with the highest and lowest income earners of the society. The poverty line is calculated in the 50% parts determined together with the average of this rate. Statisticians use a poverty line to measure relative poverty. There are a variety of ways to draw this line, but the OECD uses the following method: To begin, statisticians look at a country's entire spectrum of incomes – from lowest to maximum – to determine the point at which the top half of earners and the bottom half of earners are separated. This is the average wage. After that, the poverty line is set at 50% of the median income. The poverty rate is calculated by counting the number of people who are poor. The poverty gap, which represents the average income of those living below the poverty line, may be used to refine this statistic even further. (Keeley, 2015)

The most important difference between the definitions of relative and absolute poverty is that the absolute poverty line is fixed (Tireli M. 2009). Income level and consumption habits in the society directly affect whether people will be relatively poor or not. In this case, the higher the average spending level, the higher the relative height ratio. However, the change in the income and consumption level of everyone at a certain rate does not create a change in the number of the poor (Şenses, 2001). Relative poverty is more related to the distribution of income and wealth within society, not absolute income level (Doğan, 2014). Another difference between absolute poverty and relative poverty is that in the concept of absolute poverty, one day no one in the society may be poor. However, as relative poverty relates poverty through income distribution and inequalities, it predicts that the poor in the society will never end (Şenses, 2001). In other words, while calculating the size of poverty in absolute poverty; it is assumed that there is poverty in that society in relative poverty (Doğan, 2014).

1.1.3. The New Poverty

While the implementation of neo-liberal policies has led to an increase in inequalities, it has introduced a new content to the phenomenon of poverty. In this process, poverty is defined as "new" because it affects both wider segments of the population with its appearance in cities and has a more permanent character (İpek, 2015).

According to Adam Smith, the increase in wages and the improvement of the conditions of the workers were the indicators of the wealth of the nation, but poverty was the indicator of economic retardation (Buğra, 2008). This idea has been further supported by its impact on the neoliberal globalization environment and the restructuring of production in the last century. Especially in the 1980s, the "Welfare Governance" model, which believes that the market economy will create a "spontaneous order" by rejecting state intervention and that everything will work in the best way for everyone, was creating a new order. There has been a shift from welfare state, which is the complement of the Keynesian period, to workfare state (Buğra, 2008).

With this change, labor markets began to be restructured with the effect of accelerated production in both developed, underdeveloped and developing countries. As of the 1960s, due to the decline in industrialization in developed countries, employment fell in the manufacturing industry, which paid an average high wage, and shifted towards the service sector, which generally provided low wages (Şenses, 2001). The inter-sectoral change in employment also caused changes in labor standards. Especially, as multinational companies played a major role in this process, while employment shrunk to a great extent, low-wage, part-time jobs with no job security emerged. This situation caused the labor market to work less precariously and for lower wages, especially in less developed countries, and many people, especially unskilled workers, lost their jobs (Şenses, 2001). The transition to flexible production and the increase in global competition, the poor would be able to work part-time and profit below the poverty line, irregularly, without insurance or without security, with wages lower than the minimum wage (Buğra, 2005).

Neo-liberal policies have affected and changed the production and consumption patterns all over the world. Technological progress and transition to the information society have transformed the quality of employment and workforce and differentiated the sectors and fields of work. In this process, the role of the state in the economic, political and social life has been redefined, and the social, economic and political understanding in which the state is active at every stage. Despite that, stands by the individual, where the social and economic rights of various segments are protected, has been moved away. An understanding that left the individual and the market face to face, that social and economic rights are based on opportunities in the market, narrowed the public sector, and the social state understanding began to dissolve. The weakening of trade union organizations, the decrease in wages, the reduction of public expenditures, and the increase in inequality in income distribution have diversified and multidimensional poverty. The new concept of poverty has emerged in this conjuncture. The new poverty, as a result of neo-liberal policies, employment forms such as the informal sector and subcontracting become widespread and chronic with the increase in their weight in the economy under the

name of flexible production. The society whose cannot get rid of poverty despite working are seen as a very common situation especially in developed countries during crisis periods and in developing countries. In this sense, one of the most important aspects of the new poverty is the “working poor”, unlike the old poverty (İpek, 2015).

The working urban poor are generally formed by unskilled and propertyless laborers, urban unemployed, reserve industrial labor, working in informal sectors, with a high indebtedness ratio. This community is a group that works irregularly, usually for low wages. Poor laborers usually work with wages even below the minimum wage. In general, no job has been continuous; they often had to change jobs. It is known that most of them work without security and insurance (Bahçe & Köse, 2018).

It is observed that these people apply for additional jobs such as construction worker and building painting due to insufficient income. The insufficient level of wages makes it impossible to live on a single income, especially for families with rental income. For this reason, it is seen that women in the household contribute to the home economy by making and selling handcrafted products or cleaning other homes. Although the jobs are usually physically heavy and tiring, their wages are generally low, and income is irregular. It is the area where this mass is seen the most in subcontracted labor, as well as in jobs with daily income, insecure, low income (Hacısalihoğlu, 2018).

1.1.4. Humanitarian Poverty

At the beginning of the discussions about poverty, it is about whether poverty will be defined and measured only on economic values or with composite indicators covering other socioeconomic indicators such as health, education, life expectancy. The main reason for this debate is that only economic-based poverty definitions and policies applied against it do not give sufficient results in combating poverty. On the other hand, the Human Development Index, which has undergone various changes since 1990, does not define poverty only according to concrete economic

values (Şenses, 2001). Humanitarian poverty, although it includes definitions of absolute and relative poverty, it has been considered as a broader concept than them. This concept, which is accepted by the United Nations, emphasizes the necessity of having economic, political, social and cultural opportunities in order to meet basic needs as well as material opportunities for human development and a humane life, and deals with poverty in a multidimensional way (İncedal, 2013). The HDI is not only concerned with the economic growth of countries; it questions how two countries of the same GNI level can achieve different human development solutions and what policies this is the result of (UNDP, no date).

The indicator that makes the concept of human poverty comparable across countries is the human poverty index. Key points for human development in the human poverty index are about a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a reasonable standard of living. The health dimension is measured by the life expectancy at birth, and the education dimension is measured by the average years of education for adults aged 25 and above, and the expected education time for children starting school. The standard of living dimension is measured in per capita gross national income. The HDI uses the logarithm of income to reflect the decreasing importance of income with increasing GNI. The scores of the three different dimensions are then aggregated into a composite index using the geometric mean (UNDP, no date).

There are two versions of the human development index. The first of these is the Human Poverty Index. HPI aims to reflect the distribution of development and the amount of poverty. It uses access to quality water resources and children's nutrition to measure their access to economic resources. The second version is the Gender Development Index. This index approaches the issue of poverty in a gender-oriented manner and looks at the developments in HPI in a gender-focused manner (Şenses, 2001).

It compares the situation of developed countries and less developed countries at the international level by associating education, health and socioeconomic indicators with their economic growth (Şenses, 2001). According to this index, human poverty

refers the deprivation of educational opportunities, malnutrition, short life span, lack of job opportunities, insufficient maternal and child health, fear of the future, preventable diseases, lack of freedom, and weakness (İncedal, 2013).

1.2. Conceptual Framework and Definition of Social Assistance

There is a hypocritical relationship between social policy and capitalism. The commercialization of economic relations and the control of the market cause the existing social structures to dissolve and the livelihood of individuals to become more difficult. As the results of this process, poverty, insecurity and their effects on social life form the subject of social policy. Social policy aims to make capitalism humanly and socially sustainable by reducing the impact of capitalism on individuals and society. On the other hand, it structures capitalism by limiting its commercialization and commodification tendencies; it causes it to be different from the line it will create spontaneously (Buğra & Keyder, 2015).

This is why; the problems created by today's capitalism constitute the subject of social policy. With the effect of globalization, it is known that the welfare state order established after World War II has undergone a transformation as of the 1970s (Buğra & Keyder, 2015) . Full employment mentioned in the welfare state system; he mostly meant the employment of men and they are heads of families, and women were usually portrayed at home. Concepts such as access to healthcare services, retirement, and unemployment insurance were mostly addressed in the context of employee rights. Demographic, economic and technological developments that took place in the 1970s were challenging the welfare state's assumption of full employment. With the participation of women in the labor force, global competition, the rapid growth of the world economy and the commodification of labor, unemployment increased, most people started working in part-time, non-permanent jobs (Urhan & Urhan, 2017). Due to this transformation, discussions in the political arena about how much of the gains brought by the welfare state will be preserved constitute the subject of social policy (Buğra & Keyder, 2015).

There are many definitions regarding social policy. Social policy in the British empirical tradition is defined as the collective provision of social services such as education, health, personal social services. Social policy definition in other countries of Europe is mostly the institutions and relations related to the labor market are defined within the framework of agreements between employers, trade unions and governments, especially workers' rights. The broader definition of social policy is “the interventions of the state that serve the purpose of influencing individual behaviors, dominating resources or determining the economic system in order to shape society in a way” (Kleinman, 2015). Like poverty and social policy, there is no fixed or universal meaning to the concept of social assistance (Gough, 2015). This concept is generally defined as in-kind and cash support programs developed by the state against poverty, covering and complementary to the deficiencies of the social security system, and classified as non-premium payments and general aids. Social help is a social security technique used to meet social security requirements by making income transfers through public social security expenditures to individuals who are out of the scope of social security due to administrative and technical gaps of social insurance institutions. (Urhan & Urhan, 2017).

Social benefits are practices that started before the welfare state. These practices, which started in the early capitalism period of the 17th century, were institutionalized as the social aid programs of the welfare state, which were founded with the Beveridge Report after World War II, and the services provided by the state. The desire to transform the concept of “social aids” into the concept of social solidarity, the effort to institutionalize it with policies and legal regulations, stems from the tendency to create it on the basis of social rights. However, in developing countries, there is an approach of conducting social services and social cooperation in an understanding of “social solidarity” in general. Therefore, especially in developing countries, social solidarity and social aid are used in the same sense. However, social solidarity is a voluntary movement that depends on the internal aids of societies, and it starts entirely with the initiative of the society. Social benefits, on the other hand, refer to aids provided by the state within the scope of

social security. Social aids are provided free of charge by public institutions and organizations. They are made depending on the conditions of neediness and need determination and continues to be met by the state during the period of neediness (Urhan & Urhan, 2017). Due to their tendency to see social assistance as a complementary element of social policies, II. After the World War II, the practices of enclosing all citizens in the protection net went into crisis. Social assistance changed in the 1980s when the issues of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion began to come to the fore and were added to the essential elements of social policy. Thus, social assistance has become one of the important elements of social policies (Türkoğlu, 2013).

1.2.1. The Definition of Clientelism

With the effect of globalization, social assistance has become an element of "grace". Social assistance has been the most important means of managing poverty for the survival of the capitalist system. However, it has become the clientelist vote trap of those who seek political rent. In the context of social benefits, clientelist relationships are used to recruit votes. Political nepotism, on the other hand, emerges as a form of privileged action and providing unfair advantage to the electoral groups that support them after the political parties come to power (Karadoğan, 2018).

Many researchers have associated the concept of clientelism with traditional societies that developed with modernization and then regressed. However, clientelist relations are seen not only in developing countries but also in developed societies such as Austria, Italy, Japan (Charaka Nichter, 2010).

Clientelism is an interdisciplinary concept that is of interest to different disciplines. Political scientists define clientelism as a government feature that influences voting behavior and democratization (Arslantaş & Arslantaş, 2020). Harold Lasswell defines clientelism briefly as the art of "who wants what, who gets what" in society. As a result of the researches made in line with this definition of Lasswell, it is stated that the system known as the boss-customer model in politics has been formed. For

Joel Migdal, clientelism is defined as “the politics of survival” on behalf of both the boss and the customer (Karadoğan, 2018).

It has been observed that this concept is compared with the concept of patronage in the discussions of clientelism (Karadoğan, 2018). The concept of patronage *“describes the ability to power by distributing or making use of state resources and opportunities and thus to carry out its own power”. Clientelism, on the other hand, is “conducting political work by mediating the use of resources and facilities in a customer / client relationship (client = customer / buyer) and creating customer / client bases addicted on this intermediary”* (Bora, 2000).

Clientelism is also used as a political strategy in many countries. Parties follow a clientelist rather than a programmatic approach if two conditions are met: (1) the party “enjoyed access to patronage at the time it first undertook to organize a mass base,” and (2) a “constituency for bureaucratic autonomy” had not yet emerged to resist clientelism at the time. When vying for electoral support, political elites specifically choose whether or not to participate in clientelism, and this study explores how factors like socioeconomic modernization, electoral rules, and ethnocultural cleavages affect this decision (Charaka Nichter, 2010).

Although clientelism is used as a strategy by many parties, it hinders horizontal solidarity and strengthens oligarchic tendencies; reverses accountability; directly or indirectly causes violence; barriers to institutional development; blur the distinctions between public and private spheres; and leads to economic inefficiency, systematic corruption and populist backlash (Arslantaş & Arslantaş, 2020).

Clientelism pits the disadvantaged in a twisted relationship with the government: either you work for the government, or you don't get government benefits. The problem is that under this form of “punishment system,” poor citizens are unable to approve government corruption because if they left, their loses is highly. Exiting the scheme necessitates a voter's ability to bear the costs of not being able to use the spoils system. For the poor, who depend on the structure’s favors for basic survival, these costs are enormous (Diaz-Cayeros, Magaloni, & Estévez, 2016).

1.2.2. Electoral and Relational Clientelism

Election clientelism provides citizens with all the benefits before they vote. For this reason, citizens can benefit from these opportunities during the election period, it includes the threat of ending opportunities after the election. Relational clientelism can bring benefits to elites and citizens even after the voting process (Charaka Nichter, 2010).

The most specific example of election clientelism is voting buying. It is a strategy that encourages citizens to vote against their preferences in any election period and as a result rewards them. This strategy causes political parties to examine voters' votes and pursue a policy of punishing or rewarding accordingly. This situation puts the responsibility of the votes cast on the voters rather than the political party. On the other hand, relational clientelism includes the accountability of elites. Politicians or political parties that do not give the incentives that voters demand to vote are held accountable by the voters and cannot receive votes (Charaka Nichter, 2010). Therefore, in relational clientelism, while the trustworthiness of political elites is more important; in election clientelism, the words / credibility of political elites are not taken into consideration. Because citizens get what they want before the election to vote. In relational clientelism, since there are various relations of interest after the elections, keeping the promises and reliability of the political elites is more important.

Academic observers of politics in many cities around the world have affirmed that offering direct financial incentives remains a highly effective way for leaders and parties to gain votes from the urban poor. In most studies of such issues, the poor are identified as the main targets of the political machinery: chosen’s thanks to financial incentives are considered more effective when targeting low-income citizens, to used method for this is by buying votes. Because the decrease in public resources resulting from neo-liberal policy pushes party leaders to distribute public employment to party members and supporters instead of voter’s income (Ark Yıldırım, 2017). Some states use it as a strategy. Kılıçdaroğlu claims that the parties in the government use clientelist strategies more. Parties with a single-party

government or coalition partners are more likely to follow clientelist strategies, while opposition parties prefer more programmatic strategies. The socio-economic level of the constituency also affects which of these strategies will be used. Generally, clientelist strategies are more likely to be used in less developed regions. (Kılıçdaroğlu, 2020). Clientelist parties have been regularly observed in poor societies characterized by high inequality. These parties can use state administrative resources as part of their electoral strategy to reach and mobilize voters. Clientelism is a problem solver for various groups. In the case of the urban poor serve to meet the basic needs that should in theory be met by the welfare state. Even in their pursuit of their most basic rights, the poor need the help, or to put it more clearly, their "compassion" from the political authorities. They make various demands from those who vote, especially during election periods: to work for the party, to attend rallies. In return, it solves the existing problems of the voters or guides them. (Arslantaş & Arslantaş, 2020). As a result of this mutual interest relationship, voters are expected to vote for this party.

Benefits are targeted at a party's support base through client-based redistribution. Developed dominant parties can administer clientelist redistribution as well. By implementing social policies and patronage through their partisan networks, populist parties were able to gain electoral support. Instead of competent bureaucratic institutions, poverty is distributed based on partisanship and handled by clientelist networks. As a result, clientelist redistribution necessitates an incumbent party assuming control of the bureaucracy in order to allocate employment, government services and transfers, and other benefits to its members. Many anti-poverty services are voluntary and run by partisan or personal networks of clientelist social security. This situation shows that clientelism in social security encourages corruption and rent-seeking and is ineffective at alleviating poverty (Diaz-Cayeros, Magaloni, and Estévez, 2016).

1.3. Poverty-Electoral Behavior: Social Aid in the Context of Clientelist Relations

Political behavior, which has an important place in the political science literature, is one of the behaviors of citizens in the face of political events. Voters' behavior, which is a part of political behavior, constitutes all of the opinions, thoughts, attitudes and impressions of the citizen, naming his social and political life according to his own needs, demands and expectations. Voters participate in political action and vote to elect the rulers as one of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the voters. While the act of decision-making lies at the core of voter behavior, there are many reasons affecting this decision (Kavas Bilgiç, 2020).

The person who are the voter is an entity consisting of many characteristics such as age, gender, education and income level, country, geographical location, status, nationality, ethnicity, sect, religion, political ideology, social class or stratum, and in this respect, it is the reflection of the society that it has become quite heterogeneous. In this respect, factors affecting voter decisions and preferences; socio-demographic factors such as the age, gender, occupation, education and income of the voters, personal characteristics such as political interest, knowledge and consciousness, rational reasons such as promises and actions, emotional / psychological motives, sociological contexts shaped by collective identities, mass media and party It may vary according to structural factors such as the image of its leaders, and cultural characteristics that vary from country to country (Kurtbaş, 2018). In this context, it can be said that social assistance has an effect on voting behavior of poor people.

Economic and social transformations experienced all over the world in recent years; globalization, neo-liberal policies, income inequality and economic crises have led to a deepening of the gap both between countries and among individuals living in the country. This situation has caused poverty to become an important problem dealing with all states of the world. Poverty has changed dimensions with the effect of neo-liberalization. With globalization, “new poor” emerged, who became

individualized, lonely, in dynamism, migrated, who could not make ends meet, not consume and earn even though they were in the working life (İpek, 2015).

With poverty gaining such a different dimension and deepening, approaches that evaluate poverty in the context of human rights violations have started to take place in the literature. Living humanely is the primary right of every individual and evaluating poverty in this context brings with it the concepts of "responsibility / obligation" instead of "philanthropy". Mentioning about "violation of rights" also allows us to ask the question of who is responsible for this violation of rights. When we consider poor people as people whose rights have been violated, instead of accusing or humiliating individuals for their poverty; responsibility is attributed to institutions and society. Both the state and citizens face the responsibility of finding solutions to poverty. Thus, all tools that try to push states and individuals to a responsible position regarding human rights violations can be used in the context of poverty alleviation (Uyan Semerci, 2010).

However, as of the 1970s, due to neo-liberalization and globalization, it was observed that the influence of welfare state institutions and organizations started to decline. In this environment, there has been a shift of emphasis from the rights of the welfare state to individual responsibilities, from the rights of individuals that impose responsibility on the state. With the disappearance of state intervention in the 1980s, a new ideology has emerged around the belief that the market economy will form and function as a "spontaneous order". In this environment, while the employment state was constantly emphasized, the relationship between employment and livelihoods weakened. In an environment where full-time regular jobs are decreasing, part-time and insecure jobs are increasing in the informal sector, there are the belief that "if the market works properly, nobody will fall into poverty.". For this reason, the importance of social assistance, which imposes an important responsibility especially on philanthropists, has increased (İpek, 2015).

The role and primary duty of social assistance as a 'last resort' is to avoid emerging poverty, largely dependent on the inclusiveness of the social protection network of primary welfare institutions such as the labor market, the state and the family

(Urhan & Urhan, 2017). Social assistance is one of the most important characteristics of the social state to provide everyone who needs support in order to realize and develop humanitarian opportunities. Social benefits should be defined and protected as a right for all citizens within the scope of citizenship rights. Social assistance, while providing social assistance based on rights, ensuring social justice and protecting fundamental human rights and universal human rights. It ensures that conditions or social exclusion that power certain population groups and weaken others are prevented (Özateş Gelmez, 2018). Social policies gaining a function and quality that provide social equality and social justice is about placing these policies on a legal basis on the plane of rights and adding a social dimension to the understanding of citizenship. Social rights, which are an absolute right within the citizenship institution, involve an intervention in the free market system. While considering the human as a social being, it can also be considered as the movement of society as a whole to protect itself against the commodification of labor power (Urhan & Urhan, 2017).

In the solution of poverty, when social assistance is not on a rights-based plane; with the effect of globalization and neo-liberalization rather than fighting poverty, it is used to reproduce poverty for the market, to keep the poor under control, and to provide legitimacy to political parties in power, especially populist parties. Social benefits should be covered by the state and should be provided free of charge depending on the conditions of neediness and determination of need, as long as the neediness continues. However, in developing countries such as Turkey, where there are many workers in the informal sector, the market is lacking and the livelihoods are scattered, the social security measures are low, the degree of limiting the commodification of labor is low, social security institutionalization based on social and family relations is observed. This situation makes poor people vulnerable and dependent in the long term, resulting in solutions in the short term. In such countries, it is seen that boss-client relations are seen more, and especially social assistance respond to political expectations, that is, it causes clientelist relations (Urhan & Urhan, 2017). However, clientelist relationship networks are also seen in underdeveloped and developed countries.

Clientelism is an expression of a situation that includes the processes and relations of "demanding political support in return for some services or goods offered according to the distribution criteria of the political authority". These processes and relations cause the political authority to turn to some social strata by using mostly public resources for the purpose of collecting support.

In general, clientelism, which is established on inequality, reciprocity and personality, takes place with the exchange of goods and services on the axis of an unequal relationship in terms of relationship, status, power and influence. In an environment where social inequality is high, informalization and poverty are widespread, individuals who are far from political and economic participation can get support in their lives, thanks to, the clientelist relationship network, penetrate the public, receive services and participate in politics (Urhan & Urhan, 2017).

It is often said that clientelist networks are associated with social assistance. The most important reason for this is that the social assistance is not defined as "social citizenship" or "social right". In this context, social assistance has become an indispensable mechanism for both the future of political power and the neo-liberal ideology of capitalist globalization. The tendency of social assistance to respond to political expectations was explained by Bourdieu as follows. *'Donations create obligations, people who receive donations feel the need to comply with obligations in this way, people who fit are kept under control* (Karadoğan, 2018).

There are many debates about whether social benefits have an impact on the voting right, which is a reflection and symptom of an individual's free will. Various data have been found in many countries showing that voting is based on social assistance provided especially during election periods (Karadoğan, 2018). Some studies shows that in Latin American countries and Turkey, showing that with the Clientelist relationship networks, provide supported to political parties, votes are bought in return for promises or services during election periods, they provide some benefits to various groups in the following period. Various results have been reached in these countries supporting this thesis.

1.3.1. Poverty-Voter Behavior Relation in Latin America and Africa

There are studies showing that clientelist relations are particularly effective on voter behavior in many Latin American countries. In many different countries, there are examples of nepotism and, accordingly, practices that lead to vote buying. Clientelist groups (or political machines) provide material inducements to individuals in return for political support during campaigns in many countries. During campaigns in many countries, clientelist parties (or political machines) deliver material inducements to individuals in exchange for political support. For example, according to the field research conducted during the local election period in 2008 in Bahia, the most crowded and poorest region of Northeast Brasil; targeting the poorest segments of the political party elites living in that region, namely the farmers; they agreed to give them a certain amount of money in exchange for voting (Charaka Nichter, 2010).

In another study conducted in Kenya, it was found that the Kenyan president made the most asphalt roads in the areas of his own ethnicity and thus bought votes in road construction. Researcher Burgess explained the situation as follows; “The vote-buying theory states that politicians target (or contribute to targeting) public spending in order to increase their chances of being elected” (Charaka Nichter, 2010).

PRONASOL, which is national poverty alleviation scheme, “was a successful vote-buying program.” like in Mexico's. She refers to the PRI regime's distribution of local public goods overwhelmingly to PRI-controlled municipalities rather than opposition-controlled municipalities as “vote purchasing”. Magaloni is especially careful to stress that the chapter focuses on “the regional distribution of total PRONASOL,” rather than on “individual vote buying by excludable advantages, which the literature equates with clientelism” (Charaka Nichter, 2010). Mexico's public funds and social programs under the former hegemonic party were notorious for excessive forms of political manipulation. A study on Pronasol's wide-ranging operations and programs from political scientists; “Nepotism”, which is a form of

political exchange between, politicians and the poor, has systematically made it understandable (Diaz-Cayeros, Magaloni, & Estévez, 2016).

How voters react to buying a non-binding vote can be seen in the Mexican example. Research conducted in Mexico revealed that two programs that distribute individual benefits to the poor, Oportunidades and Seguro Popular, boosted Calderón's political support and contributed to his victory in the 2006 Mexican presidential election (Charaka Nichter, 2010). In other words, it is seen that such poverty aid and poverty prevention policies in Mexico positively affect the choice of the voters.

1.3.2. Social Assistance-Voter Behavior Relations in Turkey

There is a belief in Turkey that traditional solidarity principles will protect the individual against poverty and other life risks. In the fight against poverty, Turkey has passed from the indirect approach, that is, the understanding that economic growth will automatically prevent poverty, to the direct approach, that is, in the post-1980 period when neoliberal economic policies have severely damaged. Due to the fact that poverty was more important as of the 1980s, some new implementations were made in the fight against poverty (İpek, 2015).

In the field of social assistance, it is seen that some methods and ways of thinking inherited from the Ottoman Empire continue even today. Volunteering and philanthropy constitute the main theme of social aid practices in Turkey. In fact, the state's participation in social assistance practices in Turkey is mostly shaped on a voluntary basis. It seems to be a model of “intertwined state-charity relations” (İpek, 2015). In today's social policy environment of Turkey, state intervention is suspicious in terms of both its desirability and effectiveness, that the social security reform is discussed above all with the aim of reducing the pressure on public resources. It can be seen that the benevolent tendencies stemming from our culture and traditional institutions such as zakat or foundations are often praised in the context of fighting poverty (Buğra, 2005).

Until the 1980s, social aids were maintained as care and temporary aids within the framework of the responsibility of the state in the institutional sense, and were

among the side functions of institutions such as Kızılay, Social Services and Child Protection Agency; which are in the form of alleviating poverty, to helping the poor at certain times. After the second half of the 1980s, the fight against poverty was handled on a more institutional basis and policies began to be developed. The unfavorable conditions caused by the economic crises in the 1990s caused an increase in the interest in poverty at the level of public and non-governmental organizations. As well as poverty, developments in mass media have made poverty more visible (İpek, 2015).

It is not possible to consider what has happened in the field of social policy during the last 19 years of AKP rule separately from the social and economic transformations in Turkey, and also, the structural adjustment programs envisaged by international institutions and organizations which are play a role in the restructuring of capitalism. In Turkey, a country where poverty has increased with the effect of neo-liberalization, the need for social policies has increased even more due to the 2001 crisis. At the same time, important steps have been taken in terms of institutionalization in social policy, with the acceleration of integration to the international market practices such as the harmonization programs of the WB and the harmonization process with the EU. However, the emphasis on philanthropy and volunteering has not been abandoned (Urhan & Urhan, 2017).

As Kılıçdaroğlu points out, clientelist parties and widespread networks of clientelism are more likely to occur in Turkey when compared to developed democracies. These networks are especially common at the local level (Kılıçdaroğlu , 2020). It is seen that the emphasis on “social municipality” and “service” are frequently made throughout the period. Throughout the AKP governments, there has been a significant increase in the resources transferred to social assistance practices and the number of people benefiting from social assistance in Turkey. However, it is known that the lower income limit used in determining the neediness and the amount of aid provided are very low. While the aid provided covers the lowest group of the population, the amount of aid is quite low; It should not be forgotten that a part of this amount of aid is returned to the

state again through taxes collected through products and services such as basic foodstuffs, transportation and electricity. Despite the increase, it is seen that the applied economic and social policies are insufficient to provide social welfare and poverty is reproduced (Urhan & Urhan, 2017).

The most important reason for this is; in the center of corporate social service and social assistance policies, the focus is on the family, not the individual. (Urhan & Urhan, 2017). The increase in policies for women during the AKP period stems from this importance attributed to the family. Studies have revealed that conservative views on family policy are adopted, the role of women in the home is emphasized, and women are individuals who apply and receive more social assistance applications. Especially within the scope of the clientelist relationship network. It has been observed that women receiving social assistance tend to vote for parties that distribute aid (Karadoğan, 2018).

In Turkey, where social assistance is not defined over the concept of 'social rights', the legal nature of social assistance is not clearly defined, and the conditions for social assistance application and distribution are irregular (Kutlu, 2018). While the importance of municipalities, community and fellow countrymen relations, associations and foundations, which constitute strong cultural elements, increases; clientelist relationship networks are mostly established on these issues (Urhan & Urhan, 2017). Social benefits in Turkey are not clearly regulated at the constitutional level. Social assistance was considered as a part of the right to social security and the assistance to students and the elderly was mentioned in the Constitution. Social benefits are not properly addressed at the constitutional level, the public does not have sufficient awareness and knowledge about social assistance; social assistance application processes are difficult and based on the determination of “neediness”, the implementations made for the determination of neediness have humiliating and belittling effects on the individual; since social aid distribution processes contain uncertainty and fear, because of these reasons there are easy to establish clientelist relationships (Kutlu, 2015).

When the social policy-aid regime of the AKP period is examined; informal solidarity relations such as religiousness and philanthropy, which form the plane of clientelist relations, strengthen them and are compatible with conservatism, which are familiar and easily adopted by the society, are seen to be at the center of official social policies and assistance. This situation paved the way for the AKP to attribute the costs created by neo-liberal policies to society and to use social policy-aid for politics and voting (Urhan & Urhan, 2017).

The clientelist nature of social assistance functions as an element of political continuity; this situation was also supported by the statements of AKP politicians. In Turkey clientelism is leader- rather than broker-mediated. Party officials make frequent home visits to inform people in their area of responsibility about the party's developments. In this way, they manage to keep the party organization alive (Arslantaş & Arslantaş, 2020). According to the report of Meral Tamer in the newspaper Miliyet in 2007; Cemil Çiçek, former Justice Minister and Government Spokesperson of the AKP, responded to the criticisms of the charity economy as follows: “We want every service we do to return to vote. Here, of course, there is a demand for votes. Moreover, such help exists in our own belief system and traditions (Tamer, 2007). This discourse shows that the social assistance provided is based on philanthropy as a result of the tradition of conservative, seen as “grace” far from the concept of social rights, and is made with the expectation of a clientelist vote.

Another example is that individuals with a Green Card are more common in areas with AKP municipalities. Green Card applications are made by district governors under the responsibility of the governors in the center. Particularly in regions where there is a strong organization of the political party, the information flow of the applicant citizens on issues such as 'neediness' or 'good citizenship' is easily provided between the local party organization and the district governor's office; even some people or individuals who support the party have had a card even though they did not apply for a card (Kemahlioglu & Bayer, 2019).

While there are findings that social assistance practices became more effective before the election; clientelist relations are not only established between voters and parties for voting. For example, by giving the tenders made for the purchase of goods and services such as supplies, clothing, fuel, which is a “social municipality” practice, “aid to the needy” applications, generally to proponents or companies; such as in some researches, various findings have been found that it is required to donate to the “common pool” in return for the award of any tender to the supporters, and that these donations are returned to the poor regions in various forms of aid (Urhan & Urhan, 2017). In this way, while reaching the voters who will demand their votes through social assistance, at the same time, profit and rent relations are entered into with producers in various positions.

In a clientelist relationship, an indirect perception is created on the individual that “if we go, you cannot get the help you receive”. However, it is worth noting that different municipal administrations or citizens who have experienced different governments think this perception is wrong. As a result of the field research conducted by Denizcan Kutlu in Ankara; while it is observed that women tend to vote more under the influence of clientelist relations. There has been observed that men's voting preferences change according to their ideological views rather than social assistance (Karadoğan, 2018). This is due to the greater involvement of women in the social assistance process and the place of women in the concept of family. There has been observed that the beliefs of male voters that the state has to look after them because of the tax collections are criticism that it is not known which party anyone voted for or that people cannot be deceived with the aid distributed. Because the vote is secret, also some critisim said, the aid increases during the election period and that no one support it after the election period (Karadoğan, 2018). In addition, social assistance provided due to the understanding of social assistance that is not based on rights can be given from political parties, mayors, presidents or various leaders.

In short, it is attributed to any party or person and causes that person / parties to be glorified. It is known that social assistance is seen as a clientelist vote trap, and

existing political governments prioritize places where their voting potential is high (Karadoğan, 2018). In addition, at times, it has become a concept that includes the processes of intimidation or resort to punishment if they cannot get support. In 2009, former minister of justice Mehmet Ali Şahin said, 'If you do not vote for the AKP, you will not be able to get service or supports (Urhan & Urhan, 2017).

As a result, with the effect of the neo-liberalization process in Turkey, poverty has deepened, and new poor masses have emerged in the city, who work precariously in the informal sector and cannot make a living although they work. In order to combat the problems of this new poor mass, the importance of social policies has increased with the effect of both international and internal dynamics. However, it is a known fact that social policy practices are mostly reduced to social aid practices. It is seen that after the conservative AKP, which was supportive of neo-liberal economic policies, came to power in 2002, social policy-aid expenditures increased. The fact that the party defines itself through the concept of ‘service’ has a great impact on this. At the same time, the party ensured its reproduction by controlling poverty for the market with social benefits, as well as with clientelist relationship networks, it transformed it into a field of voting for itself. It is known that the social assistance concept, where the themes of philanthropy and volunteering are at the forefront, emerged in a concrete form such as food and coal, especially during election periods. In this way, the party was able not only to transfer resources to many small entrepreneurs close to it, but also to collect votes from voters. The reason why poverty is not seen as a violation of human rights and social assistance is not based on social rights has a great effect. For this reason, social assistance practices in Turkey are tied to the President, mayors and their parties, and there is concern that the aid will be cut if they are not elected in the society.

CHAPTER II

2. Transformation of Poverty and Social Policy in Turkey

In this chapter, the transformation of poverty and social policy in Turkey will be explained. Poverty in Turkey is one of the most important issues for each period. The perspective on poverty is far from being resolved, often ignoring poverty, in Turkey. Poverty has always been in one of Turkey's most important problem. Parliamentary General Assembly, Family, Labor and Social Services of the Ministry of made by the 2021 budget, the Minister Zehra Zumrut Selcuk in the interview, "*Poverty, especially extreme poverty, as expressed in international documents has now ceased to be an issue for Turkey*" (Parliamentary Proceedings Journal, 2020), description of the unfortunately from reality and Turkey is far from being worsened poverty levels. According to the research published by The Research Center of Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey; according to Turkey's Gini coefficient ratio is the country has the highest income inequality among European countries. According to the data of 2019, while the Gini coefficient of 0.417 in Turkey, according to Eurostat data rate of this TUIK rate was announced as 0,395. As income inequality has increased, the earnings gap between the richest and the poorest has widened. The poor got poorer while the rich got richer. Turkey, in European countries, with the poorest 20 percent, the country has the highest income gap between the richest 20 percent. According to Eurostat data, in 2019 the richest society in Turkey has earned 8.3 times more than the poorest society. According to TUIK data, this rate was announced as 7.4. Gross National Product per capita in Turkey (GDP) last year 1434 dollars has decreased. In our country, the national income per capita was 9,150 Dollars in 2019, it decreased to 7,715 Dollars in 2020. In Turkey, the number of poor increased by 8.4 percent last 2 years. The number of poor people, which was 15 million 864 thousand people in 2017, increased by 1 million 343 people in 2019 and reached 17 million 207 thousand people. The poverty rate rose to 21.3 percent. Working poverty in Turkey last 2 years has increased by 15%. Turkey in 2017, an increase of 3 million 493 thousand workers are poor, while increased half a million in 2019, this number

has increased to 3 million 999 thousand people. In 2019, the rate of working poor increased to 14.4 percent. The proportion of people living below the poverty risk in Turkey is increasing every day. Turkey is the country where there is a risk of poverty highiest country in European countries. Risk of poverty rate in Turkey, which is twice the EU average. While 21.4 percent of total average risk of poverty in the EU member states was 39.8 percent in Turkey. Income inequality and poverty, making it owes 71 percent of people living in Turkey, who is one of the most basic needs such as, healthy eating, shelter, huge part of population have become not meet the needs. Poverty has become an even greater threat to women, children and youth. The fact that female employment is lower than that of men also increases the poverty risk of women. While the poverty risk of women is 22.3 percent compared to the EU average, this rate is 20.4 percent for men. In Turkey, 41 percent of women at risk of poverty is 38.6 percent of the men. EU member states in children at risk of poverty rate was 23.4 more than twice this rate in Turkey is 48 percent. So one out of every two children under 18 years of age in Turkey is faced with the risk of poverty. The proportion of young people at risk of poverty in Turkey, which is twice the average of the EU member states. EU member states on average 18-24 young people at risk of poverty rate was 28.1 percent, but 43 percent in Turkey (DISK / General-İŞ, 2021).

Despite these proportions, the view of poverty has always been problematic.There has always been a tendency to find solutions at the initiative of philanthropists and volunteers in the short term, away from structural solutions that ignore the poor and aim to reduce poverty. Since the early Republican period, the poor have mostly been categorized with rural peasants. Approaches aimed at keeping the poor villager in their village were followed. However, with the increasing industrialization, the global world and the neo-liberal economy effect and the acceleration of rural-urban migration, the rate of poor in the cities has increased rapidly. Despite this, the problems of the urban poor have been ignored for many years. Even the left politics, which rose in the 1960-1980 period, displays an approach that is far from producing policies to defend the rights of the poor. Unlike the process in the European market, lack of demand for using poor labor force,

blocking period by the conjuncture of trade union rights and workers' organizations, within the influence of different ideologies with the 1980 military coup in the fight against poverty in Turkey, rather than a state responsibility, also, philanthropic and on donations from volunteers, Islamic it is loaded on foundations and communities where the discourse is effective. In the last 20 years, this trend has accelerated with the increasing conservative discourse as well as neo-liberal economic policies.

2.1. Early Republic Period

With the “Charity Reform” in Europe in the 16th century, the perception of poverty had changed; begging was beginning to be condemned. Discussions about how to deal with the problem of poverty and who will take how much responsibility have started. It was understood that poverty could not be solved by the traditional charity methods of the religion. Thinkers like Juan Luis Vives argued that by the 16. century, secular political officials were responsible for the poor. After this period, poverty started to be considered as a social problem. The agricultural sector experienced the transition from the industrial sector and the correct use of the labor of the poor, the fight against poverty would result in the prominence of economic concerns (Buğra, 2008).

Handling of poverty at the beginning of the republican era in Turkey is in some ways parallels with modern poverty debate in Europe. In the Republican era, begging was described badly, the importance of work was emphasized. However, in this period of the emphasis on statism, contrary to modern poverty debates, fighting poverty was not counted among the responsibilities of the state. 19th century liberals in 1834 occurred in England 'New Poor Law basing emphasized that voluntary charity and the poor blame approach has played a major role in the poverty approach early Republican era (Buğra, 2008).

In the early republican period, poverty was under the influence of wars and the political changes that resulted from them. In this period, the group defined as poor was 'peasant living in the village' and this group constituted the majority of the country. The poor in the city were completely ignored. The only method of the

period administrators in combating poverty is to keep the villagers out of sight as much as possible, that is to keep the villagers in the village. During this time, both the improvement in conditions in agriculture, as well as possible to come to the discourse that needs to be brought into the main center of the industrialization of Anatolia (Buğra, 2008). Similar to the Western literature, the poor are accused of being 'marginalized' and the peasant is portrayed as an inhuman 'other'. With the effect of this marginalization, it has been observed that the elites of the republic have a tendency to escape from the peasantry, to never meet the poor peasants, to blame the poor for their poverty, to educate them together with the method of discipline.

Due to the fact that the industrialization process had not started and the existing industry was managed by the state, not by the private sector, the poor were not yet seen as a labor force. Because of this reason, it was not to be defended by political or special interest groups of the rights of the poor (Buğra, 2008). Unlike the West, the labor market did not realize its rights and did not feel the need to fight for the improvement of its conditions. An environment where each segment played three monkeys prevented the state from facing poverty. The poor in the city were completely ignored. Although the situation of the “working poor” reached very serious levels especially in the 1940s, it was not possible for the working poor to benefit from any state support. The state was doing nothing to improve the situation of the working poor. Also, by preventing the organization of workers, it would make it impossible to defend their rights (Buğra, 2008).

In this period, the approach that stood out in the fight against poverty was voluntary philanthropy, as I mentioned earlier. Charity, which is a religious duty, and traditional philanthropy based on religion, and the modern theme of volunteering, which is articulated with liberal ideology, played an effective role in poverty alleviation. Combating poverty is not seen as the duty of the state, it was mostly attributed to voluntary efforts and non-governmental organizations. These voluntary organizations were close to the ruling party of the period, the Cumhuriyet Halk Fıkrası. These organizations were established by the initiative of politicians.

They financed some of their activities from public resources. They were established under state control initiatives (Buğra, 2008). The belief that the state is responsible for poverty started to be expressed towards the end of the one-party era. It is clear that the early Republican period politicians' perspective on poverty is incompatible with the state's official ideology of statism. Distant stance against poverty, the poverty problem in Turkey for a long time to be ignored, does not occur in consciousness in the state and public, unable to face the state's poverty problem has led to the alienation of workers to defend their rights.

2.1.1. Welfare State Period: 1950-1980

After the 2nd World War period in which the welfare state emerged, it appears that affected the conjuncture in Turkey. The transition to multi-party life, the acceleration of industrialization, the strengthening of left politics, the formation of a groundwork for a rights-based social policy approach, and the emergence of social state emphasis in right politics are among the characteristics of this period. Although there were changes in the political and economic life of the period, we cannot say that the perspective on poverty was very different, especially in the period of 1946-1960. In this period of accelerated industrialization, while the state's desire to stay in the village of the villagers continued, the situation of the poor in the city was ignored. This situation prevented any policy and resource allocation for the poor in the cities. In the 1960-1980 period, with the increasing influence of leftist views, the perspective on poverty has changed. This period, Ayşe Buğra, the ground of fighting poverty, E.P. Referring to Thompson's article “The Moral Economy of the British People in the 18th Century,” she claims it was shaped within the framework of moral economics. Thompson refers to the role of society in meeting the needs of the people in their traditional way of life. In this traditional way of life, everyone is provided with a living space according to the requirements of their social position. Buğra, in Turkey, in this period of private ownership and free the working class was missing. Also, in this case the state-society relations and personal networks say that there is a moral economy functioning on the basis of (Buğra, 2008).

World War 2 with the effect of increasing poverty in Turkey with the state's social criticism began to be raised about state should take more responsibility. After the war, some innovations were made in the field of social policy with the implementation of the transition to the multi-party era. Various studies have been carried out especially on social security. However, there was not enough budget to provide social security for everyone and most of the population lived in rural areas and worked without security. While the problems of the peasant population were more pronounced, there was a tendency to ignore the problems of the poor and working class in the city. As a result of this approach, it was seen that the place of the poor in society was not dependent on citizenship rights and they were far from rights and responsibilities. The most important reasons for this were the poor people's lack of social security and the difficulties in accessing various legal social rights and benefits (Buğra, 2008). Providing social assistance to the poor not as a right but as a charity created a problem of continuity and did not provide an effective way to combat poverty.

Based on imported sources in Turkey after the 1960 military coup industrialization process had begun. This period also depending on gains strength left politics in Turkey and it has been a period of social policy and poverty reduction steps were laid. The leftists of the period; they were in a 'real' industrial ideal. They had beliefs that poverty would be resolved by this means. Therefore, they were useless discussions about relevant social spending or social rights (Buğra, 2008).The reality of the period was more than what was discussed. As of the 1950s, with the rapid growth in the industrial sector, the shift of employment to the industrial sector and the strengthening of the private sector, rural-urban migration gained momentum. However, the number of migrants more than the deficit was too much employment in the industrial sector, and this was pushing people to work in the informal sector (Buğra, 2008). People working in the informal sector with low wages, precariously, were causing unplanned urbanization, especially in the vicinity of the factory. The most prominent feature of the period is the poor in cities living in slums (Işık & Pınarcıoğlu, 2015). However, there was no policy or precaution for this group, which will increase in the future. In fact, the problems arising from the illegal

construction of most of these shanty houses were provided by the municipalities in every election period and demanded votes with “forgive” by the municipalities. Increasing unearned income resulted in clientelist relations between people and the state, framed by a vote-service network. It prevented the production of policies regarding the real problems of the poor people living in the slums.

2.1.2. Poverty in the Neoliberal Era

The crisis process, which started with the Keynesian economic model entering into a crisis in capitalist states, ended with neoliberalism with the “There is no alternative” discourse. With the created ideological hegemony, it has become the dominant economic model almost all over the world (Daldal, 2016). Oil crisis affecting the whole world, the structural problems of industrialization based on imported resources, is far from producing effective policies of political impotence and a coalition government and increasingly worsening economic picture, because of the military coup on 12 September 1980 as a result of stress and their in-country Turkey in every sense a new had entered the period. This new method outside of the military junta in Turkey during the outdoor industry adopting a neoliberal model and quickly passed to the global economy, freeing capital movements (Buğra, 2008).

This new era caused changes in many areas.First of all, the importance of the market increased. In addition to the increase in the number of unregistered and insecure workers, subcontracting became the new employment model of the period. The increase in the number of 'working poor' due to both the lack of a social security understanding covering the whole society and the subcontracting deepened the poverty. In addition, the changing family structure with the increase in the urban population also isolated the poor. In this period when poverty was defamed and the problem of poverty was ignored, the poor and social assistance were left to the initiative of benefactors. With the increase in Islamic discourse, it has become the responsibility of the "good deeds" of benevolent citizens rather than the responsibility of the state in the fight against poverty.

2.1.3. Conservative Liberalism: The AKP Period

It was obvious that the poverty problem, which had deepened with the 2001 crisis, could not be solved with past practices. The impact of changes in the merger with the crisis environment in Turkey in 2002, the Justice and Development Party came to power. Coming from a conservative tradition and embracing neo-liberalism to the fullest, the AKP, when it came to power, faced poverty caused by the 2001 economic crisis and the Kurdish immigration caused by the increasing conflict environment in the Southeastern Anatolia region. Thus, the articulation of the ethnic dimension of poverty and was completed by a large segment of society to become an addict of the living conditions of the market (Buğra, 2008).Poverty reached a great level during the AKP's first rule. This enormous impoverishment, combined with the desire of the poor to overcome the livelihood problem in a short time, made it easier for the AKP to spread the echo of the discourse appealing to the poor, which it inherited from the Welfare Party period (Yılmaz, 2015). Poverty was in a state that placed a political responsibility on the state, similar to poverty in 16th century Europe. In this case, the government had to make poverty visible in all its dimensions. The international conjuncture has changed since the 1990s, and the management approach came to the fore. According to this new approach; the state was considered to be in a regulatory role for the functioning of the market economy. In this case, a partial responsibility was imposed on the state to fight poverty, which has affected the whole world. However, as a method of combating poverty, the main emphasis in social assistance was volunteering and the activities of non-governmental organizations (Buğra, 2008).

AKP sees poverty as a comprehensive political problem rather than income inequality. In this way, by politicizing existing inequalities, naming the poor within the “we” discourse; it creates a common poverty denominator by creating a material, symbolic and institutional framework that will enable the poor to take their place in this defined 'us'. However, the poor could not become a political subject by getting stronger and more active in the political arena. On the other hand, the demands of the poor, which created pressure on the system, were mobilized in line

with the pragmatist and political aims of the party. Moreover, the poor who supported the party were brought under control through paternalist recognition policies. The AKP's policy of establishing trust networks between the poor and the party at the neighborhood level and focusing on finding solutions to their daily problems resulted in getting high votes from the extremely poor sections of the society (Yılmaz, 2015).

It is known that the poor support the AKP in the fact that Recep Tayyip Erdogan is a charismatic leader in AKP's getting a high rate of votes from the poor. There is a belief that Erdogan is a political leader who “gives the right to his Turkishness” depending on his traditions, history, culture and religion. In this context, Erdogan stands out as a figure who does not hesitate to show his “stick” to the judiciary, also, the media and the activist, rather than being seen as just a political party leader, the “Leader of the Century”, the “Chief”, the Conqueror of Davos etc. Using this feature, Erdogan reinforces the belief in the public that his party and governments are fully performing their duties and that they are successful (Turan).

In addition, the constant emphasis on the fact that the party is a service-oriented party also has an effect on the party's high rate of votes from the poor. The election propaganda of the party is mostly made over “service”, the necessity, legitimacy, etc. of any action and project, it is legitimized without being discussed in society (Turan). When we evaluate these “services” from another perspective, it is seen that the relationship between the party and the poor people through these “aid boxes” is a means of cultural representation. It is obvious that these aids are seen as “caring” for the poor, “solving” their problems for a short time and representing them before the public “(Yılmaz, 2015).

This relationship established between the state and society; it can turn into a paternatistic relationship that is used to control the poor, to establish a rapport between the poor and the party, to control the desires of the poor, to manage their world of meaning, and to articulate the poor in the neoliberal project. Paternalism, which Richard Sennett defines as “a form of authority based on false love”, is described as making the poor more dependent on power through policies that

condemn the poor to a short-term, aid-based livelihood, and ensure their financial, and political debt. (Yılmaz, 2015).

Poverty during the AKP period, it has become a part of the crime and security system with the marginalization of the media. In addition, there is a poverty that has gained many dimensions through ethnic, sectarian and gender differences through social assistance and is getting deeper and more intense. However, despite all these differences, besides paternalist practices, the transformation of labor relations, precarization, subcontracting, and the obscurity of the formal / informal labor distinction cause the articulation of different states of poverty. The 19-year rule of the AKP government has been a period when the livelihoods of the poor gradually became short-lived and began to rely on more financial and political debt, while paternalist aid practices targeted the poor in every sense (Yılmaz, 2015).

2.2. Transformation of Social Policy in Turkey

Since the 16th century, discussions on poverty and social policy started to be held in Europe with capitalism. As a result of these discussions, it is seen that basically two approaches are dominant in the literature. First, it is set around the belief that the primary duty of the propertyless person is to work for wages and that this is the only way to participate in society. This tendency, which explains poverty by blaming the poor, does not look favorably on the use of public resources for social purposes. It emphasizes philanthropy by rejecting the understanding of social policy towards the rights that arise from the fact that a person is a member of the society and that are necessary for his social life to continue under all conditions. The second approach is, poverty is beyond a humanitarian and social problem and also, it takes poverty as a political problem by politicizing it. In this context, it makes the conditions necessary for the participation of people in society on the "ground of rights" by imposing responsibility on the political authorities (Buğra, 2008).

The social state understanding is a fundamental principle for modern states, while social policy can be said to be an indispensable (Koray & Çelik, 2017). However, in lately effected from capitalism countries such as Turkey; the fact that the labor-

market relationship is not formed spontaneously, the class consciousness is weak, and the democratization debates are discussed even today make poverty and social policies discussions more problematic. It is seen that the tendency to hide and ignore poverty in Turkey is reflected in the field of social policy. It is possible to say that in Turkey, where poverty is not seen as a human rights violation, its social policy is not created with a rights-based perspective.

From the beginning, the political imagination formed over the absence of class-cultural conflict, the claim of a classless society has become the “official ideology” of the right-wing parties in particular. Since the understanding and structuring of the state in Turkey is far from the idea of democracy, which includes the conflict between different interest groups, political and social differences arising from this conflict, identity, culture, political and class differences create an insignificant subject perception (Koray , 2017).

In this context, it has been observed that since the single-party period, the “non-privileged-classless society” and the “paternalist” state understanding, which claims to be at an equal distance to everyone above the society, and the “populist” discourse and policies continued in the later periods. Even in the period when the 'social state' discourse is at its highest in Turkey, social policy cannot be established on the basis of rights, the social state remains only as a promise, and traditional methods such as 'voluntarism', 'solidarity', 'goodwill' It has been observed that religious motifs such as' are at the center of social policy.

2.2.1. Social Policy in the Early Republican Period

In the early Republican period, social policy is under the influence of wars, subsequent political events and being a newly established state. It can be said that there are basically two different views about the social policy of the period. The first view is the criticism that the social policy understanding of the period was incompatible with the concept of statism, that the poverty problem was approached through voluntary philanthropy and that an effective social policy was not followed in the fight against poverty (Buğra, 2008). Another view is that an effective social

policy was followed under the conditions of the period by blending the social aid understanding of the traditional agricultural society and the Western understanding of social assistance (Baytal, 2009). In general, it was observed that in the first period of the Republic and especially in the single-party period, approaches regarding the understanding of work life and social policy were formed in the axis of the "populism" ideology (Merve Özaydın & Çevik, 2017).

The single-party period is a period in which growth is not stable, growth slows down in some years due to the effects of the Great Depression and World War II, and even decreases in total production. It is known that this economic environment deeply affects the poorest people and causes serious problems. In the period when the majority of the total population is struggling with poverty, the existence of a social policy that combats poverty clearly and effectively is a matter of debate.

According to the point of view that criticizes that an effective social policy to combat poverty was not followed in the early Republican period, the idea that a poor state of a poor country cannot be effective in the field of social assistance is at the center of the social policy understanding of the period. The problem of poverty was mostly discussed over peasant poverty, urban poverty was ignored. This situation made it difficult to take any social policy measures against the needy society in the city who needed and deserved it. It can be said that the effects of the historical background were seen in this period and the Ottoman foundation tradition continued. The social policy of the period mostly depends on the voluntary social aid activities directed by the state (Buğra, 2008).

The second view is in the social policy of the single party period, claims that besides traditional effects such as aid, solidarity, religious feelings, social assistance system that emerged after the Industrial Revolution in Europe was effective and social policies were followed in the fight against poverty in traditional ways or modern terms according to the conditions of the period. This period is also characterized as the period in which social assistance understanding was institutionalized, similar to the one in the West. In other words, although the traditional understanding of social assistance services continued between the years of 1923-1938, it is seen that this

approach was gradually broken and a state-controlled institutional aid approach was adopted. Determination of social benefits according to modern methods and methods is adopted as a goal. However, the effects of the wars that lasted for years, the necessity to meet the needs of the poor people as soon as possible, the political, social and economic reasons that the Republic of Turkey faced during the establishment phase, there was delayed the implementation of the Western understanding of social assistance. Therefore, in addition to modern social policy practices such as social security laws, the traditional Ottoman and Islamic model aid continued (Baytal, 2009).

Although the modern poverty debates that started in Europe in the 16th century attribute responsibility to the states for the solution of the problem, charity, which is a religious duty, still appears as an important concept. In environments where liberal ideology is strengthened, it is seen that the traditional understanding of philanthropy based on religion has evolved into modern volunteering and is still important (Buğra, 2008). In this context, it is known that philanthropy in Muslim societies has a meaning that carries some social obligations beyond just volunteering. The emphasis of the religion of Islam on solidarity, the fact that “zakat” is an important religious duty, and the prophet's saying, “If you are full but his neighbour is hungry, who is not one of us." this is a very important example in that issue. However, the fact that philanthropy does not only target the poor, and that it provides “benefit” to the poor as a part of a more general “gift” relationship shows that the only purpose of philanthropy is not to fight against poverty.

Individual charity works based on religious rules and traditions played an important role in protecting the poor in Ottoman society. Religious individual aid activities carried out by the wealthy groups in charity have temporarily met the needs of the poor (Baytal, 2009). In the early Republican period, the state tried to systematize this traditional method, based on secular and modern status. While doing this, the principles of “populism”, “statism” and “secularism” were taken as basis.

However, strong emphasis on volunteering was still the focus of social assistance. Foundations, which are institutions that contain a mix of public and private

resources, are an important point in the perspective of poverty in the republican era. How effective the foundations are in combating poverty is a matter of debate. The fact that both the users and the resources are created by a mixed mass, and the donors to foundations and foundations are generally those who run the state raise questions about the main purpose of foundations. The non-governmental organizations of the period were generally established by the initiative of the leaders of CHF, operating under state control, and established with some financing from the state (Buğra, 2008).

There are criticisms that the main objectives of these organizations are focused on spreading the official ideology and educating the society rather than fighting poverty. For example, with the more modernization mission of the Yardım Sevenler Derneği, both economic support for poor women and their efforts to integrate them into the society by working serve this purpose. It is seen that the Community Centers and Village Institutes serve a purpose again, to raise awareness of the society, to educate and actually to keep the villagers in their village.

In general, the institutions and organizations related to the social policy of the period are institutions and organizations such as Darülaceze, Red Crescent, which were transferred from the Ottoman Empire. It is aimed to make these institutions institutional and systematic with the Republic period. One of Atatürk's greatest goals is to make the traditional sense of benevolence of the Turkish people more useful by directing them to such foundations and to spread the official ideology (Baytal, 2009). Considering the conditions of the period, the state was not expected to be successful immediately in the field of social policy. Because the newly established state was economically troublesome and the continuation of the habits and traditions from the Ottoman Empire were an obstacle to the institutionalization of social policy. Despite this, various regulations and practices were made based on modern examples (Baytal, 2009). However, when these practices and regulations are evaluated together with the poverty perspective of the elites of the period, we can say that they prevented the development of the concept of social rights and a rights-based social policy strategy. The most important reason for this is the

intertwined relationship between the state and volunteers is a strong emphasis on volunteerism, contrary to the statist understanding (Buğra, 2008).

2.2.2. Social Policy in the Welfare State Period: 1950-1980

With the effect of increasing poverty during World War II, opinions about the state's need to take responsibility in the social field, beyond the approaches specific to authoritarian statism in the social field, started to come to the agenda in Turkey. Following the publication of the Beveridge Report, which is a source of welfare state practices in the West, the social security issue was discussed in various articles in Turkish newspapers (Buğra, 2008). In this period, the studies of German professors at Istanbul University who escaped from Nazi Germany, emphasizing the importance of social policy measures in reducing the tensions in society, have been observed to accelerate the discussions on the social responsibilities of the state (Özaydın & Çevik, 2017). In the post-war period, the transition to a multi-party era has begun in Turkey. Democratic Party shared offered promises, to economic policies such as transition from statist economic policies to liberal economic policies, prioritizing the agricultural sector, realizing industrialization under the leadership of the private sector, liberalization in foreign economic relations, and also, providing democratic and social rights to large masses of people in the society and increasing the living standards for public. Although it is a party that defends liberalism, “statism” has not been completely rejected due to the socio-economic situation of the country. (Kanca, 2012).

In the bipolar world that emerged after the Second World War, Turkey was transitioning to a multi-party regime, and important changes were made in terms of social policy. Establishment of the Ministry of Labor in 1945, the enactment of a law on occupational accidents and diseases in the same year, and pension arrangements for workers within the scope of insurance at the beginning of the 1950s are important examples of this (Buğra, 2008). While coming to power, the Democratic Party included important and positive principles to protect workers' interests in its program. During the war years, a period of high inflation and expensive was experienced and naturally, workers were most affected by this

situation. With the effect of this environment, the Democratic Party has put provisions in its program to create a more just society and benefit the workers (Kanca, 2012).

Although the studies on social security gained momentum in this period, the social security system was not very effective due to the serious cost of the social security system and the fact that most of the population was uninsured and the laws regulating working life were not protected. While these regulations do not cover the general public, it is known that they do not include measures to prevent poverty (Buğra, 2008).

In addition to the social security regulations, the party program included approaches that envision establishing the pluralistic side and character of democracy and that opened to the basic philosophy and principles of the post-war understanding of democracy. The benefits of granting the right to organize for almost all segments of the society and establishing unions, associations and professional organizations freely were stated (Kanca, 2012). Although the right to strike was included in the program of the DP's first government established in 1950, by the mid-50s, it was said that the words strike and union would be removed from the party program and the relationship between workers and employers would be regulated by law (Buğra, 2008).

One of the issues that the DP government focused on most seriously was health. Government programs included items such as public health, making treatment services accessible, health insurance practices, capacity increase in health institutions, and increasing the number of health centers. It is known that the budget of the Ministry of Health increased significantly during this period. However, criticisms are being made that some practices define different citizenship rights for those outside the scope of social security. The reason for these criticisms is that, with the decision issued in 1955, it was registered that the treatment services are right for the insured group, the treatment of the poor is conditional on a document proving poverty. Citizens who did not have a poverty paper in their hands could

only have the opportunity to be treated on the initiative of chief physicians (Buğra, 2008).

In this period, we can mention the tendency to ignore the poor in the city and their problems with reference to like the first period of the Republic years. The government did not intend to take measures against, urban poverty which is one of the most important problems of the period and also including housing and increasing unlicensed slums. In addition to the housing problem, infrastructure and transportation problems in the cities have reached a significant level.

The period between 1960-1980, when the Democratic Party's rule ended and Turkey entered a new era with the 1961 constitution, was a period limited by two coups. In this period when the discussions on the welfare state in Europe intensified, the discussions over the qualities of the state in Turkey increased with the effect of the world conjuncture. With the Constitutional amendment made at the beginning of the period, “social state” took its place as a basic principle and as a result of the efforts for the construction of social rights, important legal regulations were initiated in this period. As a result of the constitutional will in society and working life, many regulations and institutional structures that direct Turkish working life and social policies were formed during this period. However, as a result of the tensions experienced depending on the political conditions of the period, the desired implementation capacity could not be reached. This period can be described as a contradictory period in which important social rights related to working life were defined after a military coup, and these rights were substantially abolished as a result of another military coup that followed. (Özaydın & Çevik, 2017).

One of the most prominent features of this period is the 1961 Constitution. Attention has been paid to the preparation of the 1961 Constitution in a structure that emphasizes the “social” aspect of the state more. Unlike other constitutions, the 1961 Constitution included the expression of human rights and freedoms in its initial provisions for the first time. In Article 2 of the Constitution, the nature of the state is stated as “a national, democratic, secular and social rule of law”. This principle has imposed important duties on the state, reflecting the content of social

rights and the nature of modern rights. Important regulations on the right to work, the prohibition of forced labor, the right to rest, the right to pay, social security, health, housing, the right to education, agriculture and the regulation of the farmer have been included in the constitution. Collective bargaining and the right to strike, not only for workers, but also for all employees has been secured by the constitution (Özaydın & Çevik, 2017). The regulations on working life, including the Trade Unions Law, which brought organizational facilities in 1963, abolished the ban on strikes, were generally created not as a result of conflicts with the working class, but to prevent conflicts from happening. (Koray , 2017).

Again in the constitution, the references to the concepts of 'human rights' and 'social justice, it is aimed to provide a sufficient income, reasonable and humane working conditions, and to give everyone and especially the laborers a life worth living humanely. In addition, the Constitution also includes the promise to fight against poverty, to realize a working system suitable for everyone and human nature, instead of bad and heavy working conditions. Again, thanks to the effect of the “social state” concept in the constitution and the duties and responsibilities assigned to the state in this field in a separate section in the constitution, it has enabled all economic and social life to be formed by the principles of as “equal opportunity” and “social justice”. In addition to the responsibility of treating all citizens equally, the social state understanding has a state understanding that accepts positive discrimination against those in need of protection and assistance, paving the way for an order in which social assistance and services can be realized under the protection. The Constitution did not regulate the right to social security only as a right for citizens, but as a result of international developments that took place up to that time (Özaydın & Çevik, 2017).

With this environment created by the 1961 Constitution, important changes were made especially in the field of labor and social security. This period is a period when working life is institutionalized despite all its shortcomings, and as a requirement of the “social state” principle defined in the Constitution, a number of regulations are made in many areas, such as, union organization, collective

bargaining, strike, freedom of work and contract, right to work conditions, wages and social security issues all inclueded. Again, this period is a period in which the insurance system for tradesmen and artisans who are disadvantaged in the field of social security was established and the coverage of social insurance was expanded (Özaydın & Çevik, 2017). Nevertheless, with the acceleration of migration to cities, the problem of housing increased in cities, even the increasing left politics could not pursue an effective policy in the fight against poverty, backwardness in the field of social assistance continued, and it was a period, also, the state did not take sufficient responsibility in the field of social assistance (Buğra, 2008).

As the slum problem increased, the state had to accept the right to housing and by 1966 it started to provide municipal services to the slums. However, this situation caused an informal reciprocity relationship between the state and the electorate, such as slum amnesties and title deeds, which are on the agenda in every election period. The language used in discussions on the Law on Age 65 and Green Card application made in the parliament since the 70's has been under the influence of traditional approaches. It is seen that there is an understanding of “not leaving the poor unattended” by combining public resources and donations, which was also valid in the single party period. The discussions were shaped around the rights and responsibilities stemming from Turkey's definition as a social rule of state in the constitution and discourses such as “religious obligations”, “compassion”, “the Turkish nation being a conscientious society that loves solidarity” (Buğra, 2008).

In conclusion, in the period between 1950-1980, when the welfare state discussions were held, it was seen that state resources would not be sufficient to provide social assistance to the needy on the basis of citizenship, and it can be said that voluntary organizations or foundation should continues supported to the government. Although it is seen that the “social state” understanding that emerged with the effect of the 1961 Constitution has achieved some gains, in practice, it is seen that rights-based social assistance understanding cannot function effectively. It is seen that the “social state” practices in this period remained as promises due to the lack of political will for the social state, the absence of any social-political power to force

the political will in this direction, and the political economy being. Under these conditions, 60-80 period, the claim of being a social state, which cannot go beyond being a promise, can be defined as only import substitution policies within the framework of these promises. In addition, the period between 60-80 can be defined as the period in which traditional social solidarity is blended with modern social state promises and comes into existence in a populist practice (Koray, 2017). Many of the gains achieved in this process were lost after the 1980 coup.

2.2.3. Social Policy in the post-1980 Neoliberal Era

Market fundamentalism, which started with the 1980 coup and continued with the rule of the Anavatan Party (ANAP) (MP) led by Turgut Özal, dominated the neo-liberal globalization environment, constituted the dominant ideology of Turkey. This period is a period in which the social state understanding is criticized strongly, and the market is brought to the fore (Buğra, 2008). In this period when the state was the implementer of global capitalism and neo-liberal policies, in the economy, efforts are made to join the global markets with outward-oriented growth policies. Along with the discourse of restructuring in the language of politics, the state downsized. The influence of the populist discourses about "politics above the classes will be done" in a period of depolitization by purifying the state and economy from politics is felt. In other words, this period is the period of political understanding, which can be expressed as a strategy to put an end to class-based politics along with economic policies, ranging from the promotion of exports to privatization of public enterprises (Koray , 2017).

After 1980, Turkey entered a democratization process with the liberalization discourse. The success of such discourse is another debate. There are criticisms that Özal combined his mission of "demilitarizing the regime" with opportunistic pragmatism and that he could not go beyond the tutelary mentality. The fact that the democratization issue is still being discussed is one of the facts of the period when civil society's underdevelopment and demands for democratization depend on its own problems (Koray , 2017). The most important statements of the ANAP governments, which were in power throughout the 1980s, "The nation is superior

to the state" and "Service to the people". While the state is expected to produce social security and social aid policies to a certain extent, it is seen that voluntary social solidarity maintains its importance in traditional social solidarity networks and social family structure (H.Sami, 2008).

In this period, Turkey consists of a political structuring that is not based on the representation of conflicting interests, and an economy that is inadequate in terms of capital accumulation and foreign-dependent. Instead of a pluralist democracy with the impact of its coup, right-wing parties that aspired to represent all segments rose and the ideological differences between parties almost disappeared, a democracy in which was a populist-clientelist relations came to the fore and patronage relations increased in Turkey. It has been discussed that the relationship between economy and politics is invisible, that socio-economic rights are ignored, and weak and dependent individuals are created, the problems caused by both socio-economic inequalities and political inequalities are ignored, and this whole process causes degeneration in Turkey (Koray , 2017). These criticisms are assumed to be necessary in order to understand the political economy and social policies of this and the next period.

The emphasis on tradition stems from the tendency to refer social problems to philanthropy. While talking about poverty was condemned due to the effect of the economic developments of the period, an aggressive attitude towards poverty discourses prevailed. While the voice of left politics was muted after the 1980 coup, those who talked about poverty were accused of "leftism". Instead, an Islamic discourse was promoted, while the traditional model was also helped. Similar to the one-party period; social assistance cannot be solely under the responsibility of the state, there is a prevalent opinion that it will be an effective support for donations collected by traditional religious institutions, foundations, and voluntary organizations such as village and fellow countrymen associations (Buğra, 2008).

The Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Law enacted in 1986 and which is a law worthy of the postmodern neoliberal environment (Buğra, 2008) constitutes an important basis for this. The purpose of the law; *'It is to help citizens*

who are impoverished and in need, and those who have been admitted to or come to Turkey by any means, when necessary, to ensure the distribution of income in an equitable manner by taking measures to reinforce social justice, and to encourage social assistance and solidarity (Resmi Gazete, 1986).*'* it was stated as. In order to realize the services stipulated in this law, the Vice President in presidency or Social Assistance and Solidarity Incentive Fund in Ministry, appointed by the President, was established. Incomes of the “poor fund” or “fakfukfon” fund among the public are covered by donations and aids as well as public resources. On the other hand, the opposition criticized the existence of a flexible and non-bureaucratic mechanism, such as a fund, where the traditional understanding of charity was at the forefront instead of the state-citizen relationship. These criticisms were not due to the opposition's view of poverty from a rights-based perspective. For example, the SHF was a party that refused to see the difference between poverty and 'poor income', moreover, was close to the poverty phenomenon of the traditional CHP line and the state's approach to social responsibilities and was completely alien to the idea of social assistance (Buğra, 2008).

Özal governments planned to ensure the enrichment of the state with the enrichment of the nation and on this basis they indexed the enrichment to hard work as the nation. Therefore, especially in party programs, issues such as unemployment, employment and development have been widely included (H.Sami, 2008). However, with the change of distribution dynamics in the control of the market, productivity in the agricultural sector decreased, and sectors such as subcontracting, privatization, tourism and construction came to the fore. In this process, in the mid-1980s, it is seen that the news in newspapers about the decrease in labor force participation, youth unemployment and social problems due to economic reasons increased. In this context, where even talking about poverty is condemned, it can be interpreted that an effective and rights-based struggle against poverty is not pursued (Buğra, 2008). During this period, the society that Özal took power, described as “middle class”. (Koray , 2017).

In this period, with the increase in migration from the village to the city, the population of the village and the city became equal. While this situation further deepened the slum problem in the cities, as a result of the construction sector gaining importance and the normalization of 'housing' type projects built for the middle class, the Toplu Konut ve Yatırım İdaresi (TKYİ) was established in 1984. With the strengthening of the construction sector, a rent fight has started between the contractors and the owners of shanty houses, it has become increasingly difficult to meet the housing needs of the urban poor. In other words, the urban poor have felt the effects of the transition to a market economy in all areas of life.

Like the change in housing, some regulations have been made in health services in line with the market logic. With the regulation made in the field of health in 1987, revolving fund practice has been adopted to manage hospitals like commercial enterprises. These regulations have caused poor patients, who do not have a document proving their poverty, to meet their own treatment costs. After the ANAP lost the elections due to the increasing discontent in the society on this issue, the DYP and the SHF coalition government, which came to power, started the Green Card application. In the law, the presence of definitions such as “non-paying citizen”, “not under the guarantee of any social security institution”, “not having an income above the determined income” shows that it is an application for the poorest, not a universal health insurance. (Buğra, 2008). Although there are criticisms about how successful the Green Card application is, it does not reach the people who really need it, and the Green Card application causes clientelist relations, it is a fact that the application has a more formal infrastructure based on citizenship rights.

The formation of a new bourgeoisie with the strengthening of Islamic capital in the 1990s opened the door to a new era in Turkey. It is known that especially small and medium enterprises in Anatolia are getting stronger with the effect of the tendency of the economy to open up to foreign countries. It can be said that this new bourgeois group, which comes from the more conservative and religious segment and called Islamic capital, is the key point for the future. It can be said that small and medium enterprises, who are treated as “step-children”, have the desire to have

the resources and rents of large capital groups and to approach the state in order to open the way for them to benefit from the opportunities of the state. It is known that with the effect of this, Islamist parties started to rise and achieved successful results especially in the local area. As seen in the discourses of the Welfare Party that rose in the 1990s and later the AKP, these parties made populist discourses that make different promises to different classes, from the bourgeoisie to the workers. In the framework of conservatism against the imbalances and inequalities caused by the system, the promises of justice and fairness are voiced and are also met in the voters. (Koray , 2017)

As a result, it is seen that globalization and liberalization started a new era in Turkey in both the economy and the political field. While the fragility of the market caused negativity in economic indicators such as the increase in foreign debt and inflation, it paved the way for an increase in unemployment and poverty and a deepening of the injustice in income distribution. While individualist-apolotic tendencies were getting stronger on the one hand, on the other hand, religious and conservative identity was on the rise through associations, foundations, sects and parties.

In this period, when integration into the global economy and market economy gained importance, new regulations were made in social policy. While the ANAP governments aimed to enrich the nation with their neo-liberal economic policies, they adopted an aggressive and accusing attitude against the poverty problem with the effect of increasing income. It could not be expected that the state would be very effective in social policy, as the “nation expecting everything from the state” understanding was opposed. For this reason, with the contribution of Islamic discourse, the influence of foundations and associations has been increased by emphasizing the themes of cooperation and solidarity in accordance with the traditional aspects of Turkish society. In this way, poverty and social policy, together with the theme of volunteering, have been produced more under the influence of “charity”.

In this case, the effect of the market in the liberal transformation process, the withdrawal of the state in public services and social policies have an effect. Social

state and socio-economic rights have disappeared even from the discourse, unionization has decreased while privatizations are increasing, social policies are insufficient while unemployment and poverty are increasing, education, health and social security rights are marketed, the informal sector is growing, insecurity is dominant in working life, wages are crushed under inflation and ' In this period when the philosophy of “every sheep is hanged from its own leg”, the problems caused by these are tried to be solved with social assistance (Koray , 2017). The social state understanding has turned into a social aid understanding; rather than eliminating grievances, it is aimed primarily to maintain the system and the government. This goal is made on the basis of volunteering with the traditional background, by bringing the populist-clientelist discourse and practices to the forefront, where the understanding of rights does not even come to the agenda.

While this conjuncture helps the AKP governments to push the rights-based understanding to the background and bring “social solidarity” to the forefront in the line of social policy; in solving the problem of increasing poverty, the state should do a serious role (Buğra, 2008).

2.2.4. Social Policy in Conservative Liberalism: The AKP Period

The new social policy regimes that emerged in the neoliberal transformation process differ from country to country. The common point of all of them is that they are more integrated with the market, in contrast to the social state understanding. While social policy is not defined in terms of citizenship right, the understanding of social state practice has been abandoned. Social assistance became prominent in the new social policy understanding, and social policy, especially social assistance, has become a means of reintegrating poor social segments other than the client citizens of neo-liberalism into the market. In Turkey, the mentioned new social policy understanding has become intertwined with clientelist relations and turned into a kind of social aid regime. Therefore, the social aid regime, which reached its peak during the AKP rule, has traces of an international neo-liberal transformation on the one hand, and on the other hand, it has some national specificities that make the said transformation sustainable in Turkey (Durmaz, 2016).

In order to understand the mentality of the period, we can roughly describe the AKP period as follows: It is a period in which the central role played by the state in capital accumulation continues along with the development discourses as a developing country. Particularly the right-wing parties have an understanding of democracy based on the claims to represent a classless society and the entire society within the discourse of national will by getting stronger. In this context, an ideological-political structuring, in which nationalist, conservative and Islamic approaches are dominant, and these understandings are accompanied by populist-pragmatic approaches and practices, has been formed (Koray , 2017).

The AKP adopted an approach that embraced neo-liberalism to the fullest and was willing to implement the IMF's proposed policies. They advocated a social policy approach that encompasses not only formal sector employees, but all citizens. Also, because of the congregational political tradition in their backside, he used family and Islamic mechanisms within traditional methods of mutual aid. The AKP, which should adopt the anti-social policy stance of conservative liberalism, has included social security reform in the policies proposed by the IMF to Turkey, the new poverty picture being visible as a result of the 2001 economic crisis, and the relations with the European Union. It forced a discussion of the necessity of a major change in mentality in terms of politics (Buğra, 2008).

In the first years of its coming to power, the AKP government had to prepare a Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM) as part of the EU harmonization process. Unlike other periods, this enabled poverty to be handled with all its dimensions. In addition, with the effect of the changing world conjuncture, the view that their states are responsible for the solution of the poverty problem has come to the fore. However, still the main struggle against poverty was the responsibility of volunteering and non-governmental organizations in Turkey (Buğra, 2008). AKP shared its responsibility with the society with its traditional and conservative background, with concepts such as family, charity and solidarity.

It is known that in the AKP period, local communication networks and municipalities had a very important place in social policy. It is known that the local

networks mentioned in the 1994 local elections and in the 1995 general elections successes of the Refah Partisi (Welfare Party, RP) and the AKP since 2002 have been effective. This understanding of municipalism, which manages to penetrate even the smallest social tissues through local governments and affects voter behavior with the social assistance they provide, goes beyond a unique local government understanding, so to speak, it becomes policy regime one of the essential elements in the society. During the AKP governments, this situation has been strengthened by legal regulations. With these legal regulations, local authorities have come to the fore in the field of social policy as never before. The relations between municipalities and religious foundations and communities have met in the axis of social policy and have been harmonized with the neo-liberal transformation process in this axis. (Durmaz, 2016).

In this period, it is a fact that social expenditures and social assistance increase. In the program of the party, which acts with the ideal of "being the supporter of the orphans", the social state understanding that takes care of the victims such as the poor, the individuals in need of care, the elderly, children, the unemployed, the citizens in distress, and that will enable to share living in a way that suits for human dignity mentioned. For this purpose, the ruling government will expand, the scope of old age pension, provide support pensions to low-income families, elderly or disabled people in need of care, pension to women whose spouses have died and who do not have any social security, extending the period of free education and distributing books free of charge, expanding the social security system, conditional cash supports in society. Has implemented regulations and practices such as the establishment of the Ministry of Social Policy (Koray , 2017). However, it should not be forgotten that these cause different interest relations between both the state-voter and the state and different rent groups. For example, while creating the perception that equality of opportunity is created for poor students by distributing some educational materials free of charge in education. On the other hand, there are criticisms that some companies are provided with a tender procedure for the supply of these training materials. (İnal, 2017). Another example is that in regions where the AKP has a strong local organization and has a party under its local

administration, there are some discuss, the rate of having a Green Card is higher, and the tendency to have Green Card holders is higher. Especially, the party wants to change voters mind's and uses state opportunities. (Kemahlıoğlu & Bayer, 2019). Establishing clientelist relations with the electorate is easier for established parties. Because they mobilize more resources with relatively less effort, incumbent brokers have a larger capacity to mobilize various formal and informal networks for clientelistic interactions, and they can also reap more electoral benefits from discretionary distribution of resources (Yıldırım, 2019).

As a result, the AKP came to power in the early 2000s, when poverty emerged as a serious problem and Turkey entered a new era with the effect of globalization and neo-liberalization. The impact of IMF programs and EU cohesion relations forced the new government to be more effective in poverty and social policy. In addition, the party's neo-liberal, conservative and populist discourses also supported this process. The social state understanding of the AKP governments, who came to power with the “service” oriented and “elimination deep victimization” discourse: It can be defined as a “social aid state” that aims not to realize socio-economic rights, and to protect the poorest and the most destitute in society. The government, which is far from a rights-based social policy approach as a result of neo-liberal policies, aimed to “manage” problems such as poverty, unemployment, and homelessness and to “deal” with problems without experiencing a serious legitimacy crisis. In addition, by making the culture of “addiction” in the individual and “poverty-deprivation” permanent in the society, masses that cannot live without help and do not engage in any political-ideological struggle to change the system have been formed. Clientelist relations are established with these masses through aids, through institutions such as social assistance associations, municipalities, foundations and charity associations.

CHAPTER III

3. Poverty and Voter Behavior: The Case of Zeytinburnu

In this chapter, the poverty, effect of social assistance on voter behavior will be examined through the example of Zeytinburnu.

3.1. Purpose and Scope

Today, poverty is one of the most important problems that individuals, states, institutions and organizations struggle with. Istanbul, which is the most populous city in Turkey, is the province with the highest income inequality. According to the Regional Results of the Income and Living Conditions Survey published by TURKSTAT in 2019, the region with the highest annual average household disposable income in Turkey was the Istanbul region with 40 thousand 749 TL. However, despite this figure, according to the P80 / P20 ratio calculated as the ratio of the income of the 20 percent group with the highest income to the income of the group with the lowest income, Istanbul has been the region with the highest income inequality in Turkey with a rate of 7.8 (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2020). This result proves that poverty is an important problem in Istanbul.

Zeytinburnu, one of the oldest districts of Istanbul, has been elected and managing by the heads of the same political party for many years with a high rate of votes. In the last local election held on March 31, 2019, Ömer Arısoy, the mayor candidate of the AKP, was elected with a rate of 50.42% (Anadolu Ajansı, 2019). The AKP's success is thought to be influenced by social assistance in Zeytinburnu, which is a populous district, hosted different economic sectors and is one of the “slum” districts of the city. Therefore, the impact of poverty on voter behavior will be assessed through a survey study conducted in this district.

The concept of poverty, mostly in cities, mostly in the informal sector, working with insecurity and low wages, in other words, it will be evaluated over the concept of “new poverty” who is poor despite working. For this reason, the survey participants were asked to make their own evaluations about their own economic

conditions, and the effects of social assistance on voter preferences were examined within the scope of clientelist relations, together with their social assistance backgrounds.

3.2. Spatial Framework of the Research

Zeytinbunu district of Istanbul consists of 13 neighborhoods, it has 11.39 km2 area with popular infrastructure services and transportation networks, it is a place established on an area of such as Metrobus, Tramway, Metro, Marmaray and Eurasia Tunnel, and includes in their borders of 2 important road routes as, the coastal road and the E-5 road (Zeytinburnu Municipality, 2020). It should also be noted that Zeytinburnu is an important income center due to these spatial characteristics, urban transformation activities are intensified, and therefore it is in a socio-economic transformation process.

The number of workplaces in the region is also very high. There are approximately 25 thousand workplaces and around 10 thousand workshops belonging to sectors such as textile, knitting industry, leather, home furnishings and metal goods in the district (Zeytinburnu Municipality, 2020). It should be noted that these workplaces are generally 'under the stairs' companies, informal work and low wages are high.

As of 2020, 283,657 people live in the district (Zeytinburnu Municipality, 2020). The district has been an intense immigration region for many years, it is known that the Kurdish population during the 90s and the Syrian immigrants who migrated to Turkey after the war in the last 10 years settled in the district. It can be said that this is due to the lower rental rates compared to other districts and the intense and cheap labor force of the workplaces.

The neighborhood where the research was conducted is Yeşiltepe District. According to a study conducted in this neighborhood in 2016, it was the most crowded neighborhood in Istanbul, but it is not the most crowded neighborhood in Istanbul at the moment. However, the neighborhood is generally dominated by unplanned urbanization and has a high population of immigrants and workplaces.

The places where the research was conducted are businesses such as haberdashery and markets that are mostly visited by women.

3.3. Research Design

The thesis examines the effect of social assistance on voting behavior. While doing this, three concepts were especially emphasized: poverty, social assistance and electoral favoritism. In this context, the main question of this thesis is 'Does social assistance affect people's voting behavior, and does it have a relation with the poverty? '. The answer to this question was investigated through the example of Zeytinburnu. To followed three stages while trying to answer this question. In the first stage, wanted to define the concepts of poverty, social assistance and voter clientelism. Each of these concepts were multi-faceted concepts that contained too many sub-concepts and did not have absolute definitions. After the definition, tried to make sense of the interactions of these concepts with examples both in Turkey and in the world. In this context, has included the literature reviews has done in the previous sections.

In the second stage, tried to learn the effect of all this conceptual framework that to examined and tried to make sense of on people's lives. To carried out this stage as a survey study, taking into account the pandemic conditions. The haphazard sampling method was used as the sampling method. In the selected region, survey questions were directed to randomly selected people without knowledge of poverty or social assistance history. A general evaluation was made as a result of the questionnaire answered by 80 people. Thanks to the survey, had basic information about the socio-economic status of people in the selected region, their experience of receiving social assistance and their possible effects on voting behavior.

The last and most challenging stage was face-to-face interviews. 3 female and 3 male participants were selected from 80 people surveyed. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with these participants. During the face-to-face interview, a total of 26 questions were asked about the participants' experience of receiving social assistance and its effect on their voting behavior. For this stage, had to convince

people first. In particular, people have heard reservations about privacy. Thanks to face-to-face meetings, to gain an inclusive knowledge of the experience of receiving social assistance and how this was reflected in voter behaviors.

3.3.1. Survey Study

For quantitative data, a questionnaire developed for this research was filled out by 80 randomly selected people. There are a total of 20 questions in the questionnaire. The first 5 questions are about the demographic characteristics of the participants such as gender, age group, education, marital status and the number of people living in the household. Information was obtained about the individuals' economic income, employment characteristics, satisfaction with the economic situation and their opinions about the future with the 6 questions behind it.

Questions between 6 to 12,

- Employment status
- Monthly income
- Views on personal economic well-being
- Views about the economic progress
- Worries about the future
- The most worried issue

The last 9 questions in the survey are focused on the participants' experience of receiving outreach. The questions about the source, duration / continuity of the aids received, the type of the aids received, whether they were beneficial or not were included in the questionnaire. Questions about whether or not social assistance is effects politically preferences, whether or not political party continuity is effective on social assistance were included in the questionnaire.

These questions,

- Have you received any social assistance from any institution, organization, foundation, party or community in your life?
- What is the type of institution or organization you receive social assistance?

- Have you received any social assistance from your provincial/district municipality?
- How often do you receive the assistance?
- What type of help do you receive?
- Do you find it useful to distribute aid to people in need?
- Do you think that the parties that provide social assistance affect the preferences of the voters during the election period, and that the aid provided ensures that the party is preferred?
- Do you think that the municipality or the government should be managed by the same political party for the continuity of social assistance?
- Do you worry that the social benefits distributed will be cut due to the separation of the current political party from the municipality or the ruling administration?

The questionnaire includes evaluation scales where the participants can reveal their subjective perceptions, open-ended questions that can be answered according to their own life, economic situation, thoughts and evaluations, and multiple-choice answers. The survey did not specifically include the name of the political party. Questions were asked about the participants' evaluations of the effect of the aid distributed to the poor in general on political preferences.

The survey application was carried out on 18-19 May 2021. Participants in the survey were briefed by me on what the survey will be used for, that the participant information that filled out the questionnaire will be kept and remain anonymous. Later, the participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire prepared electronically on Google Documents. The information provided by the people who completed the questionnaire is completely confidential. The reason for doing this is that the findings of previous studies similar to this study suggesting that the participants who received social assistance were psychologically negatively affected during the application process and the aid distribution process, felt themselves needy, humiliated and lost their self-esteem.

3.3.2 Face to Face Interviews

To made face-to-face interviews with 6 volunteers who also participated in the survey. To make these interviews in November 2021. Since the survey did not provide comprehensive information about the experience of receiving social assistance and its effect on voter behavior, it was decided to conduct these interviews. There is a period of approximately 6 months between the survey and the study. However, the need for social assistance has increased even more due to price increases, high inflation, changes in exchange rates and deeper poverty due to the pandemic period. During the face-to-face interviews, it was observed that the type of help needed changed during the survey, while benefiting from different aids (For example, Mrs.E).

Face-to-face interviews were the most challenging part of the fieldwork. The most important reason for this was that had a hard time convincing people to meet face to face. Some of the survey participants that to offered to participate in the face-to-face interview did not want to participate in the face-to-face interview. People's biggest reservations had to do with privacy. They were particularly disturbed by the fact that their names, addresses and homes were known. For this reason, the initials of the participants' names were used by coding. The qualifications that define the participants, such as which apartment or flat they live in, were kept confidential.

Had a personal acquaintance with some of the participants before the research because to live in the same neighborhood. This means that has the impression that people who know me before are sometimes embarrassed when sharing their personal information. For example, it was observed that a female participant hesitated before giving the information that she did not have a civil marriage with her husband. Had a personal acquaintance with some of the participants before the research because to live in the same neighborhood. This means that has the impression that people who know me before are sometimes embarrassed when sharing their personal information. For example, it was observed that a female

participant hesitated before giving the information that she did not have a civil marriage with her husband.

To interview a total of 6 people, three women and three men. During the interview, a total of 26 questions were asked to the participants.

In first eight questions,

- What is your gender?
- What is your age?
- Where do you live?
- What is your marital status?
- What is your education status?
- Do you have children, how many children do you have?
- How would you describe your economic situation?
- How do you make a living, do you work? If you are working, what are the qualifications of the job (secured, full-time, insecure, part-time etc.)

These questions were asked to determine the socio-economic status of the participants. In this way, the personal information of the participants was learned. Instead of asking directly about their monthly net income, to asked to participants to describe their own economic situation. Participants defined their economic situation as 'low income', 'not able to live on'. The most important reason why to asked tto participants to describe their own economic situation was that to wanted to raise awareness about their own situation.

Eleven of the 26 questions were related to the experience of receiving social assistance. These questions,

- Have you ever received social assistance?
- From which institution or organization did you get it?
- How did you apply for the social assistance you received, how did your application process work?
- Did you encounter any difficulties during the application?

- Do you think the aid is distributed fairly? Do you think that every needy person can get help?
- Do you tell your people that you are getting help? Are you ashamed to seek help?
- How often do you receive social assistance?
- Were you satisfied with the help you received?
- Do you think that the aid you receive meets your needs? Do you find it particularly useful in the long run?
- Do you think social assistance will reduce poverty?
- Do you think institutions and organizations such as the municipality and district governorship should help?

The answers to these questions provided information about the social assistance experience in the selected region. In addition to the survey questions, also to added questions about the application processes and the situations encountered during the face-to-face interviews during the face-to-face interviews. The long and tedious process of applying for help or the experiences that humiliate or embarrass them during the application create obstacles to people's access to help. In addition to the survey study, in the face-to-face interviews, the participants were also asked whether they shared the information that they received help with their surroundings.

Last 7 questions asked,

- When you vote, would you prefer the party that helped?
- Do you think the municipality belonging to each political party should help?
- Are you or a member of your family a member of any political party?
- Do you think that membership of a political party facilitates access to social assistance?
- Have you participated in the work or activities of any political party to get help?
- Are you worried that if the current party is not elected, the aid you will receive will be cut off? For example, do you think that if the AKP mayor is not elected in Zeytinburnu, there will be no aid

- Have you ever thought of voting for another political party?

These questions are about the effect of social assistance received on political preferences. In addition to the questions in the survey, respondents were asked whether they were members of any political party. The opinions of the participants on whether or not party membership facilitates access to social assistance were obtained. In addition, the opinions of the participants were taken about whether participation in any political party activity would also benefit from getting help or not.

3.4. Demographic Characteristics of Participant Samples

The survey was conducted with 80 participants. 29 of the participants are men and 51 of them are women. The reason why the participants are mostly chosen from women; there are findings indicating that women's tendency to apply for social assistance, social assistance experiences and political preferences in the context of clientelist relations are higher.

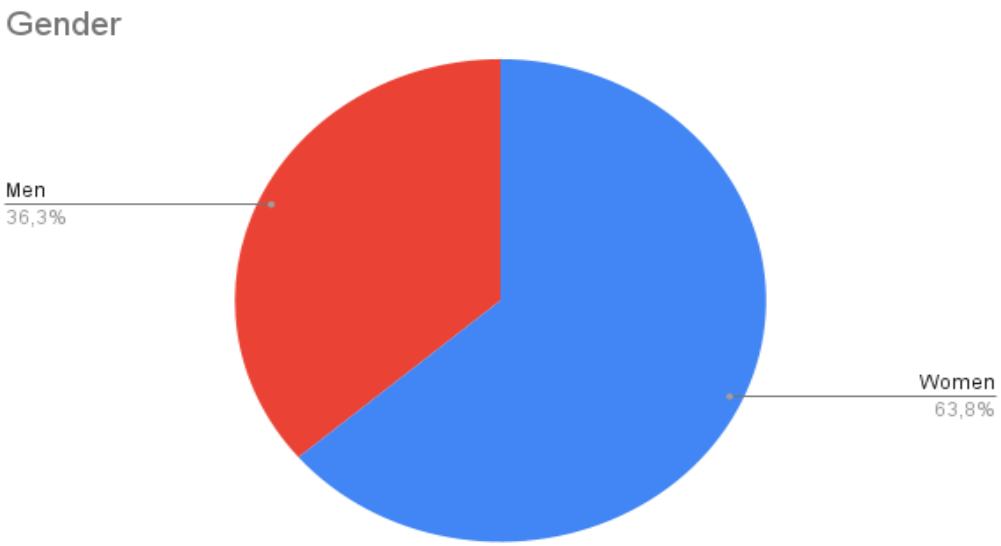

Table 1: Gender

Of the participants interviewed face to face, 3 men and 3 women. The reason why the number of men and women was chosen equally in the face-to-face interviews

was because to wanted to learn about the experience of both genders in receiving social assistance.

While 36.3% of the respondents are in the 35-44 age group; 32.5% are in the 25-34 age group. The youngest who participated in the face-to-face interviews was 22 years old, while the oldest was 56 years old. It is assumed that the social assistance applications of individuals younger than 18 and older than 65 are made by others.

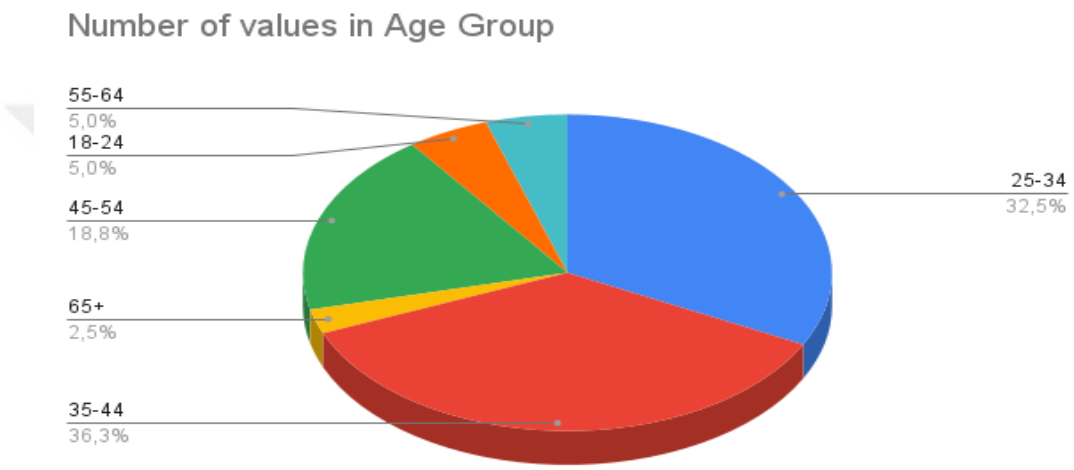

Table 2: Number of Values in Age Group

While 30 of the participants are single, 50 of them are married. While 11 of the men participating in the survey were single; 18 of them are married. 33 of the women are married. It was learned that while the 4 participants who participated in the face-to-face interview were married, two of them were single but living with his/her family. It has been determined that married individuals have a higher tendency to receive social assistance.

77% of the participants are members of families of 3 or 4 as an example of traditional family structure. Most of the participants interviewed face to face are family with children. It is known that married individuals and individuals with children demand more social assistance in order to survive and access basic needs, and women in particular look more favorably on social assistance for their children.

While 36.2% of the participants are undergraduate graduates, 33.8% of them have high school education. The rate of those who have completed only 8 years of compulsory education is 26.3%. Only one of the face-to-face interviewed participants has undergraduate education, while the other participants are at high school and lower education level.

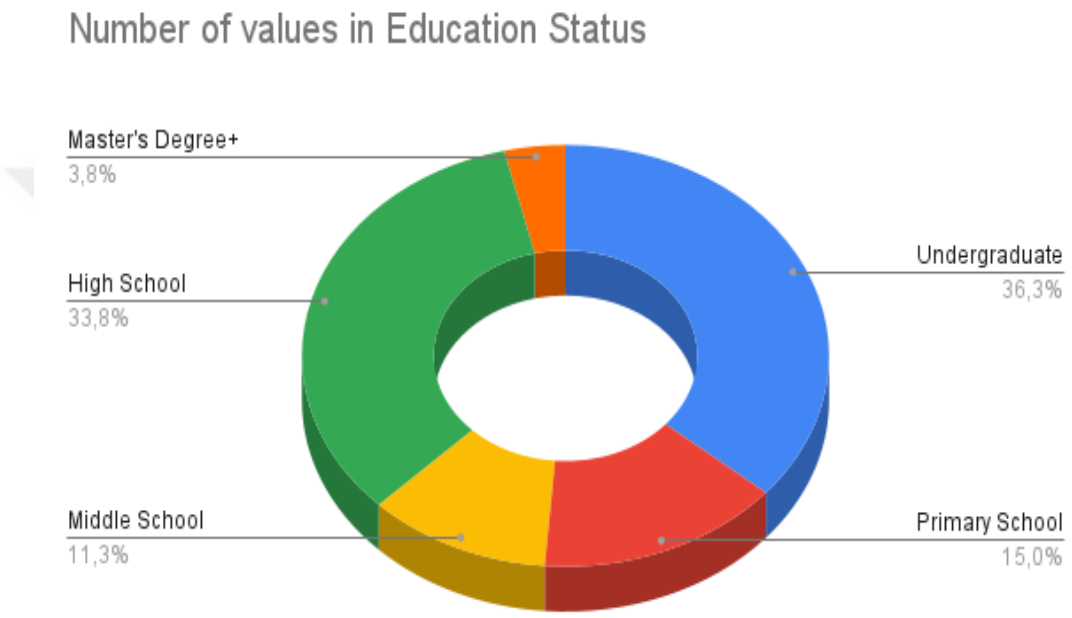

Table 3: Number of Values in Education Status

Accordingly, it was observed that most of the participants were working in a full-time, regular and insured job. While 41 people work in a full-time, regular and insured job, 15 people marked “I work part-time in an irregular and uninsured job”. While 2 of the female participants who participated in the face-to-face interview stated that they were housewives, one of them stated that they had recently started working with minimum wage. While one of the male participants states that he is unemployed, two of them are self-employed. One of the participants, who is self-employed, also declared that he is retired.

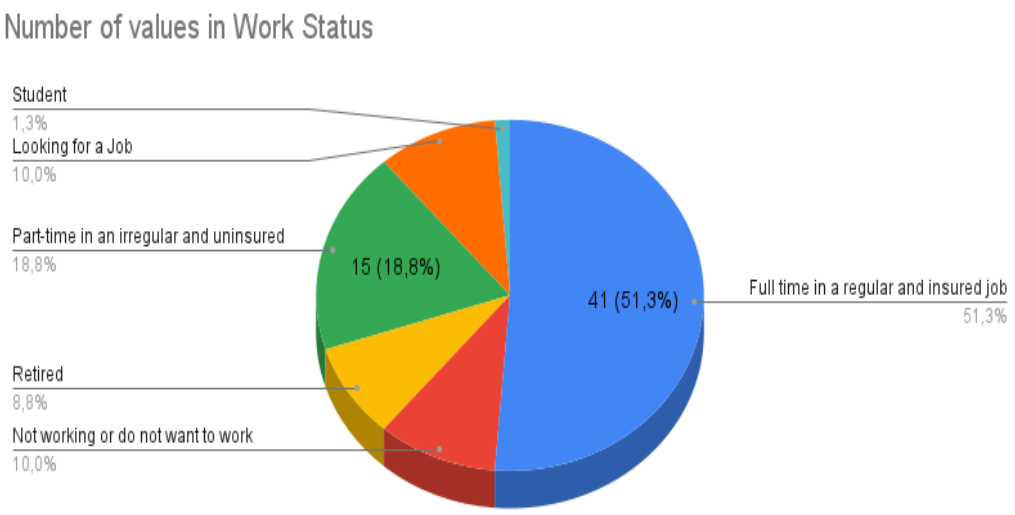

Table 4: Number of Values in Work Status

3.5. The Findings and Analysis of the Research

3.5.1. Education

It has been determined that most of the participants in the study are undergraduate or high school level. 36.2% of the participants stated that they were undergraduate and 33.8% were high school graduates.17 women and 12 men participating in the survey received a bachelor's degree. 7 male participants are high school graduates. The number of high school graduate female participants is 20. It has been observed that the education level of the young population is higher.

Education increases the ability of poor people to earn income and the mobility of labor and enables disadvantaged people to have a say in social life and the political system. In addition, education has a positive effect on increasing the qualified workforce and the productivity of labor (İncedal, 2013).

It is seen that education has a positive effect on the economic conditions of individuals indirectly on poverty (Şenses, 2001). Turkey Statistics Institute in 2019 notes that the higher the education level, the higher the average annual work income. While a higher education graduate earns an average annual income of 51

thousand 888 TL, this figure is 18 thousand 279 TL for individuals who do not graduate from a school (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2020). In other words, the higher the education level, the higher the income level. As can be seen in the survey results, the higher the education level, the higher the income level. It has been determined that the majority of people with low income and needing social assistance have less than a bachelor's degree education. Of the 22 people with a monthly income of 3.501 TL or more, 16 are undergraduate and 2 are graduate. It has been determined that the participants with a monthly income slightly above the minimum wage and minimum wage mostly have high school or lower education.

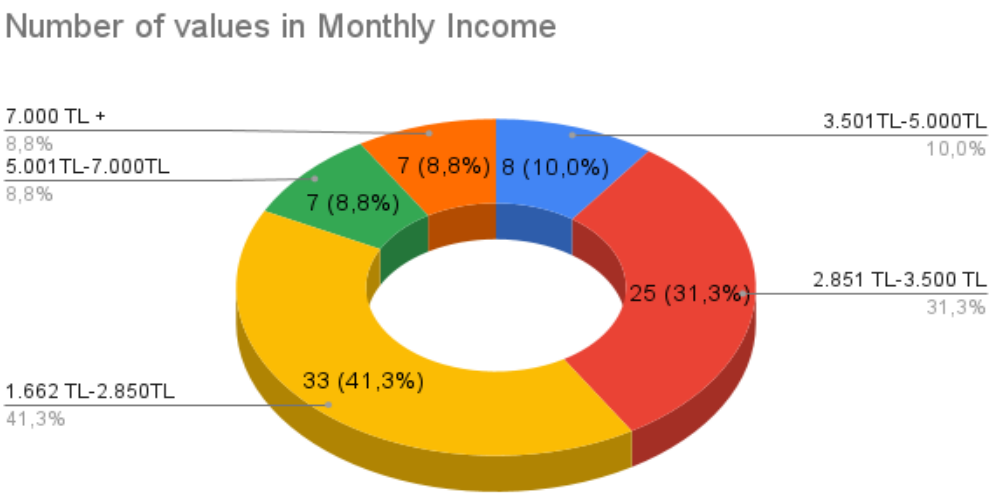

Table 5: Number of Values in Monthly Income

Another finding emerged as a result of the study is that as the education level increases, the rate of receiving social assistance has decreased. 10 of the 15 male participants who stated that they have never received any social assistance in their life are undergraduate degrees. The number of graduate women who stated that they have never received any social assistance in their life is 12. The number of women with undergraduate degrees and receiving social assistance is 5. High school graduated women are the ones who experience the most with social assistance. It was determined that married, high school graduated women between the ages of

35-44, received the most social assistance. Ms. E and Ms. L are examples of women who are both high school graduates and receive social assistance.

3.5.2. Gender

Due to the gender inequality experienced in social life, poverty emerges as a phenomenon that women encounter more. The phenomenon of feminization of poverty has been more noticed and discussed recently. Due to women's unequal access to opportunities in all areas of social life, such as education, health services, employment and participation in political life, their poverty is increasing and persistent (Kaymak, 2011).

It is seen that the concept of 'feminization of poverty' put forward by Diana Pearce is an important problem for all developed and developing countries (Uğur, 2017). Reasons such as the change in family structure, increase in divorce, increase in having children out of marriage and women being responsible for the care of children were used to explain the feminization of poverty. Women and children in the society are at a more disadvantageous position against the risk of impoverishment. The reasons such as women's gender inequality, being responsible for household chores, child and elderly care, being either uneducated or low-educated, and inexperienced in business and working life increase the poverty risk of women more than other segments. Women are more exposed to poverty and experience poverty more deeply (Şengül & Fisunoğlu, 2014). As an indication of this situation 51 women, 33 of whom were married and 18 were single, participated in the survey. The education level of the majority of the female participants (33 people) is high school and below. While 17 of the female participants were graduated a bachelor's degree, one of them received a master's degree. However, considering the number of men participating in the survey, the rate of graduation from undergraduate programs is higher than that of women.

The acceptance that the family is based on traditional gender norms, that the man is the source of the household's income, the women's job is defined primarily with duties and care responsibilities in the household, eliminates the opportunity for

women to have an equal social status to men. However, neoliberalism emphasizes individuality more in the social and economic field and ignores gender equality. Neoconservatism, on the other hand, attributes more value to the family, highly dependent on traditional gender roles. This ideological approach causes women to be more affected by the emerging inequalities and thus more exposed to poverty (Özateş Gelmez, 2018). Poverty has become an even greater threat to women due to the lower rate of female employment in Turkey compared to men.

While the poverty risk of women is 22.3 percent compared to the EU average, this rate is 20.4 percent for men. In Turkey, 41 percent of women at risk of poverty is 38.6 percent of the men (DİSK/Genel-İŞ, 2021). Considering that the epidemic of Covid-19 will increase the number of the poor both in the world and in Turkey and women's poverty will deepen, it can be said that this number may increase in the coming years. The fact that female employment is lower than that of men also increases the poverty risk of women. It is predicted that the poverty rate of women will increase by 9.1% between 2019-2021 due to the impact of the epidemic. According to the report published by UN Women; in 2021, 96 million people are expected to be extremely poor due to the epidemic, and approximately 47 millions of this number is estimated to be women and girls. This means the number of women and girls living in extreme poverty to 435 million. In this case, it is seen that in 2021, for every 100 men living in extreme poverty between the ages of 25-34, there will be 118 women. This figure is expected to increase to 121 in 2030 (UNDP, 2020).

Considering the economic situation in the pandemic period, it has been observed that families with children need social assistance more and tend to apply for more than one type of assistance. For example, Ms. E, one of the participants to interviewed face-to-face, became in need of help after her husband passed away due to the coronavirus. Ms. L, who said that she had received help from Zeytinburnu Municipality before, stated that she also applied to the district governor's office in order to access other aids.

According to that, it was determined that the majority of female participants participating in the survey are married and have children in accordance with the norms of traditional family structure. Less than half of the women who are participated the survey stated that they work full time and in a regular job. While it is determined that the majority of married women are not working or looking for a job, it was observed that a significant number of women participants were working part-time, in irregular and uninsured jobs. However, it was determined that most of the male participants were working full time, in a regular and insured job. Unlike the men surveyed, one of the men I interviewed does not have a regular job. Another participant stated that his monthly income has changed because he is a taxi driver.

In addition to the gendered division of labor transforming women's labor into a less valuable form of labor compared to men's (Özateş Gelmez, 2018), traditional gender roles also increase female poverty. Looking at the profiles of poor women, the problem of not being able to work because there is no one to take care of their children or the patient in the home becomes prominent. In particular, I can say that the biggest obstacle to women's employment is their children. Similar to Ms. L, Ms. E says that the reason she can't work is because of her children. Ms. E said, *'I have never worked in my life, I got married at the age of 20, then when there were children, I couldn't work because we had no one to look after*.' .

Working women, on the other hand, generally work irregularly and uninsured in jobs that require body strength in daily work (usually cleaning).

Ms. L explains the reason for not working regularly as follows:

'*I go to the cleaning from time to time, I can't go regularly every day because I have 3 children. Come on big girl, she has nothing to me after high school, one of the little ones goes morning period and one is an afternoon period to school. When they say take someone to school and leave someone, they don't want me to go to the house of the people with the child anyway.*'

In addition to this situation, the fact that their spouses do not allow them to work and that they are perceived as a shame prevents women from participating in working life.

70% of the respondents described themselves as 'low-income level'. The income level of 56 people including 37 women and 19 men was defined as low. It has been found that most of the women who describe themselves as 'middle-income' have an income of 3.500TL or less. Most of the participants to interviewed face-to-face also expressed themselves as 'low income'. Even though they describe themselves as 'low income', it was observed that the male participant did not like being called 'poor', while the female participant said that she was 'poor' when describing her economic situation. For example, Mr.M said that:

'I am a low-income person; they say poverty line or something. When I look at what I earn, I am below that line, but there is no lie, I am ashamed to call myself poor.'

In contrast to MR.M, Mrs. L descried herself:

'*I can't make a living. I barely make a living, colloquially I'm poor'*

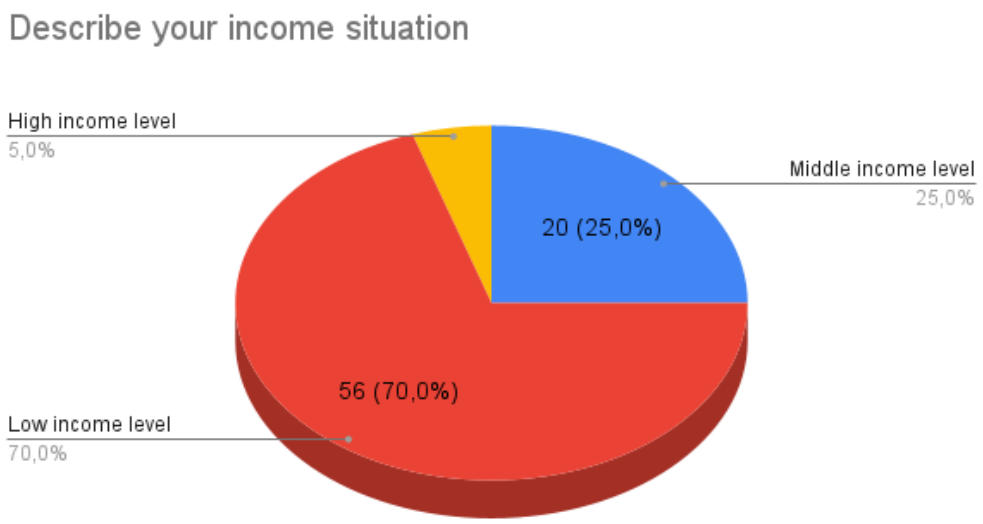

Table 6: Describe Your Income Situation

However, the poverty line in Turkey is above this figure. It was also revealed in the results of the survey that both female and male participants, who described their income status as both 'low' and 'moderate', were not satisfied with the economic course. It has been determined that women who are not satisfied with the economic situation and who are at low- and middle-income levels are also concerned about the future. That's why it has also been observed that poor health and hopelessness, both the cause and the result of poverty, cause various health problems, such as depression or an increase in nervous diseases, especially in women (Bora, 2016).

In the context of subsistence strategies, the role of women is generally positioned by the reproduction of informal social networks. Therefore, the livelihood of the household is not only dependent on cash income, but also on many resources such as social assistance that can be accessed by women and relative assistance (Bora, 2016). It was found that 32 women who describe themselves at 'low' or 'middle' income level experienced receiving social assistance. It has been determined that women have received aid from provincial or district municipalities from time to time. The reason why municipalities are mostly preferred is that they are easier to access. Ms. L explains why municipalities should provide assistance as follows:

'Of course they should, after all, those are the closest institutions that I would ask for help. I vote, they are elected with my vote. After all, it has to serve me to vote again, right?'.

Similar to what Ms. L said, Mr. İ also states that he thinks especially municipalities should provide social assistance.

The participants stated that they found it beneficial to distribute aid to people in need. Benefiting from the cash and health benefits provided for his sick brother, Mr. K answered the question 'Are you satisfied with the help you received?' as follows.

'Of course we are glad. Wherever you look, my mother receives 2 thousand TL, who will give her that much money in this period? Simply put, a diaper is 150-200 TL, how will we buy it if we don't get diapers.'

Mr. M, who said that he received invoice assistance during the pandemic closure process, answered the same question as follows.

'I'm not going to lie, I was satisfied. It was already a time when we stayed at home with children, instead of cutting off my natural gas and water, my bill was paid. Because I could not afford to pay, I had to ask someone for a loan. But the situation of my friends and family is clear, from whom I would ask for a loan at that time. But what I liked best was that nobody knew that I was getting help.'

Although other participants stated that they were happy to receive help, they also emphasized that the assistance was insufficient. Like Mrs. E said: *'I am satisfied, sure, but not enough.'*. In this process, has observed that families in need of social assistance have needs in many areas. For example, a family with a disabled individual at home has both medical and financial needs. Likewise, families with students in their households may not only need education but also need food, fuel or cash aid. Although Ms. L receives stationery aid for her 2 children who go to school, she cannot make up for all of her children's school-related deficiencies. Mrs. L said that;

'No, what good will it do? With the help, I got rid of 100-200 TL of notebook and pen money. These children have uniforms, shoes, coats. The most important thing is nutrition, I have to feed 2 kids every day'.

As it is seen, the aid received does not fully meet the needs of the people, and their deprivation in other areas continues. This causes individuals to apply to many different types of assistance. It has been observed that especially in families where women are not working and with low-income levels, many aids are applied or received at the same time to meet their needs.

3.5.3. Working Urban Poor

51.2% of the respondents stated that they will work full time, in a regular and insured job. It was determined that 15 participants were working part-time, in an irregular and uninsured job. While 8.8% of the participants declared that they are

retired; it has been determined that 20% of them are looking for a job or do not work / do not want to work.

Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions research results in March 2021 4 people traditional type of family hunger limit of TL 2,736 in Turkey. The poverty line is 8.912 TL (Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions, 2021). Provision of a normal working day minimum wage of a worker in Turkey TL 119.25 (Resmi Gazete/Tebliğ, 2020). It is stated that the monthly net minimum wage is 2.825 TL (Bıyık, 2020). As of 2022, the minimum wage has been determined as 4.253 TL (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2022). In Turkey, 3.3 million workers below the minimum wage employees, employees working near the minimum wage and the minimum wage who is about 10 million inhabitants (The Research Center of the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey, 2020). The newly graduated Ms. F, whom to interviewed face-to-face, stated that she was a minimum wage worker, while Ms. L said that her husband worked for the minimum wage.

It is seen that the monthly income level of the majority of the participants is below 3.500 TL. There are 32 participants with the lowest income of 1.662 TL, which is the lowest pension of BAĞ-KUR pension, and in the minimum wage range determined in 2020. Ms. E, who has a family of 4, whom to interviewed face-to-face, is trying to make a living with 650 TL, which she receives every 2 months, while Mr. K and his family, who have a family of 3, are trying to live on about 2000 TL. Considering that these regular cash aids are below the poverty line and even the minimum wage, it can be interpreted that the aids are far from meeting the needs.

31.3% of the participants have a monthly income between 2.851 TL and 3.500 TL. Only 27.4% of the participants receive a fee of 3.501 TL or more. Seven of the 80 participants have an income between 5.001 TL and 7.000 TL, while another seven participants declared that they have an income of 7.000 TL and above. Whereas the hunger limit for a family of 4 people in Turkey is 2.719 TL and the poverty line is 8.856 TL.

These figures show that working poverty in cities can be of significant size. The concept of working poor is not new. According to Barbara Harriss-White, the destruction of small production, the feeding of technological and cyclical unemployment, the commodification of vitally necessary products and the destruction of the vital environment are causes capitalism to reproduce poverty (Harriss-White, 2006). Workers constitute the majority of the poor in the capitalist system. This is why Paul Cammack regards absolute poverty as a phenomenon belonging to the reserve workforce. It is known that the poor households are mostly formed by the laborers. It is a known fact that the poor identify with the laborers (Cammack, 2003). Chris Jonas and Tony Novak underline that the ruling classes of British capitalism have identified the poor with the laborer since the birth of capitalism (Bahçe & Köse, 2018).

With the effect of the neoliberal globalization environment and the restructuring of production, labor markets have also begun to restructure. Since the 1960s, due to the decline in industrialization in developed countries, employment in the manufacturing industry, which pays high average wages, has shifted to the service sector, which generally pays low wages (Şenses, 2001). The cross-sectoral change in employment has also led to changes in labor standards. The fact that multinational companies play an important role in this process, the shrinkage of employment greatly, the emergence of low-wage, part-time, job-insecure jobs have caused the labor market to work with less security and with lower wages (Şenses, 2001). In other words, neo-liberal policies increase employment types such as the informal sector, subcontracting, increase and spread and chronicity in the economy under the name of flexible production lead to the formation of working poor groups (İpek, 2015). Mr. M, who works regularly but does not have a regular net income, expresses his situation as follows:

'*I am a taxi driver, my lady is not working. What I earn one day is not the same as what I earn the next. I pay the taxi fare every day. I pay my insurance from outside, my house is rent, bills, the child's school expenses etc. We somehow make a living again, thank goodness for today.*'

56 of the 80 people who participated in the survey described their own income as 'low' level, considering the hunger threshold and poverty line in Turkey. While 25% of the respondents describe themselves as 'middle' income level, only 5% of the participants stated that they were at 'high' income level. 70% of the participants stated that they are not satisfied with the economic progress. 41 participants, who stated their income levels as low, were “not satisfied at all” with the economic progress, it was determined that 11 people marked the option 'I am less satisfied'. More than half of the 20 participants who describe themselves as “middle-income level” are also found to be “not satisfied at all” with the economic progress. It has been observed that even high-income participants are dissatisfied with the economic course.

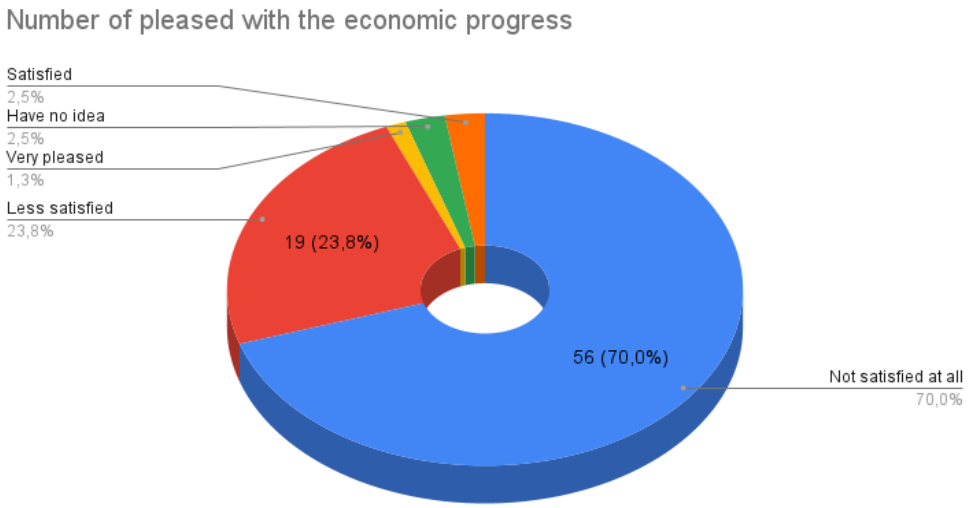

Table 7: Number of Pleased With The Economic Progress

The Turkish economy has been grappling with political tensions and economic instability in recent years. In addition, it is obvious that the global epidemic that has lasted for about 2 years has a negative effect on the Turkish economy. In Turkey, which cannot overcome the effects of fluctuations in the currency, some sectors have been greatly affected by the effect of the COVID-19 epidemic. Alper Üçok, Berlin Director of TÜSİAD, expressed the effect of the global epidemic on trade, saying “Our trade with Europe has almost come to a halt.” (DW Türkçe, 2020). In

2020, the Turkish economy entered this process with fragilities such as both dollarization and high inflation. While inflation increased, it was observed that the purchasing power of TL decreased significantly. Despite this, Turkey achieved a positive growth of 1.8% annually during this period. Changing the head of the Central Bank in a short period of time brought the sustainability problem we faced in economic policies back to the agenda. The decrease in the predictability of the market caused a depreciation in TL and the reliability of the country in the markets was negatively affected (TUSIAD, 2021). Whether Turkey is in an economic crisis is a different matter of debate. However, it seems that what happened in the Turkish economy in the second half of 2021 confirms Üçok's words. It is a known fact that cyclical fluctuations in the economy and financial crises have an effect on poverty, and it is a known fact that high inflation has a negative effect on people's purchasing power. Increasing unemployment, low wages and high inflation due to the economic crisis increase poverty as an extra burden on low-income individuals. This causes people to need more social assistance. It will be seen in the future how Turkish politics, which is far from a rights-based social aid understanding, will also be affected by this increasing wave of poverty. However, in this process, it is seen that the discourse of poverty in the opposition parties has increased. As seen in the example of Ankara, the increase in aid activities in provinces governed by opposition party mayors shows this.

With the effect of these internal dynamics and epidemic in the country, it has been determined that 90% of the participants have concerns about the future. It has been determined that most of the participants marked the options of pandemic-economic, crisis-unemployment. It has been observed that future anxiety is another issue that worries people the most. According to these results, it has been observed that there are working but poor, low-income, anxious and hopeless masses in Istanbul, the metropolitan city of Turkey.

3.5.4. Social Aid Experience

57.5% of the participants have had experience of receiving social assistance. While it was determined that five of the 6 participants to interviewed face-to-face, either

themselves or their family members received any help, the application of one participant was not accepted although he applied. When the demographic characteristics of social assistance recipients are examined, it is seen that the number of people receiving assistance increases as the age group increases. It has been determined that the number of people receiving assistance, especially in the age range of 18-24, is almost negligible. It has been determined that the participants who have had social assistance experience mostly have less than a bachelor's degree. It has been observed that the potential of married individuals to receive social assistance is higher. It has been determined that most of the social assistance recipients are married and belong to families of 3 or 4 people. It can be predicted that such families, which are estimated to be families with children, need social assistance more. This determination was also confirmed by the participants in the face-to-face interviews. Especially families with children are more inclined to seek help to meet their children's needs. There are examples such as Ms. E and F receiving stationery aid to meet the school needs of her children, and Mr. M applying for bill aid especially for his child.

It was observed that 30 of the 46 people who declared that they received social assistance were working full or part time. This is also the case with people interviewed face to face. However, it should be noted that the vast majority of people (almost percent of %67) who have not experienced social assistance work full time, in a regular and insured job. Approximately 52% of aid recipients have a monthly income between the lowest pension and the minimum wage, 39 percent of them were found to be in the range of 2.851-3.500 TL.

Provincial and district municipalities are the leading institutions where the participants receive the most aid. 67% of the participants who received social assistance declared that they received aid from provincial and district municipalities. It has been observed that most of the participants received help from many sources. The district governorship, the mukhtar's office, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, non-governmental organizations, foundations and associations, and provincial and district presidents of political parties are other

institutions and organizations that receive assistance. It was determined that more than half of the participants in the study received aid from provincial and district municipalities. This was confirmed by those who participated in the face-to-face interviews. Most of the participants declared that they received help from Zeytinbunu municipality.

In the 1970s and 1980s, decentralization was central to the reproduce of the welfare state under the rule of the new right. The role of local governments and other local actors in social policy has increased. One of the most important institutions in this period has become municipalities. This change in the local welfare system has caused municipalities to be the center of social power relations. In this new structuring, the concept of the local welfare system can be expressed as the intersection of both local and supralocal dynamics. In this context, the local welfare system's policies and practices towards the poor are not independent of the economic politics, the welfare state understanding and social policy in the center. There are advantages and disadvantages of transferring the struggle against poverty to the locals. In this way, it has been made easier to access services and policies determined to meet the needs of people in different regions. However, not every local government has the same resources and income. On the contrary, assigning poverty policies to local governments may lead to the deterioration of the standardized social rights system and the reproduction of social inequalities if certain conditions are not determined. In this conjuncture, the new trend in the fight against poverty in Turkey is the social policies established at the local level (Urhan, 2018). This explains why municipalities do the most social assistance. In addition, it has been determined that people see municipalities as the most accessible institution. The answer given by Ms. L to the question 'Do you think the municipalities should help' shows this. She said:

‘Of course, these are the closest institutions that I will ask for help.’

One of the most emphasized thoughts by AKP governments is the understanding of 'social municipalism'. This understanding has increased the importance of municipalities in Turkey, especially in this period. The district of Zeytinburnu has

also been administered by AKP municipalities since 2004. While Zeytinburnu district has a budget income of 398.808.475.71 TL, 368,564,047.26 TL of budget expense. Social Aid Affairs Directorate has a share of 22,033,043 TL in the budget expenditure. According to the report of the municipality, the success rate of this directorate according to the targeted and realized projects is 95% (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, 2020).

Social assistance provided by municipalities is usually provided as food aid or one-off cash aid. The reason for the low level of these assistance is often attributed to insufficient resources. The financial source of the aid is usually covered by donors, not from the budget (Urhan, 2018). Patronage work in state administration positions in contracted companies and direct transfers of money from the state budget or private companies in exchange for favors, especially for the award of contracts, are used by political parties to build their organizations and aids (Kemahlıoğlu & Bayer, 2019). According to the results of the research, participants received the most health, supplies and stationery aid. It was observed that the participants who received aid from the provincial and district municipalities received the most these aids. For instance,in 2020, Municipality of Zeytinburnu provided 31,970 food support to 16,333 families (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, 2020).

It is also stated in the annual report that the relevant unit in the municipality provides various aids for the disabled, immigrants living in the district, and students residing in the district. It has been observed that the municipality has excessive policies towards women, in line with the ideology of its party. Considering the role and importance of women in the family, they provide services such as education, counseling and therapy for the protection of the family. The report states that these practices aimed at women are made with an approach that' prioritizes the development of our women who are the core of the family' (Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, 2020). This discourse proves that policies for women are not designed to ensure gender equality, but rather to ensure the continuation of women at home and in the family. For example, Ms. E, who received a salary after her husband passed away, must not have any job and not have insurance in order to continue to

receive this salary. Ms. E expresses that she thinks that the help she receives will not reduce poverty:

‘*In order for me to receive this help, I have to remain poor all the time. If I get a job with insurance, the benefit will be cut off. If my income increases, my assistance will be cut off. What should I do now? How will I make a living if I don't work, and if I work, I will have to give up the right given to me by the state. I only go to cleaning houses or something without insurance or something. What do I do. If the government wants me to stay poor to help me, I'll stay too.’*

This example shows very well the place where AKP governments have positioned women. This mentality, which argues that women's real place is their home, instead of preventing the impoverishment of women, perpetuates the poverty of women with the help it provides.

The vast majority of the participants (about 63%) who received aid stated that they received the aid 'intermittently'. The proportion of individuals who receive aid regularly is below 1%. One of the biggest criticisms made about the social aid practice in Turkey is the unevenness of the aid and distribution process.One of the biggest criticisms made about the social aid practice in Turkey is the unevenness of the aid and distribution process. When I asked the participants in the face-to-face interviews whether they thought that the aid was distributed fairly, the participants stated that they did not find it fair. The biggest criticism was related to the fact that the one she/he knew in the AKP organization was favored. Mr. İ expresses this thought as follows.

‘I don’t think so. I needed it too, no one gave me anything.’

‘Ms. L, who had similar thoughts, shared her own experience with the following words.

‘Sometimes I see it, that is my neighbor, there is an aunt here, a parcel of food comes to her house every week, her son who is in the AKP organization works as a security guard in school. But their house is theirs, and my aunt is already retired; so they have income. Come on, I can get some food, my family is also supportive.

Is there anyone worse off than that aunt? There is no justice, I think it goes to whoever is close.'

Citizens' awareness of social assistance depends on their own efforts or the 89lientelist networks they will establish. Like Ms. E, who learned that she could get help thanks to her acquaintance working in the municipality, Ms. M and Ms. L also learned from their own circle that they could get help or that there were different kinds of help.

At the same time, that there are too many bureaucratic procedures in the application process. All 3 participants stated that the bureaucratic procedures are too many and that the most challenging part during the application is these paperwork and bureaucratic work.

Mr. K described his own experience as follows.

'It's a bit difficult of course, there is paperwork. Once I went and asked for the documents, I learned how to apply. Then prepare the paperwork and a ton of work. You get a separate paper from the headman's office, you prepare the hospital report separately, they ask for documents showing the income status, they want a lease contract, I don't know, there are a lot of documents'.

Mr. K, who had to constantly ask for permission from his job due to the long paperwork, said that he eventually lost his job.

There is also a factor of uncertainty and fear of cessation or termination of aid (Kutlu, 2018). An example of the uncertainty experienced during the aid application period was the experience of the brain. Mr. İ, who applied for the cash aids given to the tradesmen through the online system during the pandemic process but had to close his business by not getting any help, expressed the situation of his application while waiting for the next response.

'I know from myself that I filled out the form from that e-government, as if the money came out, I made a lot of plans like that ' I willt it on my card, I will buy goods'. Nothing came out, I was left with my hopes in vain.'

It is known that the social assistance application processes are in a humiliating and belittling manner. Ms. L, who wanted to apply for the financial aid given to families for their children, but did not meet the conditions, talked about her experience during the application.

'*I do not have a civil marriage with my wife, he has a married wife in Diyarbakır. When he saw him as a subject, his gaze and behavior changed immediately in the records, and the officer went to my pain a little.'*

Ms. L also stated that she would not apply for that aid application again because she thought she was humiliated.

3.5.5. Electoral Tendency

Most of the people surveyed stated that they found it beneficial to distribute aid to people in need. While 37.5% stated that the aids are 'very useful', 47.5% find the aids 'useful'. The participants to interviewed face-to-face also stated that it was right to provide assistance. Some participants also said that the aid was helpful but insufficient.

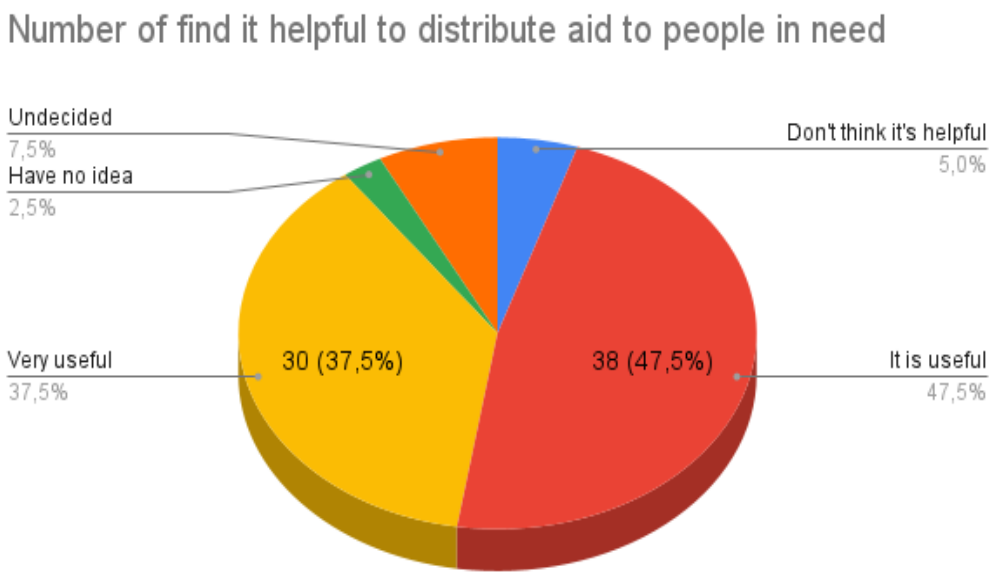

Table 8: Number of Find It Helpful to Distribute Aid to People in Need

The satisfaction rate of women who have had more social assistance experience is also higher. One reason for the high level of satisfaction with social assistance is that it is in line with the Islamic conservative understanding of philanthropy. The main characteristic of social assistance in Turkey is that it is not in the context of social rights based on the relationship between state and citizen. Social aids are often not seen as a right by managers and are made with a focus on conservative philanthropy and volunteerism.

The second reason is that the officers who provide assistance in determining the indigent people in the social assistance process, the amount of assistance, the type and duration of the assistance have a great discretion. This increases the possibility of aids being provided based on clientelist relationships (Urhan, 2018). Considering the power of AKP local organizations and the use of national government resources for party mechanisms and organizations (Kemahlıoğlu & Bayer, 2019), it can be predicted that party activists, who constitute an important element of local party organization, are also involved in the aid process to reach the voters. The stronger local party organizations in AKP-controlled municipalities helped the central government bureaucracy identify these voters, help them make applications for interests, thereby increasing the number of people accessing social policy practices in are controlled by AKP partisans (Kemahlıoğlu & Bayer, 2019). Almost most of the participants answered yes to the question of "Do you think that membership of a political party facilitates access to social assistance?" In addition, Mr. K explained one of his benefits as follows.

'*When I applied, they did not ask me anything about party membership. But there is a benefit. Friends say, for example, that you can apply to this. We also have older, more important familiar, and when we say their greetings, the process speeds up a bit.'*

Participants have been asked whether or not political parties that distribute social aid are the preferred reason for voters. 72.5% of the participants answered this question that the aids would affect the choice of voters. Most of the women to

interviewed face-to-face said that this was a reason for preference, while 2 of the men said that it would not affect them.

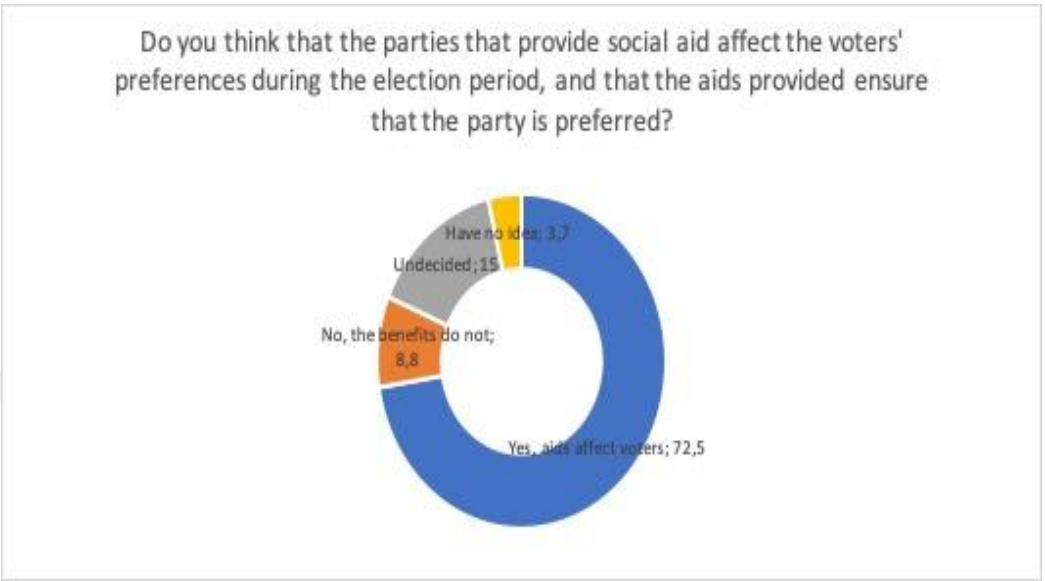

Table 9: Do You Think That The Parties That Provide Social Aid Affect The Voters' Preferences During The Election Period, And That The Aids Provided Ensure That The Party Is Preferred?

This is a big ratio because both those who receive aid and those who do not think that the aids will affect the choice of the voter. It is seen that social aid practices in Turkey support the current politicization style and clientelist relations. The fact that aids are not rights-based, there are uncertainties about the aid process, and their presentation to the society as a kind of party ability supports this process. It is seen that social assistance causes tendencies in the society that may cause political support. Individuals who receive social assistance have a tendency to get help and give political support spontaneously and affect their immediate environment without the need for the intervention of any central or local element of the political subject (Kutlu, 2018). Ms. F, who declared that she is a member of the AKP, said that she voluntarily participated in the work of the party during the pandemic period.

'After all, isn't the great feature of our party to serve its nation? Especially municipalities are working hard. In the pandemic, for example, volunteers have always shopped and bought their needs for those who are infected and cannot leave

the house, the elderly, etc. Where else in the world is there such a helping hand? Our state helped a lot of people, and we were able to get through those days, thank God.'

Individuals receiving social assistance cannot fulfill the most basic needs for reproduction with the income obtained from the labor market. Therefore, they tend not to give up social assistance. Social assistance both fulfil the cash needs of individuals/ households and make it easier to have other basic needs. For this reason, social assistance acts as a kind of buffer (Hacısalihoğlu, 2018).Another reason for the tendency of individuals receiving social assistance to show political support in the context of clientelist relations is the emphasis on philanthropy in aid. Since the donors do the aid for conservative philanthropy or 'good deeds', recipients also reproduce this understanding mutually. They feel a sense of belonging to the people who help and institutions, and they feel gratitude (Urhan, 2018). Mr. K also expresses his belonging to the party he is a member of as follows.

'I have participated in the party's rallies and activities until this time, but not so that they can help me. My ties to the AK Party are not dependent on aid. Today, 20 liras is not enough in my pocket, but I know that my state is with me. Thanks to whom? Thanks to Mr. Erdoğan, he embraced all the oppressed and served everyone. God bless us.'

Uncertainties regarding the application, distribution and continuity of social assistance raise people's concern that their aid will end in case of any party change. Therefore, 53.8% of the participants stated that they have this type of concern. Particularly, it has been observed that the participants tend to be grateful to the president for the aid provided.

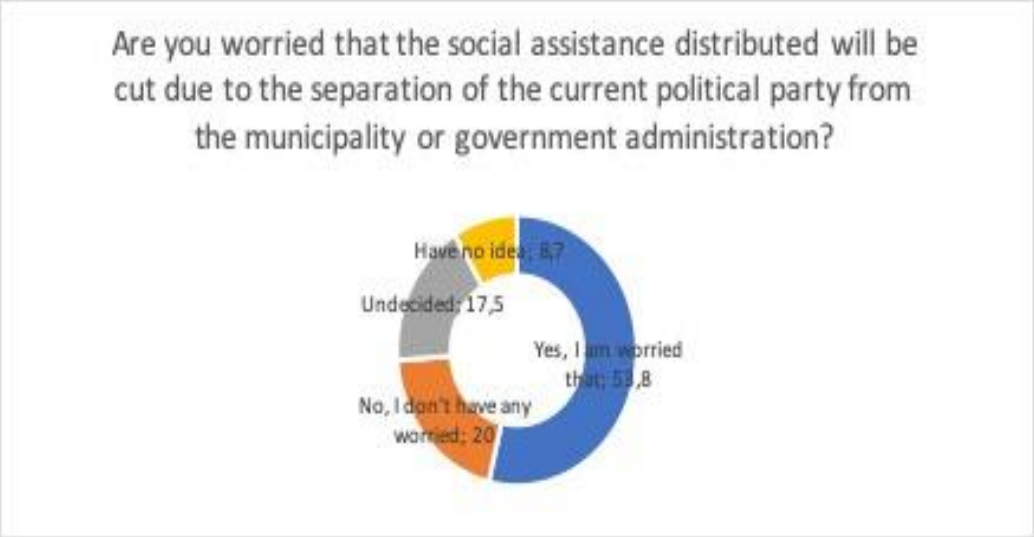

Table 10: Are You Worried That The Social Assistance Distributed Will Be Cut Due To The Separation of The Current Political Party From The Municipality or Government Administration?

Participants who have experienced outreach are concerned that the ruling party and the party of the municipality will not be able to receive assistance from a possible change. While only 8% of the participants who have received social assistance before thinking that the party change will not affect the benefits, approximately 21% of the participants are undecided. Not just social assistance recipients, approximately 32% of the participants who have never received any social assistance in their lives think that the party change will negatively affect the continuity of social assistance. These results show that the respondents have a high tendency to vote in the context of clientelist relations for the continuity of social assistance. The most important reason for these results is that the social assistance provided is identified with parties, party leaders or mayors. Party rhetoric and propaganda that support this also enable this perception to be easily managed.

Ms. E, *'God forbid, can such a thing happen? May God does not leave Erdogan behind us. I don't think anyone else should help this much when it comes to the head. He stated that he was worried about the election of another party.'*

41.3% of the participants think that the municipality or government should be managed by the same political party for the continuity of social assistance.

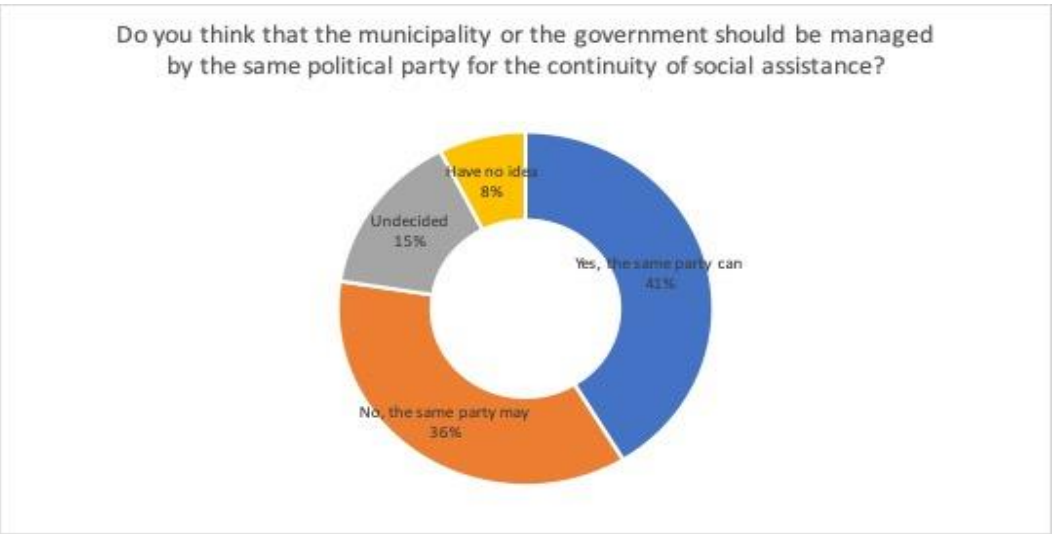

Table 11: Do You Think That The Municipality or The Government Should Be Managed By The Same Political Party For The Continuity of Social Assistance?

However, a high percentage of participants (36.2%) stated that the same party is not required for the continuation of the same aids. Considering the other responses given to the questions, the reason why this ratio was relatively high is that after the 2019 local elections, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality was governed by the CHP mayor and Zeytinburnu was governed by the AKP mayor. In the period before 2019, both the metropolitan municipality and the district municipality were run by the same party. However, in 2019, CHP candidate Ekrem Imamoglu won the elections, which were repeated twice, by increasing the rate of votes. Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality has been observed that the various implementations initiated by the new municipality administration, which was chosen with the promise of combating poverty effectively, were criticized and appreciated by some groups, especially during the pandemic process. Ms. L 'Imamoglu was also distributing aid, now everyone is helping.' He stated that he was aware that other parties also provided social assistance. However, it was observed that different political party administrations did not prevent the aids. However, it should not be

overlooked that in the case of Zeytinburnu, the strong local organization of AKP and the party of the ruling party and the district municipality are the same.

Most of the respondents stated that they found social assistance activities beneficial. It was observed that social assistance was an important factor in choosing parties. In order to ensure the continuity of the aid, it is important for the participants to have the ruling or the provincial or district municipality from the same party. About 54% of the participants are concerned that the aid will be cut off in case of a possible party change. In line with these results, it can be interpreted that poor people have a high potential to vote in the context of clientelist relations due to social assistance. In face-to-face interviews, it has been determined that participants who receive regular help or need help constantly have a higher tendency to vote for the same party. However, it has been determined that people who put an end to their neediness with their own efforts, such as Mr. M and Mr. İ, will not affect the voting behavior.

The following conclusions were drawn from the survey and face-to-face interviews conducted in Zeytinburnu district:

Social assistance is the most used method in the fight against poverty in Turkey. It was observed that the education level of most of the participants who stated that they had received help before was high school and below. It has been determined that the participants who do not have a regular and secure job need social assistance more. The rate of receiving social assistance is higher for individuals whose income level is below the hunger and poverty line, and who generally have minimum wage or an income close to it. It has been observed that especially families with children, disabled, elderly or sick in their households need any social assistance more. It has been observed that women can talk about poverty and social aid more easily than men. One of the biggest criticisms about social assistance was that although the state had access to all information about citizens, not all those in need could receive assistance. The other criticism is that although 'some' people do not need help, they can easily access help, especially because of their activities within the party or their proximity to people.

Although social assistances meet the needs of the needy in a limited and short-term way, most of the participants find social assistance useful. However, the vital needs of the poor are not limited to just one subject. For this reason, it was determined that many different aids were received in the same period.

The first method that the needy resort to as a solution is to get help from a person, institution or organization. If the needy person cannot get help from the immediate environment such as family and friends, he turns to local governments in order to get help. Local governments are the most important part of the social assistance network in Turkey. The most important reason for this is that it is accessible to people. Giving aid is an important reason for preference for political parties.

Most of the participants stated that political party membership is beneficial in accessing social assistance. This benefit has sometimes been to speed up the applicant process, and sometimes to provide ease of access to help, even if the necessary conditions are not met. It has been observed that people who receive help tend to feel gratitude and belonging to any person or group for their help. Particularly, the participants who receive assistance from local governments attribute the continuity of assistance to the presence of the same political party in the administration. While it is not preferred to directly participate in the work and activity of a political party in order to get help, it affects voting preferences.

As a result, in Zeytinburnu, where AKP has been in power for many years, social benefits are distributed to low-income citizens. These aids do not provide long-term solutions to the problems of citizens, and they partially meet their current needs. However, distribution of aid is an important reason for preference and gratitude for the party. The most important reason for this is that poverty in Turkey is defined as 'the need for help'. The hierarchy of "help-recipient-helper-giver" created in this way in the society makes the citizens who receive aid, in a way, "indebted" to the helping state. This hierarchy also affects voting behavior by causing a clientelist relationship.

CONCLUSION

Poverty is one of the main common problems in all societies from the past. Everything about poverty has been conceived by the controversy that has been going on for years. The definition of poverty, poverty perspective, causes, consequences and methods of struggle have been discussed for a long time.

The capitalist globalization process and neo-liberal political economy becoming the dominant hegemony have deepened poverty. While hegemony, which gave a new dimension to poverty, brought the commodification of labor to an unavoidable extent, the conditions of participation in the labor market have changed. With this change and transformation in the employment processes, it has led to the formation of 'new poor' masses, especially in cities. This new poor mass consists of people working in the informal sector with low wages, insecurity and high indebtedness. With this change and transformation, approaches that evaluate poverty only on income were not sufficient. For this reason, in the 90's, UNDP derived the concept of 'human poverty' based on Amartya Sen's concept of capability (Sen, 1999). This concept paved the way for the discussion of poverty in terms of human rights and rights.

However, poverty in Turkey is not addressed in terms of rights. Poverty perception in Turkey has always been problematic. Since the early years of the Republic, there has been a high tendency to ignore poverty and leave poverty to the initiative of philanthropists and volunteers. Turkey, which was actively involved in the capitalist globalization process as of the 1980s, has seen that this tendency has become the dominant ideology in the fight against poverty, with the effect of neo-liberalization and conservatism in the following years. At this point, the importance of social policies has increased.

Social benefits become a form of government intervention in the management of the relationship between capitalist accumulation and the reproduction of labor power. Through social assistance, the state controls both production and consumption patterns. Especially since the 1980s, social assistance has undertaken

the task of controlling poverty, increasing unemployment and the problems resulting from them. However, social assistance could neither fully rid the poor of poverty nor eradicate unemployment. In the world, it has been observed that social assistance is generally used as a complementary task in order to eliminate the negativities caused by the labor market and the reserve labor force. However, in Turkey, social assistance is used to reproduce the poverty of the working and unemployed poor.

However, it is a well-known fact that establishing clientist relations networks is not unique to Turkey. Turkey is just one example. The situation is the same in many party states such as Turkey, in many countries where democracy and class struggle are weak, and the understanding of rights-based social assistance has not developed: clientelist relationship networks have not emerged in Turkey only in the last 20 years, as in Latin American countries. In the previous periods, every power has established a kind of relationship of interest with the political circles close to it. Since the AKP has been in power for many years, these relations networks have been longer-lasting

In the neo-liberal phase, with the increase in migration from rural to urban, the increase in the working poor in the cities, the change in Turkey's traditional welfare regime based on family work and housing; social assistance has become a non-wage income type and means of living, keeping the poor in poverty and for them. The compensatory quality of the in-kind and in-cash social aids is quite limited. However, as it contributes to the reproduction of poverty, it causes especially the new poor to need assistance for a longer period of time.

There are two determining features of social assistance in Turkey. The first is that social benefits are far from the basis of rights. Since poverty is not seen as a violation of human rights, social benefits are not defined on the basis of citizen-state relationship. As a result of this, social benefits become open to clientelist relations. This is the second determinant feature of social assistance in Turkey. Political affiliation and belonging relations formed on a geographical,

neighborhood, and sectarian basis facilitate the establishment of clientelist relations.

The AKP, which came to power at a time when poverty was becoming more apparent, gained great support with its 'service' oriented party rhetoric. The AKP has put this discourse into practice, especially thanks to its local organizations and municipalities, which are the biggest centers of social policies, strengthened by transferring resources from the center. While the share of social aid expenditures in the budget increased during the AKP period, the power of both the ministry and the municipalities in this area was increased. However, as conservatism became visible in this period, social assistance got further away from the basic of rights. Social benefits are mostly handed over to philanthropists and volunteers, and the aid is combined with Islamic motifs. These Islamic motifs have positioned social donors as 'the graceful', while the recipients 'grateful' to them.

This positioning puts the people receiving aid in the position of 'indebted' to the political party they receive aid from. This situation ensures that social aid parties are preferred more by the voters. It is seen that the example of Zeytinburnu supports this thesis. Zeytinburnu is a district that is described as the 'suburb' of Istanbul but is in the process of change and transformation with the increasing urban transformation process in recent years. In this district, there are very small-scale businesses called 'under the stairs'. It is known that these enterprises have insecure and uninsured working conditions and low wages. In addition, it is known that the number of immigrants in the district is considerable. According to the survey results of 80 participants in Zeytinburnu, it has been determined that families with low income, generally at the minimum wage level, married and with children need more social assistance. It has been observed that women have more experience of receiving social assistance, and men are more reserved in this regard. It was determined that cash and food aid was received mostly from the provincial or district municipality. While social aids were found useful by the majority of the respondents, it was stated that the aids were effective on the choice of choice. While the political parties that distribute aid were more supported, it was stated that there

was a concern that the aid would be cut in case of a possible party change. It can be interpreted that this concern may lead to the behavior of voting for the political party that provides the aid so that the aid is not cut off.

In face-to-face interviews, questions were asked about the participants' experience of receiving social assistance and its effect on political preferences. Similar to the survey results, it was seen that families with children, disabled or elderly people in their households need more help. Participants criticize the lengthy and tediousness of their applications for assistance, since all information belonging to citizens is registered in the online system. In addition, it has been observed that low-income families need help in more than one area. For this reason, it was emphasized that the aid provided was useful but insufficient. Face-to-face interviews have also been proven, as have the results of the survey, that social assistance is the reason why parties are preferred. In Zeytinburnu, which has been ruled by mayors of the same party for many years, the first institution that people seek help from has been the municipalities. While some participants are especially grateful to the President for the aid, others think that municipalities have to serve the people, especially because they get votes. There are opinions that social assistance is not distributed fairly, and that individuals close to the AKP or people they know within the party can access help more easily. In addition, it was stated that 'having a familiar person' in the party speeds up the application time. There is an opinion that in a possible change in the ruling party, the benefits will not be cut off because they have been 'given'. However, thanks to the social assistance provided by the municipalities administered by the opposition parties, some of the participants said, 'Everyone does it now.' has also been identified.

In societies where security conditions do not exist, citizens cannot stop receiving social assistance as social assistance acts as a buffer. In addition, individuals feel a sense of belonging to the party, as the poor, one of the most disadvantaged segments of society, become interested in AKP governments. In the context of the clientelist relationships that people establish, they can both define themselves in the eyes of society and benefit from this. In return, they tend to vote for this party, especially

during election periods. In addition, individuals feel a sense of belonging to the party, as the poor, one of the most disadvantaged segments of society, become interested in AKP governments.

It is not foreseen that a solution will be found for poverty, which is one of the important problems of Turkey and deepening all over the world with the Covid-19 epidemic. It is seen that social assistance, which is the most used method in the fight against poverty in Turkey, cannot adequately cope with poverty. In this environment where neo-liberal policies reproduce poverty, the function of social assistance does not go beyond providing only a temporary benefit. The 'new poor' masses living in the cities and working in poverty are becoming more dependent on social assistance. For this reason, the issue of poverty in Turkey should be handled on the basis of rights and aid should be removed from being an element of 'grace'. In this way, more permanent solutions to poverty will be produced and the effect of bilateral interest relations established with social assistance on voters will be reduced.

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ETHICS BOARD APPROVAL

Ethics Board Approval is available in the printed version of this dissertation.