

Discursively Positioning Women as Protected Objects in the Turkish Parliament:
A Corpus-Assisted Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis
(Memposisikan Wanita Secara Wacana sebagai Objek yang Dilindungi dalam Parlimen Turkiye:
Analisis Wacana Kritis Feminis Berbantuan Korpus)

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ABSTRACT

Benevolent sexism is well established as an attitudinal construct, yet its discursive operation in conservative non-Western legislatures remains underexamined. Addressing this gap, the study examines paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, where women's numerical presence has not necessarily translated into recognition as autonomous political actors. Using corpus-assisted feminist critical discourse analysis, it analyses 97 plenary speeches from the 28th legislative term (2023-2024), totalling approximately 156,000 words. The study identified 55 discourse segments containing 847 coded instances of paternalistic and motherhood-based representation. Protective paternalism, motherhood glorification, and sacred domesticity emerged as interlocking strategies. Together, they assign agency to men and the state while casting women as vulnerable dependents and defining them through care, sacrifice, and morally valued domestic roles. Crucially, the pattern recurs both within debates on women's rights and violence against women and across policy domains without a formal gender focus. Apparently respectful language thus positions women as protected objects and constrains their political agency. The study extends Ambivalent Sexism Theory beyond attitudinal measurement by demonstrating how benevolent sexism is linguistically enacted and institutionally reproduced. Its corpus-assisted procedure offers a replicable means of tracing this process. The findings indicate that substantive gender equality requires attention to parliamentary language as well as women's numerical representation.

Keywords: Parliamentary discourse; paternalism; motherhood-based discourse; benevolent sexism; Turkish politics

ABSTRAK

Seksisme baik (benevolent) telah lama dikenal pasti sebagai suatu konstruk bagi menghuraikan sikap. Namun pengoperasiannya melalui wacana dalam badan perundangan konservatif bukan Barat masih kurang diteliti. Bagi mengisi jurang ini, kajian ini meneliti wacana paternalistik dan berasaskan keibuan dalam Perhimpunan Agung Kebangsaan Turkiye, iaitu sebuah institusi yang menyaksikan peningkatan jumlah wanita tetapi tidak semestinya mengiktiraf mereka sebagai aktor politik yang berautonomi. Dengan menggunakan analisis wacana kritis feminis berbantuan korpus, kajian ini menganalisis 97 ucapan pleno daripada penggal perundangan ke-28 (2023–2024), yang berjumlah kira-kira 156,000 patah perkataan. Kajian ini mengenal pasti 55 segmen wacana yang mengandungi 847 contoh berkod berkaitan representasi paternalistik dan berasaskan keibuan. Paternalisme protektif, pengagungan keibuan dan kesucian ruang domestik muncul sebagai strategi yang saling berkait. Strategi ini memberikan agensi kepada lelaki dan negara, sementara wanita digambarkan sebagai golongan yang lemah serta ditakrifkan melalui penjagaan, pengorbanan dan peranan domestik yang dipandang mulia dari segi moral. Pola ini berulang bukan sahaja dalam perbincangan tentang hak wanita dan keganasan terhadap wanita, tetapi juga merentasi bidang dasar yang tidak memberikan tumpuan khusus kepada isu gender. Oleh itu, bahasa yang kelihatan menghormati wanita

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sebenarnya meletakkan mereka sebagai objek yang perlu dilindungi dan mengehendkan agensi politik mereka. Kajian ini memperluas Teori Seksisme Ambivalen melangkaui pengukuran sikap dengan menunjukkan cara seksisme baik yang direalisasikan melalui bahasa dan diterbitkan semula oleh institusi. Prosedur berbantuan korpus yang digunakan menawarkan kaedah yang boleh direplikasi. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kesaksamaan gender yang substantif memerlukan perhatian terhadap bahasa parlimen, selain representasi Wanita yang numerik.

Kata kunci: Wacana parlimen; paternalisme; wacana berasaskan keibuan; seksisme benevolen; politik Turkiye

INTRODUCTION

Parliaments are central institutional arenas where political authority, social norms, and collective identities are produced and legitimised through discourse (Fairclough, 2013). The linguistic choices made in political speeches are adapted strategically to their socio-political context (Haroon, Abdul Rahim, Basir, & Zubir, 2020; Norsimah et al., 2021). In these settings, forms of address reflect and actively construct institutional power relations and political identities (Chilton, 2004; Dayang Sariah, Kesumawati, & Norsimah, 2020).

In the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM), the growing numerical presence of women has not necessarily translated into their recognition as political actors in discourse. In parliamentary debates, women are frequently constructed as dependent subjects in need of protection and moral regulation, while their portrayal as agents of political decision-making remains limited. This study asks whether and how such benevolent framings, despite their respectful appearance, work as forms of symbolic subordination. Examining this dynamic matters for understanding how subordination operates in conservative, non-Western parliamentary contexts.

As the central legislative institution of the Turkish Republic, the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) plays a decisive role in defining political legitimacy, national identity, and social order. Recent debates on family policy, alimony reform, and women's employment have made gender a recurring axis of parliamentary contention, and this makes the way women are positioned in such discourse especially significant. Despite the formal expansion of women's representation, female parliamentarians remain numerically underrepresented and, as prior research argues, symbolically marginalised in legislative discourse (Budak & Aldemir, 2025). The same pattern has been documented in other parliamentary systems, where a greater presence of women does not translate into discursive equality or political authority (Ilie, 2018; Che Abdul Rahman, 2024). These representations matter because they shape how women are positioned within the political and social imagination (Shaw, 2006). Corpus-assisted discourse studies show how recurrent lexical patterns and discursive structures help reproduce social inequalities across institutional settings, including gendered language in parliaments (Alkhamash, 2020; Baker et al., 2008; Haroon, Abdul Rahim, Basir, & Zubir, 2020; Che Abdul Rahman, 2024; Wang et al., 2025). Earlier research documented overtly hostile sexism, such as interruptions, trivialisation, and remarks about physical appearance (Ilie, 2018). Contemporary political discourse increasingly relies on subtler mechanisms that appear respectful, including benevolent framing, moralisation, and protective rhetoric, but still constrain women's agency (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Across different national settings, these ostensibly supportive representations have been shown to work as effective mechanisms of subordination (Haroon et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2025; Che Abdul Rahman, 2024; Edam et al., 2024). Yet how women are positioned through discourse in the TBMM remains under-analysed, especially how benevolent, paternalistic framings become routine features of parliamentary language.

Scholarship on gender and political discourse in Turkey has grown, but it has tended to focus either on explicit sexist expressions in media and public debate (Akser & Baybars-Hawks, 2012) or on policy outcomes related to women's rights. Less attention has been paid to the discursive mechanisms within parliamentary language itself, through which women are repositioned from political subjects to protected objects. Cross-national corpus studies have examined gendered language in parliaments (Wang et al., 2025; Che Abdul Rahman, 2024), yet little work has applied corpus-informed feminist critical discourse analysis to Turkish parliamentary debates. The Turkish setting warrants separate investigation because benevolent sexism here is articulated through a fusion of religious and nationalist authority that is largely absent from the Malaysian, Chinese, and British contexts studied elsewhere. Addressing this gap is important for understanding how paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse constrains women's political subjectivity in conservative, non-Western contexts.

THE CURRENT STUDY

This study examines how paternalistic and motherhood-based strategies are used in Turkish parliamentary debates to reposition women from political subjects to protected objects. Parliamentary discourse on women is not uniform. It also includes an explicit discourse of rights, equality, and opposition to violence against women. The study does not claim that protective framing exhausts this discourse. It isolates the benevolent, paternalistic strand and asks how that framing positions women as objects of care rather than as political agents. Drawing on corpus-informed feminist critical discourse analysis of 97 parliamentary speeches from the 28th legislative term of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (2023-2024), it addresses the following research questions:

1. How are paternalistic discursive strategies deployed in Turkish parliamentary debates to position women as dependent subjects requiring male protection?
2. How is motherhood-based discourse mobilised to naturalise women's association with care and sacrifice, thereby constraining their representation as autonomous political actors?
3. What do these discursive strategies suggest about the construction of women's political agency and substantive representation in the Turkish parliamentary context?

The article first outlines the theoretical framework on benevolent sexism and its institutional forms, then presents the corpus and analytical procedures, reports findings organised around three discursive strategies, and closes with implications for gender-sensitive parliamentary deliberation and legislative language reform.

By answering these questions, the article contributes to feminist scholarship on political language in three ways. First, it shows how institutional discourse reproduces gendered power relations in a non-Western conservative parliament where formal commitments to gender equality coexist with discursive marginalisation. Second, it shows that corpus-assisted methods can reveal systematic patterns of benevolent sexism that qualitative analysis alone might miss. Third, it extends our understanding of how paternalism and motherhood discourse work together as mechanisms of symbolic exclusion in political institutions.

To conceptualise these mechanisms, the study draws on benevolent sexism theory and on its two main institutional carriers in political discourse, paternalism and motherhood-based framing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory developed by Glick and Fiske (2001) distinguishes between hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism takes the form of overtly negative evaluations, whereas benevolent sexism works through seemingly positive but patronising representations that position women as objects requiring protection, care, and moral guardianship. Because benevolent sexism is framed as concern rather than exclusion, it escapes critical scrutiny and settles into institutional language (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005), especially in conservative political settings where gender equality is endorsed rhetorically yet undermined structurally (Hamad et al., 2022). The scholarship is divided on how constraining these framings are. One line of work treats protection and motherhood discourse as inherently subordinating, and shows that even ostensibly progressive actors reproduce exclusionary hierarchies through moralised and protective framings (Jackman, 1994). A second line contests this, arguing that women can mobilise the same framings strategically as sources of legitimacy, voice, and political authority (Childs, 2000; Glapka, 2025; Kandiyoti, 1991). This debate remains unresolved, since the effect of such framings appears to depend on who articulates them and in what institutional setting. This study foregrounds the constraining dimension while recognising this more ambivalent potential.

Paternalism is a central mechanism through which benevolent sexism becomes institutionalised. Paternalistic discourse presents male-dominated political authority as a set of guardians responsible for protecting vulnerable groups, particularly women and children (Jackman, 1994). It positions women as dependents whose participation is mediated through male oversight, not as autonomous political subjects. This creates a systematic asymmetry of agency in which men appear as active protectors and women as passive recipients (Baxter, 2000). The result is a hierarchy of gender relations that is maintained under an appearance of moral responsibility (Stopfner, 2018).

Closely intertwined with paternalism is the idealisation of motherhood as a central organising principle of women's social and political identity. Motherhood discourse naturalises women's association with care, sacrifice, and domestic labour, and this limits their representation as autonomous political subjects (Rich, 1976). In conservative political contexts, motherhood often carries religious and nationalist significance, positioning women primarily as reproducers of the nation and moral educators of future generations (Kandiyoti, 1991). Cross-national corpus studies consistently show that women are associated with reproduction and care work, while men are largely absent from discussions of childbearing and domestic responsibility (Wang et al., 2025; Che Abdul Rahman, 2024). What remains less settled is whether this association is primarily economic, as in the family-planning discourse Wang et al. (2025) analyse, or moral and civilisational, as Turkish state discourse suggests in positioning women as mothers of the nation and valuing their biological and moral labour over political leadership (Arat, 1994). The present study addresses that question for the Turkish case.

METHOD

MATERIAL

The sampling frame comprised all plenary session transcripts of the second legislative year of the 28th legislative term of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM), covering October 2023 to October 2024 (N = 117 sessions), all of which were read in full. Speech transcripts were obtained from the official TBMM parliamentary records system (tbmm.gov.tr) between November 2024 and January 2025. The unit of analysis was the individual speech delivered by a member during these sessions. Candidate material was identified through close reading rather than automated keyword retrieval, and 110 speeches met the inclusion criterion. A speech qualified as a candidate when it contained at least one explicit instance in which women were represented through protective, paternalistic, or motherhood-based framing, by positioning women as objects of protection or guardianship, by defining womanhood primarily through maternal, caregiving, or domestic roles, or by endowing these roles with religious or nationalist significance. Speeches with no such representation were not retained, and this rule was applied consistently across both debate strata. This purposive identification prioritises analytical relevance over statistical representativeness, and the frequencies reported below are treated as descriptive of the analysed material. The candidate speeches were delivered by male and female members from several parliamentary parties. Consistent with the purposive, qualitative design, speeches were not sampled to achieve proportional representation by gender or party. All speeches that met the inclusion criterion were retained.

The analysis focused on speeches delivered in two parliamentary contexts. The first comprised speeches on explicitly gender-related agenda items, including debates on Law No. 6284 (Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women), alimony reform, gender equality, women's employment, and family policy. The second comprised speeches from debates with no explicit gender focus, including discussions of disaster response, national security, economic policy, and agricultural development. This dual focus made it possible to test whether paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse is topic-dependent or works as a normalised practice across parliamentary speech more broadly.

Parliamentary contexts were classified into two groups by the formal agenda item of the session, not by a proportional threshold of gendered content. Women-focused debates were those in which gender-related matters formed the primary agenda, and unrelated debates were those in which gender was not the agenda focus. Where a session covered several topics, classification followed the principal agenda item under which the speech was delivered. Sessions whose formal agenda concerned women's rights, gender equality, or violence against women, such as the debate on Law No. 6284, were classified as women-focused, whereas sessions on other policy domains were classified as unrelated even when they contained incidental gendered references. This ensured that classification reflected the official agenda and not the analyst's expectation of gendered content. Unrelated debates comprised nationalist and military discourse (national security, counterterrorism, martyrdom narratives), economy and agriculture debates (employment, production, labour, farming), and earthquake and disaster debates (natural disasters, emergency response, reconstruction). Because the study relies on publicly accessible official parliamentary records, ethics committee approval was not required.

SAMPLE REDUCTION AND ANALYTIC REDUNDANCY

Because the corpus is finite, every candidate speech was read and coded, and none was set aside unexamined. The exclusion reflects analytic redundancy rather than sampling saturation in the interview-based sense (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By the final 13 speeches, the coding scheme had neither expanded nor been redefined across three consecutive iterations, and these speeches reproduced patterns already present in the retained material without introducing divergent or counter-discursive representations. Their exclusion therefore reflects redundancy, not the removal of contradictory evidence. Figure 1 presents the corpus selection and analytical procedure.

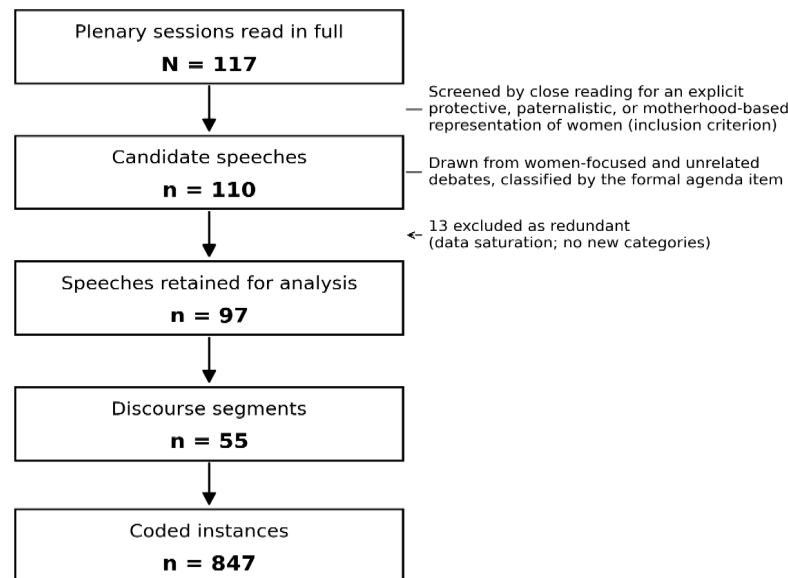


FIGURE 1. Corpus selection and analytical procedure

UNIT OF ANALYSIS AND CODING STRUCTURE

The study uses a two-level analytical structure. The primary unit is the discourse segment ($n = 55$), an extended excerpt from a plenary speech that displays paternalistic or motherhood-based discourse. Segments range from single sentences to multi-paragraph sequences. They were selected for (a) their exemplary representation of paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse, (b) their distribution across diverse parliamentary contexts, and (c) their analytical richness in rhetorical complexity and ideological density.

The secondary unit is the coded instance ($n = 847$), the smallest discursive element within a segment that conveys gendered meaning relevant to the analytical framework. In most cases, a coded instance corresponds to a single sentence. When gendered meaning was embedded in a clause or phrase, intra-sentential units were coded separately, and when a single sentence performed several discursive functions, each function was coded as a distinct instance. This two-level structure supports analysis at the macro level of extended parliamentary discourse and at the micro level of specific linguistic and rhetorical devices (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. Analytical Structure and Distribution

Analytical Level	Unit	N	Description
Macro	Session transcripts read (in full)	117	Reading frame, 2nd legislative year
Macro	Candidate speeches	110	Met the inclusion criterion
Macro	Retained speeches	97	After excluding 13 redundant speeches
Meso	Discourse segments	55	Selected for detailed analysis
Micro	Coded instances	847	Linguistic elements within segments

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND CODING PROCEDURE

The study uses feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its primary framework (Lazar, 2007) and examines how gendered assumptions and hegemonic power relations are produced, maintained, and normalised in institutional settings. The coding scheme was developed through a hybrid procedure that combined theory-driven and data-sensitive approaches. Initial codes were drawn from the literature on parliamentary sexism, benevolent sexism, and gendered political discourse (Ilie, 2018; Stopfner, 2018). Additional codes were generated inductively to capture features specific to the Turkish context, particularly paternalistic constructions, motherhood-based legitimisation strategies, religious metaphors, and nationalist framings (Kandiyoti, 1991).

Coding proceeded in three iterative stages. First, the entire dataset of 97 speeches was scanned and preliminary codes were applied to identify potential discourse segments. Second, code definitions were refined as patterns emerged, and borderline cases were re-evaluated for conceptual clarity and consistency. Third, the final 55 discourse segments were selected, and the 847 coded instances within them were categorised across the three primary discursive strategies of protective paternalism, motherhood glorification, and sacred domesticity.

RELIABILITY AND LIMITATIONS

Two reliability checks were conducted on separate subsets, one sampled by segment and one by coded instance. Intra-coder consistency was assessed by recoding a random 20% subset of discourse segments ($n = 11$ segments, approximately 170 coded instances) at two-week intervals, which gave 94% agreement. For inter-coder reliability, a second coder, a linguist with expertise in discourse analysis who had not helped develop the scheme or taken part in the initial analysis, was given the coding scheme, category definitions, and decision rules (Appendix A). This coder independently coded a stratified 20% sample of the coded instances ($n = 169$), drawn from all three strategies and all eight sub-categories, blind to the first coder's decisions. Cohen's kappa indicated almost perfect agreement ($\kappa = .87$; Landis & Koch, 1977). Disagreements occurred in borderline cases involving more than one discursive function, and they were resolved through discussion to consensus. They revealed no systematic differences that would require revising the categories or the framework. Taken together, the inter-coder agreement and the 94% intra-coder consistency indicate that the framework is applied consistently and can be replicated.

Multiple coding was permitted throughout the analysis. A single discourse segment may contain instances of more than one discursive strategy, and a single coded instance may carry overlapping rhetorical functions. Because the discourse segments were purposively selected to exemplify paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse, the reported frequencies and proportions describe the distribution of coded instances within the analysed material, not their prevalence

across the full corpus. Quantitative distributions are therefore reported descriptively, and the study prioritises depth of qualitative interpretation over frequency-based inference. The corpus-assisted dimension of the analysis consists of the systematic frequency and distributional examination of recurrent formulaic expressions, possessive constructions, and grammatical-agency patterns across the defined corpus (Tables 2 to 4), in the frequency-based tradition of corpus-assisted discourse studies (Baker et al., 2008). This is complemented by a collocation analysis of *kadın* across the full corpus (Table 5). Hostile sexism was identified and coded for completeness, but the analytical focus is on benevolent, paternalistic, and motherhood-based discourse, since gender subordination in parliamentary contexts increasingly works through subtle, legitimised, and symbolically inclusive mechanisms rather than through overt degradation or exclusion.

FINDINGS

OVERVIEW OF DISCURSIVE PATTERNS

Analysis of 97 plenary speeches yielded 55 discourse segments that contained 847 coded instances of gendered discourse. These instances were distributed across three primary discursive strategies. Protective paternalism accounted for 352 instances (41.6%), motherhood glorification for 298 (35.2%), and sacred domesticity for 197 (23.3%). The strategies frequently co-occurred but performed distinct functions. These distributions describe the dominant tendencies of the analysed material, not the whole of women's representation. Because the material was identified through a purposive reading oriented toward paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse, these framings organised the overwhelming bulk of the data, and the analysis does not claim that counter-framings are absent. It therefore characterises a prevailing discursive pattern, not an exceptionless one. Figure 2 presents the conceptual model of these three strategies.

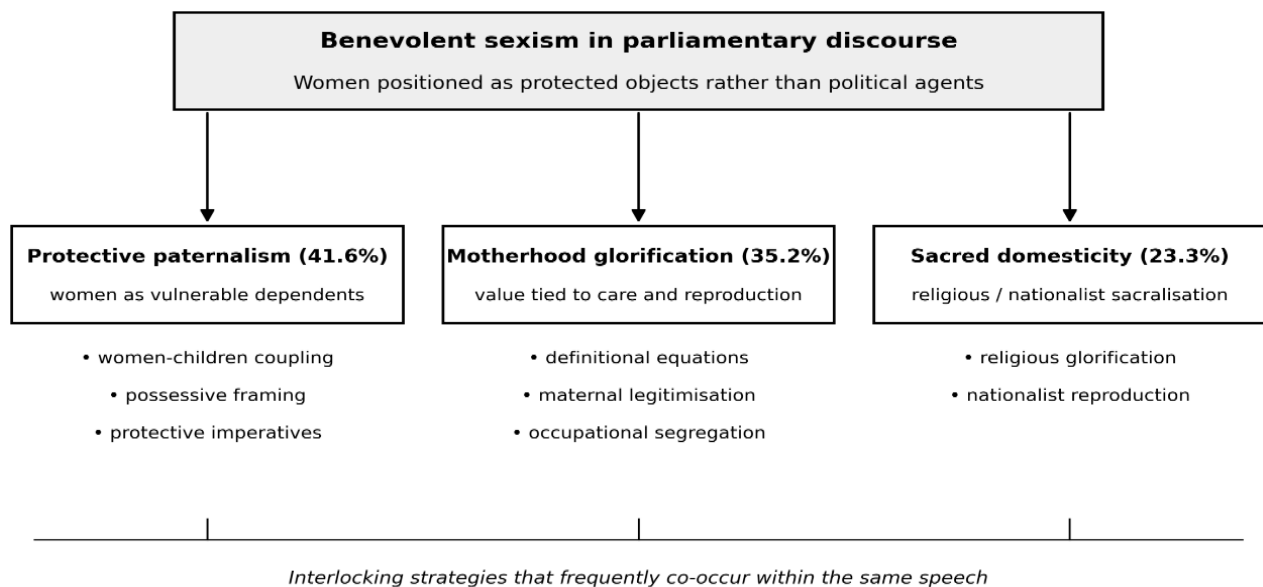


FIGURE 2. Conceptual model of the three discursive strategies. (Developed by the author from the coding scheme)

Within this material, women were rarely positioned as autonomous political actors. They were predominantly cast as dependents, caregivers, or moral symbols whose value derived from family, protection, sacrifice, or national continuity. These representations were not confined to debates on women's rights or gender equality. Paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse recurred across a wide range of parliamentary contexts within the analysed material, including debates on national security (18% of instances), disaster response (12%), economic policy (9%), and moral order (15%), as well as women-focused debates (46%).

PROTECTIVE PATERNALISM: WOMEN AS VULNERABLE DEPENDENTS

Protective paternalism was the most pervasive strategy, with 352 instances (41.6%) across 38 speeches by 24 speakers from all major parties. It presents women as inherently vulnerable and in need of male or state protection. Three sub-patterns were identified: women-children coupling (127 instances, 36.1%), possessive framing (98 instances, 27.8%), and protective imperatives (127 instances, 36.1%).

WOMEN-CHILDREN COUPLING

Women-children pairing as vulnerable dependents appeared in 127 instances across 23 speeches by 17 speakers. The coupling was realised through coordinate noun phrases such as “kadınlar ve çocuklar”, possessive serial constructions such as “çocuğunu, kızını, hanımını”, and comparative vulnerability claims such as “en çok korunması gereken” combined with references to women and children. Table 2 presents the most frequent formulaic expressions.

TABLE 2. Formulaic Expressions: Women-Children Coupling

Formulaic Expression	English Translation	Frequency	Distribution (Speeches)
kadınlar ve çocuklar	women and children	34	15 speeches
hanımlar ve çocuklar	ladies and children	22	12 speeches
en çok korunması gereken hanımlara ve çocuklara	women and children who most need protection	18	9 speeches
savunmasız kadınlar ve çocuklar	defenceless women and children	15	8 speeches
çocuğunu, kızını, hanımını	their child, daughter, wife	12	7 speeches
Other variants	—	26	14 speeches

This is a systematic discursive convention recurring across many parliamentary sessions and political parties. The most frequent formula, “kadınlar ve çocuklar”, appeared in 15 separate speeches from four parties, which points to cross-partisan normalisation. Representative example: “Şu hâle bakın; hiç kimse çocuğunu, kızını, hanımını, annesini sokağa yalnız çıkarmak istemiyor.” (Look at this situation; nobody wants to let their child, daughter, wife, or mother go out alone. Plenary Session 2, 2 October 2024 hereafter PS 2/2)

Here, coordinate noun phrases pair women and children (1), vulnerability is emphasised (2), and possessive framing is added (3).

POSSESSIVE FRAMING

Possessive constructions that situate women as objects belonging to male subjects accounted for 98 instances across 19 speeches by 15 speakers. All of these forms take the first-person plural possessive suffix "-ımız/-imiz" (our), which marks women as belonging to a male-inclusive collective. Table 3 presents the frequency and distribution of these constructions.

TABLE 3. Possessive Constructions: Frequency and Distribution

Possessive Form	English Translation	Frequency	% of Total	Speeches	Speakers
kadınlarımız	our women	34	34.7%	14	11
annelerimiz	our mothers	24	24.5%	11	9
kızlarımız	our daughters	22	22.4%	10	8
hanımlarımız	our ladies	18	18.4%	9	7
Total	—	98	100%	19	15

These constructions appeared across 12 separate plenary sessions, in women-focused debates and in unrelated policy discussions alike, which shows that possessive framing is a normalised feature of TBMM discourse. Representative example:

“Hanımlarımız fedakâr, eli öpülesi değerlilerimizdir.” (Our ladies are self-sacrificing and deeply revered. PS 28/2).

Syntactically, possessive constructions occurred overwhelmingly in the subject position of predicate nominative clauses (62 instances, 63.3%) or as direct objects of protection and care verbs (28 instances, 28.6%). Only 8 instances (8.2%) positioned them as agents of active verbs, and these were restricted to care-related actions. Possessive constructions never appeared as subjects of verbs denoting political agency. The masculine equivalent “erkeklerimiz” appeared only twice in the entire corpus, and only in military contexts.

PROTECTIVE IMPERATIVES

Imperative constructions and modal obligation verbs that direct male subjects to protect, safeguard, or care for women appeared in 127 instances across 21 speeches by 16 speakers. The most frequent forms were “korumak zorundayız” (we must protect, 38 instances), “sahip çıkmalıyız” (we must take ownership, 29 instances), “gözetmeliyiz” (we must watch over, 22 instances), and “kollayıp gözetmek” (to watch and guard, 18 instances). Table 4 presents the distribution of protective verbs and their grammatical subjects.

TABLE 4. Protective Imperatives: Verb Distribution and Agency

Verb	Frequency	Male Subject (we/men/state)	Female Subject	Gender-Neutral Subject
korumak (to protect)	38	38 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
sahip çıkmak (take ownership)	29	29 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
gözetmek (watch over)	22	22 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
kollamak (guard)	18	18 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other forms	20	19 (95%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
Total	127	126 (99.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.8%)

Across the 127 instances, none positioned women as subjects of protective action. Protection was invariably represented as something done for women by male actors, and never as something women claimed or enacted themselves. Illustrative example: “Kadınlarımızı, kız çocuklarımızı korumak hepimizin görevidir.” (Protecting our women and girls is the duty of all of us. PS 2/2).

These constructions appeared disproportionately in debates on Law No. 6284, where 68 of the 127 instances (53.5%) occurred. Even legislative discourse that explicitly addresses women's rights is built on paternalistic frames that cast men as protectors and women as protected objects.

A collocation analysis of women (*kadın*) across the full corpus (node frequency = 6,247; ± 5 window) gives corpus-level support for these patterns and a comparison with how men are represented. Women are thematised as a gendered category far more often than men. The stem *kadın* occurs 6,247 times against 607 occurrences of the stem *erkek*, a ratio of about ten to one. The strongest content collocates of *kadın* cluster in a domain of violence and vulnerability (*yönelik*, *şiddet*, *cinayetleri*, *çocuk*, *yaşlı*), which points to a semantic preference for victimhood and protection and supports the women-children coupling reported above. The collocates of *erkek* fall in a different domain. They centre on dominance and perpetration (*egemen*, as in *erkek egemen*, together with *şiddeti* and *katledildi*) and on the paired phrase *kadın-erkek eşitliği*, and not on protection or vulnerability. Men are therefore not lexicalised as objects of protection, which is the contrast the analysis predicts. At the same time, a rights-related cluster around “*kadın*” (*seçme*, *seçilme*, *hakları*) shows at the same time that protective and rights-based representations of women coexist in parliamentary discourse, and the present study isolates the benevolent, paternalistic strand within this wider field (Table 5; see Appendix B).

TABLE 5. Principal Collocates of *kadın* (± 5 window; full corpus, node frequency = 6,247)

Collocate	Gloss	Co-occurrence	MI
<i>yönelik</i>	directed at	516	7.11
<i>çocuk</i>	child	346	7.22
<i>şiddet</i>	violence	254	7.96
<i>erkek</i>	man/men	236	9.12
<i>çocuklar</i>	children	144	7.04
<i>yaşlı</i>	elderly	144	8.44
<i>mücadele</i>	combating	141	5.53
<i>aile</i>	family	127	5.47
<i>cinayetleri</i>	femicides	115	9.21
<i>seçilme</i>	being elected	157	8.87
<i>seçme</i>	voting	147	8.61
<i>hakları</i>	rights	105	5.81

MOTHERHOOD GLORIFICATION AND ROLE FIXATION

Motherhood glorification, which treats motherhood as the primary axis of women's value, accounted for 298 instances (35.2%) across 34 speeches by 21 speakers. It ties women's worth to care work, self-sacrifice, and reproductive labour. Three sub-patterns were identified: definitional equations (112 instances, 37.6%), maternal legitimisation (94 instances, 31.5%), and occupational segregation (92 instances, 30.9%).

DEFINITIONAL EQUATIONS: WOMAN = MOTHER

Womanhood was explicitly defined through maternal roles on 112 occasions in 19 speeches by 14 speakers. These definitions were realised through rhetorical questions, copular constructions, and explicit definitional statements. These formulations fixed women's social identity and presented motherhood as a naturalised essence of womanhood rather than as one role among many. Table 6 presents the most frequent formulaic patterns that use definitional equations.

TABLE 6. Definitional Equations: Formulaic Patterns

Formulaic Pattern	English Translation	Frequency	Speeches	Speakers
Kadın denilince... anne	When we say 'woman'... mother	23	12	9
Beşik sallayan anne	The mother who rocks the cradle	21	11	8
Fedakârlık anıtı	Monument of self-sacrifice	18	9	7
Evini çekip çeviren	Who manages the household	15	8	6
Çocuğunu yetiştiren	Who raises children	19	10	7
Other variants	—	16	9	8

The rhetorical question “Kadın denilince ne anlamalıyız?” (What should we understand when we say 'woman'?) appeared in 23 instances across 12 speeches and was the most frequent definitional pattern. This interrogative structure does ideological work by inviting listeners to accept a predetermined answer while keeping the appearance of open inquiry. Representative example: “Biz kadın deyince ne anlamalıyız; beşik sallayan anne, çocuğunu doyurup giydiren, büyüten ebeveyn mi?” (What should we understand when we say woman; the mother who rocks the cradle, who feeds and clothes her child, who raises the next generation? PS 6/10).

Grammatically, these definitions use present participle forms with the “-en” suffix that work as substantivised adjectives, such as “gözetendir” (is one who watches), “vakfedendir” (is one who dedicates), and “sabredendir” (is one who endures). Morphologically, this encodes gendered identity as habitual action rather than contingent practice. The semantic domains most often associated with definitional equations were care labour (67 instances, 59.8%), domestic work (28 instances, 25.0%), and spousal support (17 instances, 15.2%). Domains associated with political agency, professional expertise, or individual aspiration were absent.

MATERNAL LEGITIMISATION

Across 16 speeches, speakers invoked their own maternal roles, or motherhood more broadly, on 94 occasions to legitimise their political authority or policy positions. Female parliamentarians accounted for most of these instances. This suggests that even women politicians frequently articulate their expertise through motherhood rather than through professional credentials, legislative experience, or policy knowledge. Table 7 presents the distribution of maternal legitimisation strategies.

TABLE 7. Maternal Legitimation: Speaker Gender and Strategy

Legitimation Strategy	Female Speakers	Male Speakers	Total	Speeches
Self-identification as mother	38	2	40	12
Appeal to maternal experience	26	8	34	11

Legitimation Strategy	Female Speakers	Male Speakers	Total	Speeches
Invocation of “all mothers”	11	9	20	8
Total	75 (79.8%)	19 (20.2%)	94	16

Maternal legitimisation was used disproportionately by female speakers (79.8% of instances). Representative example: “Değerli milletvekilleri, bu aziz Meclisin bir mensubu olarak değil aynı zamanda 2'si kız 3 evlat sahibi bir anne olarak...” (Esteemed parliamentarians, not only as a member of this honourable Assembly but also as a mother of 3 children, 2 of them girls... PS 2/3).

The conjunction “değil... aynı zamanda” (not only... but also) establishes motherhood as an additional and perhaps superior source of authority. The structure suggests that parliamentary membership alone provides insufficient legitimacy; maternal status must be invoked to authenticate the speaker's claim to address policy issues.

Maternal legitimisation appeared most frequently in debates on education policy (27 instances), health care (23 instances), violence against women (19 instances), and family policy (25 instances). It never appeared in debates on economic policy, foreign affairs, or constitutional law.

OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

The third sub-pattern naturalised gender-segregated labour markets through idealised representations of women's work in traditionally feminised occupations. It appeared in 92 instances across 17 speeches by 13 speakers and presents women's professional contributions as extensions of maternal care work. Table 8 presents the most frequently mentioned feminised occupations and their frequencies.

TABLE 8. Feminised Occupations: Frequency and Framing

Occupation	Frequency	Care-Framing	Production-Framing	Leadership-Framing
Anne (Mother)	28	28 (100%)	0	0
Öğretmen (Teacher)	23	21 (91.3%)	2 (8.7%)	0
Hemşire (Nurse)	18	18 (100%)	0	0
Emekçi/İşçi (Labourer/Worker)	12	4 (33.3%)	8 (66.7%)	0
Çiftçi (Farmer)	11	7 (63.6%)	4 (36.4%)	0
Total	92	78 (84.8%)	14 (15.2%)	0 (0%)

Care-based characteristics framed 84.8% of occupational references, against only 15.2% that emphasised productive labour. No instance positioned women in leadership or decision-making roles. Masculine-coded occupations such as “mühendis” (engineer), “yönetici” (manager), “girişimci” (entrepreneur), or “siyasetçi” (politician) never appeared in idealised descriptions of women's labour. A representative example: “Evde anne, okulda öğretmen, hastanede hemşire, tarlada emekçi, fabrikada işçi; kadın her yerdedir.” (At home a mother, at school a teacher, in the hospital a nurse, in the field a labourer, in the factory a worker; woman is everywhere. PS 2/1).

Although the example appears to celebrate women's participation in the labour market (kadın her yerdedir), it confines women to care-oriented and subordinate occupations. The parallel between “evde anne” and “okulda öğretmen / hastanede hemşire” equates professional roles with domestic care work, tightening the bond between womanhood and nurturing.

SACRED DOMESTICITY: RELIGION, NATION AND MORAL ORDER

The third strategy, sacred domesticity, accounted for 197 coded instances (23.3%) across 26 speeches by 18 speakers. It integrates religious, moral, and nationalist frames to depict motherhood and domestic labour as sacred duties central to social cohesion and national survival. Two sub-patterns were identified: religious glorification (104 instances, 52.8%) and nationalist reproduction (93 instances, 47.2%).

RELIGIOUS GLORIFICATION

Sixteen speeches by 13 speakers contained 104 instances of religious glorification. In these passages, religious references, scriptural allusions, and theological metaphors gave motherhood and domestic roles a transcendental value. These formulations cast women's care work as divinely ordained duty. Table 9 presents the most frequent religious formulae in the corpus.

TABLE 9. Religious Formulae: Frequency and Distribution

Religious Formula	English Translation	Frequency	Speeches	Islamic Source
Cennet anaların ayağı altındadır	Paradise lies beneath mothers' feet	18	9	Hadith tradition
Kadınlar Allah'ın emanetidir	Women are God's trust	15	8	Farewell Sermon
Anne hakkı / Validenin hakkı	The right of the mother	22	11	Quranic concept (haqq)
Rahmet / Merhamet kaynağı	Source of mercy/compassion	19	10	Divine attribute
Tertemiz / Kutsal (applied to mothers)	Pure / Sacred	14	7	Purity discourse
Other religious references	—	16	8	Various

These expressions show how Islamic religious discourse is used systematically to sacralise maternal and domestic roles. The most frequent formula, “Cennet anaların ayağı altındadır” (Paradise lies beneath mothers' feet), appeared in 18 instances across 9 speeches, which shows how widely hadith literature is invoked to frame motherhood as spiritually meritorious. Representative examples: “Cennet anaların ayağı altındadır. Bu kutsal sözü asla unutmayalım.” (Paradise lies beneath mothers' feet. Let us never forget these sacred words. PS 3/4). “Kadınlar size Allah'ın emanetidir. Onları emanet edenin huzurunda hesap vereceksiniz.” (Women are entrusted to you by God. You will be held accountable before the one who entrusted them to you. PS 3/4).

The first example uses the imperative “unutmayalım” (let us not forget) to render religious tradition morally binding, while the adjective kutsal (sacred) presents the hadith as transcendent truth. The second example invokes the concept of emanet (trust), a theologically significant term in Islamic jurisprudence. Women appear here as passive objects of divine trust delivered to men (to you), with men accountable to God for their stewardship of women. Religious glorification co-occurred most frequently with family policy debates (41 instances, 39.4%), moral order discourse (34 instances, 32.7%), and women-focused debates (29 instances, 27.9%).

NATIONALIST REPRODUCTION

Women were mobilised as biological and cultural reproducers of the nation on 93 occasions in 15 speeches. Motherhood was framed as a patriotic duty essential to national continuity, demographic strength, and civilisational identity. It draws together demographic anxieties, nationalist ideology, and civilisational discourse, turning women's bodies into sites of national reproduction. Table 10 presents the most frequent nationalist frames applied to motherhood.

TABLE 10. Nationalist Reproduction: Thematic Frames

Nationalist Frame	Frequency	Speeches	Key Lexical Items
Demographic strength (nüfus, nesil)	28	11	nüfus, genç nüfus, nesil, gelecek
Civilisational continuity (medeniyet, millet)	24	10	medeniyet, millet, Türk milleti, vatan
National symbols (flag, anthem, martyrdom)	19	8	şehit annesi, bayrak, vatan, millet
Generational transmission (evlat yetiştirmek)	22	9	yetiştirmek, gelecek nesil, evlat

These frames present women's reproductive capacity as a national resource essential to collective survival and geopolitical strength. The demographic frame appeared most frequently (28 instances), which reflects ongoing political anxieties about Turkey's declining fertility rate and ageing population. Representative example: “Anne ol, çünkü anne bir çocuktan bir Kudüs yapar; adam baba olunca içinde bir Kudüs canlanır.” (Become a mother, because a mother makes Jerusalem from a child; when a man becomes a father, Jerusalem comes alive within him. PS 9/2).

The imperative “anne ol” casts motherhood as a normative obligation, while the Jerusalem metaphor gives reproduction a sacred nationalist significance. In Turkish Islamist-nationalist discourse, Jerusalem (Kudüs) works as a symbol of Islamic civilisation and of anti-imperialist resistance, which makes maternal labour the foundation of civilisational continuity and geopolitical struggle. The parallel construction separates maternal and paternal roles and reinforces a gendered division, in which mothers actively produce the nation while fathers passively embody it.

A further recurrent pattern invokes the highly valorised figure of the şehit annesi (martyr's mother). The phrase “vatan için evlat vermiş” (given their children for the homeland) portrays motherhood as patriotic sacrifice and makes maternal grief foundational to national survival.

DISCURSIVE CONTINUITY ACROSS PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXTS

Paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse is not confined to debates explicitly concerned with women or gender equality. Table 11 presents the distribution of coded instances across parliamentary contexts and shows how widely gendered discourse extends across policy domains.

TABLE 11. Distribution of Discursive Strategies Across Parliamentary Contexts

Parliamentary Context	Protective Paternalism	Motherhood Glorification	Sacred Domesticity	Total	% of Total
Women-focused debates	162 (46.0%)	141 (47.3%)	87 (44.2%)	390	46.0%
Nationalist/military	64 (18.2%)	48 (16.1%)	41 (20.8%)	153	18.1%
Disaster/emergency	45 (12.8%)	32 (10.7%)	24 (12.2%)	101	11.9%
Economy/agriculture	34 (9.7%)	29 (9.7%)	14 (7.1%)	77	9.1%
Other/moral order	47 (13.3%)	48 (16.1%)	31 (15.7%)	126	14.9%
Total	352	298	197	847	100%

This distribution shows that 54% of gendered discourse instances (457/847) occurred in parliamentary contexts where gender was not thematically foregrounded. In debates ostensibly addressing disaster response, national security, or economic policy, paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse emerged incidentally, through metaphors, illustrative examples, moral appeals, and rhetorical flourishes.

In nationalist and military discourse (153 instances, 18.1%), women were frequently invoked as mothers of soldiers and martyrs, as symbols of national honour requiring protection, and as reproducers of future generations. For example: “Şehit annelerimiz, gazi annelerimiz bu vatanın bekası için evlatlarını vermiş en kutsal varlıklardır.” (Our martyrs' mothers, our veterans' mothers are the most sacred beings who have given their children for the survival of this homeland. PS 2/3).

While this statement appears in a debate concerning military strategy and counterterrorism operations, a context with no explicit gender agenda, it mobilises motherhood discourse to present maternal sacrifice as foundational to national security. The superlative “en kutsal varlıklar” (most sacred beings) places mothers at the apex of a moral hierarchy, yet this valorisation is conditional upon their reproductive sacrifice for the state.

In disaster and emergency debates (101 instances, 11.9%), women were frequently treated as particularly vulnerable populations requiring male or state protection. For example: “Depremi en çok mağdur ettiği kesim çocuklar ve kadınlardır. Onların korunması önceliğimizdir.” (The segment most victimised by the earthquake is children and women. Their protection is our priority. PS 28/2).

Earthquake vulnerability is shaped by structural factors rather than demographic characteristics, yet this formulation treats women and children as a single category of inherent vulnerability and construes disaster response as a paternalistic obligation rather than as infrastructural and policy reform. Such pairing may also reflect a general humanitarian concern with vulnerable groups; the paternalistic reading rests on the recurrent grammatical pattern in which women appear as objects, and not agents, of protection.

In economy and agriculture debates (77 instances, 9.1%), women's labour was frequently referenced through motherhood and care-work frames even when the discussion concerned economic productivity: “Kadın çiftçilerimiz sabahtan akşama çalışıyor ama aynı zamanda evinde anne, ailede fedakâr bir birey.” (Our female farmers work from morning to evening but at the same time, she is a mother at home, a self-sacrificing individual in the family. PS 5/2). The conjunction “ama aynı zamanda” (but at the same time) juxtaposes women's economic labour and maternal role as parallel identities. Comparable patterns, such as possessive framing, women-children coupling, definitional equations, and religious glorification, recurred across these diverse policy contexts.

DISCUSSION

This study indicates that, within its benevolent strand, Turkish parliamentary discourse repositions women from political subjects to protected objects, and that this strand recurs across legislative language rather than remaining topic-bound rhetoric. Paternalistic and motherhood-based discourse accounts for 54% of coded instances in debates where gender is not thematically foregrounded, which suggests that gender ideology works as an implicit background assumption

across policy domains. Protection, care, and moral reverence emerge as discursive instruments that constrain women's political agency while normalising patriarchal authority.

The three strategies illustrate how benevolent sexism operates through positive moral framing rather than overt exclusion. Under protective paternalism, women appear as inherently vulnerable dependents whose safety becomes a male or state responsibility. Across the protective imperatives in the corpus, women rarely appear as subjects of protective action, while men and the state consistently occupy agentive positions. Care is therefore organised in discourse as something done to women, not something they claim. This encodes dependency at the level of syntax and reflects the institutionalisation of male discursive norms within public institutions established by men (Lakoff, 1990).

This asymmetry parallels Wang et al.'s corpus-based analysis of Chinese family planning discourse and Che Abdul Rahman's longitudinal study of Malaysian parliamentary discourse (Wang et al., 2025; Che Abdul Rahman, 2024), even though the institutional contexts and policy frameworks differ. The TBMM data reflect a comparable imbalance. Women are persistently cast as objects of protection and reproduction, whereas men appear as protectors, decision-makers, and moral authorities. Women-children coupling and possessive framing reinforce this asymmetry by placing women in relational positions, as wives, daughters, and mothers, rather than as autonomous political subjects. This suggests that the numerical representation described as critical mass does not by itself bring discursive transformation, which requires critical acts by women themselves, as Dahlerup's framework emphasises (Dahlerup, 1988). Childs' study of British women MPs shows that female parliamentarians hold varied views about challenging institutional norms, and that many are reluctant to foreground gender issues for fear of marginalisation (Childs, 2000). In both contexts, institutional discourse accommodates women's visibility while channelling representation into care-based and victim-centred frames that limit political agency.

The Turkish case intensifies benevolent sexism in a distinctive way, by integrating religious and nationalist authority into what this study calls sacred domesticity. Religious glorification and nationalist reproduction sacralise motherhood and render maternal and domestic roles morally untouchable. Hadith-based formulae and theological concepts like *emanet* (divine trust) cast women as objects of sacred responsibility delivered to men. The formulation “Kadınlar size Allah'ın emanetidir” (Women are entrusted to you by God) is especially revealing. While it appears to honour women, it casts them as passive objects of divine trust and men as accountable guardians, and it naturalises male authority as religiously mandated.

Nationalist reproduction amplifies this dynamic by fusing religious symbolism with nationalist geopolitics and presenting motherhood as at once a divine obligation and a patriotic duty. Unlike the economic productivity-centred gender discourse identified by Wang et al. (2025), Turkish parliamentary language prioritises biological and moral reproduction as the foundation of national continuity, which restricts women's political subjectivity to a reproductive function.

Possessive constructions, notably “kadınlarımız”, show how grammatical patterns encode hierarchical relations. The near absence of masculine equivalents such as “erkeklerimiz” points to a gendered possession, in which women are claimed as collective property requiring protection and reverence. This aligns with Edam et al.'s analysis of nomination and predication strategies that assign social actors identities and functions which appear descriptive but operate ideologically (Edam et al., 2024). In TBMM discourse, women are attributed moral purity, sacrifice, and vulnerability, qualities that legitimate protection while foreclosing political agency.

Maternal legitimisation among female parliamentarians is especially revealing. In 79.8% of these instances, women speakers invoked motherhood to authorise their political voice through phrases like “ben bir anne olarak” (I as a mother), which may reflect a structural discursive constraint rather than individual preference. It echoes Lakoff’s concept of the double bind that women face in professional contexts (Lakoff, 1990), and Baxter’s research on girls in public contexts shows a similar dynamic, in which dominant behaviour is avoided to prevent negative perception (Baxter, 2000). The recurrent structure “değil... aynı zamanda” (not only... but also) implies that parliamentary membership alone is not enough for legitimacy, and that maternal identity must supplement political authority. This admits an alternative reading, in which women mobilise motherhood strategically as a source of legitimacy and voice, and the present data cannot rule that reading out. What the data do show is that such legitimacy is available overwhelmingly through a maternal frame, which is the conditioning this study describes.

Methodologically, combining corpus-assisted pattern identification with feminist critical discourse analysis made it possible to capture systematic regularities as well as contextual nuance. The two-level structure of 55 discourse segments and 847 coded instances shows how benevolent sexism operates at once at the level of extended argumentation and at the level of micro-grammatical choice. The study’s synchronic scope is a limitation. As Che Abdul Rahman’s longitudinal analysis shows (Che Abdul Rahman, 2024), parliamentary gender discourse changes over time. Future research using diachronic corpus methods could assess whether benevolent sexism in the TBMM is intensifying, stabilising, or transforming.

Benevolent sexist discourse here is resilient precisely because it is articulated through positive and honourable representations. Challenging gender inequality in parliamentary contexts therefore calls for attention not only to representational numbers or policy outcomes but to the linguistic and ideological structures through which gendered power relations are routinely reproduced. This is the point made by Holmes’ observations on male dominance in public talk (Holmes, 1992) and by Childs’ emphasis on critical difference approaches over accommodation (Childs, 2000).

CONCLUSION

This study examined the discursive construction of women in the Turkish Grand National Assembly through the lens of benevolent sexism, and it identified systematic patterns through which women are repositioned from political subjects to protected objects. Analysis of 97 plenary speeches yielded 847 coded instances across protective paternalism (41.6%), motherhood glorification (35.2%), and sacred domesticity (23.3%). These strategies operated as interlocking mechanisms that together circumscribe women’s symbolic representation within legislative space.

The findings indicate that benevolent sexism is a recurrent feature of the analysed parliamentary discourse, not an exceptional occurrence. Linguistic mechanisms such as possessive framing, the coupling of women with children, and the recurrent use of protective imperatives diminish women’s grammatical agency. The integration of religious and nationalist frames further legitimises patriarchal hierarchies through transcendental authority and makes them resistant to secular critique. Female parliamentarians frequently invoked maternal identity to legitimise participation, which suggests a structural pressure to frame expertise through motherhood.

These findings extend Glick and Fiske's Ambivalent Sexism Theory beyond attitudinal measurement and show how benevolent sexist ideology is linguistically enacted and institutionally reproduced. The systematic identification of formulaic expressions, grammatical patterns, and semantic frames provides empirical evidence for how subjective prejudice translates into objective linguistic structures that constrain women's symbolic representation. Methodologically, combining corpus-assisted discourse analysis with fine-grained qualitative coding produced replicable evidence for the systematicity and recurrence of benevolent sexism, which addresses critiques of qualitative discourse analysis as impressionistic.

These patterns carry direct political consequences. The normalisation of paternalistic discourse across diverse parliamentary contexts suggests that legislative language takes an active part in women's symbolic marginalisation, regardless of gains in descriptive representation. Even as women's numerical presence increases, the benevolent strand positions them as protected objects rather than political subjects, and this constrains the symbolic transformation that substantive equality requires. Policy interventions must therefore attend not only to numerical representation but to the linguistic and ideological mechanisms through which women's political agency is circumscribed.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The study focused only on plenary speeches and did not include committee deliberations or informal interactions, where different norms may operate. Future research could examine whether benevolent sexist patterns persist in less formalised contexts and could compare how female and male speakers use gendered discourse. Cross-national comparative research would clarify whether the Turkish patterns reflect broader dynamics or context-specific configurations.

This study shows that substantive political equality requires sustained attention to the discursive practices through which gender ideology is reproduced within legislative institutions. The systematic analysis of parliamentary language reveals how benevolent sexism works as a recurrent mechanism of symbolic exclusion that constrains women's political subjectivity even as it appears to honour, protect, and valorise them.

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APPENDIX A

CODING SCHEME AND DECISION RULES

Strategy	Sub-pattern (n)	Definition	Illustrative example
Protective paternalism	Women-children coupling (127)	Women grouped with children as a joint category requiring protection	“korunması gereken hanımlara ve çocuklara” (the women and children needing protection)
	Possessive framing (98)	Women marked as the possession of men or the collective via possessives	“Kadınlar bizim başımızın tacıdır” (women are the crown of our heads)
	Protective imperatives (127)	Constructions positioning men/state as the agent of protective action and women as its object	“onlar incinmesin diye yasalar çıkarıyoruz” (we pass laws so they are not hurt)
Motherhood glorification	Definitional equation (112)	Rhetorical definitions equating womanhood with maternal essence	“Biz 'kadın' deyince beşik sallayan anne” (when we say woman, a mother rocking the cradle)
	Maternal legitimisation (94)	Speakers grounding authority in motherhood rather than expertise	“bir anne olarak size söylüyorum” (as a mother, I tell you)
	Occupational segregation (92)	Women's roles enumerated within gendered confines, excluding leadership	“Evde anne, okulda öğretmen, hastanede hemşire” (at home a mother, at school a teacher, at hospital a nurse)
Sacred domesticity	Religious glorification (104)	Sacralisation of the maternal/domestic role through religious reference	“Cennet anaların ayağı altındadır” (paradise lies beneath mothers' feet)
	Nationalist reproduction (93)	Maternal role framed as service to national continuity	“gelecek nesilleri yetiştiren anneler” (mothers raising future generations)

Several coding decisions required interpretive judgement, and the following rules governed borderline cases. First, where an apparently positive or agentive descriptor co-occurred with a maternal or domestic anchor, the instance was coded according to the dominant framing established by that anchor. Second, utterances of apparent praise were coded according to the structural position they assigned to women rather than their positive surface valence. Third, where a speaker cited a sexist formulation in order to object to it, the formulation was recorded as present but marked as oppositionally framed, so that contested cases were not coded as endorsements.

APPENDIX B

CORPUS COMPARISON AND CONCORDANCE EVIDENCE

Comparison of the kadın and erkek stems (full corpus). The stem kadın occurs 6,247 times and the stem erkek 607 times. The strongest content collocates of erkek (± 5 window) are eşitliği (co = 37, MI 11.28), egemen (co = 44, MI 10.82), fırsat (co = 40, MI 9.70), katledildi (co = 17, MI 9.47), şiddeti (co = 16, MI 9.42), and kız (co = 25, MI 9.11). The profile centres on equality, male dominance, and perpetration, and not on protection or vulnerability.

Selected concordance lines for kadın (full corpus):

- “...kadına yönelik şiddetle mücadele edilmesi ve toplumsal cinsiyet odaklı bir...”
- “...2024 yılının ilk dokuz ayında 296 kadın cinayeti işlenirken...”
- “...silahlı çatışmalardan etkilenen kadınlar ve çocuklar için özel yardım ve koruma...”
- “...Türkiye Cumhuriyeti... kadınlara seçme ve seçilme hakkı tanınmıştır...”
- “...bir yargı paketi getiriyorsunuz, kadın haklarını geriye götüren...”

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