

Evaluation of Hospital Vision and Mission Statements in terms of Customer Orientation: A Content Analysis for Private Hospitals in Türkiye

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the vision and purpose statements of private hospitals in Türkiye with regard to their level of customer orientation. In order to achieve this objective, an examination was conducted on the purpose and vision statements of 494 privately owned hospitals in Türkiye. The vision and purpose statements of hospitals were subjected to content analysis using Nwankwo's (1995) customer orientation criteria. The evaluation of the vision and purpose statements was based on the following criteria: "Defining" refers to the emphasis placed on customer-centricity, "Sensitivity" pertains to the proactive approach adopted, "Measuring" signifies the adoption of a formalized approach, and "Implementation" denotes the commitment to taking decisive actions. Ultimately, it was determined that 82% of hospitals possessed purpose and vision statements. The findings of the study indicate that hospitals prioritize the requirements of patients and their families as the focal point of their service provision. The vision statement, accounting for 19.4% of the total content, and the mission statement, comprising 18.5% of the overall content, both emphasize the development of innovative strategies aimed at enhancing the provision of distinct service delivery to patients and their families. Nevertheless, the rate of utilization is relatively inadequate in the context of health services that heavily rely on technological advancements.

Keywords: *Mission, Vision, Private Hospital, Customer Orientation.*



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1. INTRODUCTION

According to Özer (2006), intensified competition, driven by the pursuit of customers and market share, coupled with economic downturns during periods of crisis, reduced consumer demand, and heightened focus on customer orientation in contexts where customers have increased options, can confer a competitive advantage to businesses. The concept of customer orientation entails prioritizing the satisfaction and value derived by customers from engaging with a business. It confers a competitive advantage to businesses. According to Baş et al. (2016), a crucial objective is to establish customer orientation as a means of gaining a competitive advantage. In order to ensure the continued operation and expansion of a hospital, it is imperative to maintain and enhance the quality of its service-oriented processes and performance, adhering to rigorous standards of customer service that effectively address the needs of patients (Marina & Wahjono, 2013, p. 400). There exists a clear correlation between patients' perception of service quality and the extent to which the business prioritizes customer satisfaction. Healthcare organizations should prioritize patients through a systematic approach. Patients who express their dissatisfaction and negative experiences with their environment may experience a decrease in patient retention. In the event of negative experiences, individuals may opt to seek medical care at alternative healthcare facilities. It is imperative for hospitals to ensure that all of their services are centered around the patient. It is imperative to employ a comprehensive array of motivational tools to foster the widespread adoption of a patient-centered culture among all staff members within the educational institution. In the context of social responsibility and societal service, it is imperative to consider the implementation of a patient-centered approach (Soysal & Koçoğlu, 2018, p. 42).

It is widely acknowledged that prioritizing the customer can enhance operational efficiency, prolong business longevity, differentiate a company within the market, and confer a distinct competitive advantage. The literature review revealed that existing studies have examined hospital mission and vision statements, but none have specifically investigated the extent to which these statements are customer focused. Given this, it is widely believed to be of utmost significance to examine the purpose and vision statements of private hospitals regarding their customer-centric orientation. According to Soysal and Koçoğlu (2018, p. 43), it is posited that hospitals will increasingly face competition from patients and their families, thereby becoming a significant competitive force in the present and future. This study examined the websites of 494 private hospitals in Türkiye, as documented in the Directory of Public and Private Health Institutions. The study utilized the customer orientation criteria established by Nwankwo in 1995, which were subsequently employed by Oruç and Zengin (2015) in a Turkish context. The present study employed content analysis to examine the vision and purpose statements of private hospitals in Türkiye, focusing on the criteria pertaining to customer orientation. The examination focused on distinct factors related to customer orientation, namely "Defining," "Sensitivity," "Measuring," and "Implementation." In this study, firstly, the concept of customer orientation is examined, the importance of customer-oriented approach for hospitals is mentioned and previous

researches in this field are included. In the second part of the study, the concepts of mission and vision in hospitals, their formation and content are given and the researches conducted in this field are mentioned. In the last part of the study, mission and vision statements obtained from the websites of private hospitals were evaluated with the customer orientation scale, content analysis was performed, and findings and results were given.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The Concept of Customer Orientation

Customer orientation refers to a collection of principles that prioritize the satisfaction of customers, while also considering the interests of other stakeholders, including entrepreneurs, managers, and employees, with the ultimate goal of enhancing long-term profitability (Nwokah & Maclayton, 2006, p. 67). This approach enhances the advantages for purchasers or customers while simultaneously mitigating costs. Acquiring such a depth of comprehension necessitates the acquisition of knowledge pertaining to clients and a comprehensive grasp of the economic and political frameworks that they encounter (Nwokah, 2009, p. 22). Numerous firms encounter difficulties as a result of an inadequate perception of customers and their needs. The adoption of a customer-centric approach plays a crucial role in enhancing corporate profitability when solving this particular difficulty. According to Nwokah and Maclayton (2006), the attainment of competitive advantage is of utmost importance and serves as a distinguishing characteristic of prosperous enterprises.

According to Mann et al. (2007), the establishment of an enduring and sustainable customer-centric performance system is contingent upon the presence of a widespread customer-centric culture within the business. A culture that prioritizes client orientation motivates and directs people to align their behaviors with the principles and values of this culture. The development of customer orientation cannot be achieved solely by highlighting peripheral service features. On the contrary, the literature suggests that firms can embrace customer orientation if they develop it as an organizational culture throughout the organization (Kennedy et al., 2002, p. 163). Mann et al. (2007) identified six distinct qualities that define a customer-oriented service.

1. Leadership: The influence of customers on organizational direction and activities has a key importance.
2. Listening: The organization actively seeks the perspectives of customers and provides them with opportunities to share their opinions.
3. Analysis and understanding: The analysis and comprehension of customer expectations and essential requirements have been achieved.
4. Integration and delivery: Customers' expectations are met.
5. People: The firm possesses a comprehensive comprehension of and has successfully integrated a customer-centric culture.

6. Review and improvement: It is imperative to consistently assess and enhance customer-centric strategies, procedures, and processes.

Hennig-Thurau (2004) demonstrated in his research that the degree of customer orientation exhibited by service sector employees significantly influences the development of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, within the confines of the aforementioned study, it was determined that the technical aptitude, social competencies, degree of motivation, and decision-making abilities exhibited by employees are significant aspects that impact customer-centric service behaviors, ultimately leading to customer satisfaction and loyalty. Kealesitse et al. (2013) posit that customer orientation is regarded as a strategic approach in the private sector aimed at enhancing customer happiness and loyalty, ultimately leading to improved profitability and competitiveness. Nevertheless, empirical evidence suggests that customer orientation exerts a significant and favorable influence on staff performance and motivation within the public sector (Paarlberg, 2007, p. 201).

In the light of all this information, as a synthesis of the definitions found in the literature, customer orientation can be defined as the orientation of an organization's activities and strategies by focusing on customer satisfaction and customer needs. As stated by Soysal and Koçoğlu (2018), customer orientation is based on the principles of understanding customer expectations and needs, providing value to them and offering a satisfying customer experience. A customer-centric approach also increases the success of an organization. Organizations that adopt this approach increase customer loyalty and brand reputation, expand their customer base and gain competitive advantage. It also creates an image of an organization that values customers and strengthens long-term customer relationships (Nwokah, 2009; Nwokah & Maclayton, 2006). As a result, it is clearly seen that adopting a customer-oriented approach is very important for businesses for sustainable success.

2.2. Customer Orientation and Hospitals

Consumer orientation refers to the recognition that consumer expectations play a crucial role in shaping the marketing endeavors of an organization. Customer satisfaction and expectations are on the rise across all sectors, including healthcare. To effectively meet these demands, it is crucial to adopt a customer-oriented approach that prioritizes the satisfaction of patients and their relatives (Soysal & Koçoğlu, 2018, p. 41). Customer orientation in hospitals pertains to a method that endeavors to enhance service provision to patients and fulfill their requirements. The active participation of patients in the treatment and care processes within the hospital setting is of paramount significance. The happiness of patients and the fulfillment of their demands are critical determinants that significantly impact the overall quality of healthcare services. Patient satisfaction encompasses various components, including but not limited to, efficient communication, tailored service, feedback mechanisms, complaint resolution strategies, provision of education and information, and safeguarding patient rights. Given that the patient is the central Orientation, it is appropriate to employ the phrase "patient orientation" rather than

"customer orientation" when discussing the concept of consumer orientation inside healthcare establishments. It is recommended that hospital management, healthcare providers, and all other staff members embrace a patient-oriented approach (Soysal & Koçoğlu, 2018, p. 43). The use of this strategy holds significance in enhancing patient happiness, improving treatment outcomes, and fostering a positive patient experience. (Kumbasar, 2016, p. 85)

When discussing customer orientation within the context of health institutions, it is possible to identify two paradigms that are relevant to the delivery of health services: the old paradigm, which centers around payers and healthcare personnel, and the new paradigm, which prioritizes the customer, specifically patients and their relatives. The augmentation of the 10 components of the novel paradigm can lead to an enhancement in customer happiness, cost efficiency, and therapeutic efficacy. According to a study conducted by Ford and Fottler (2000), a total of 177 hospitals were analyzed, and these 10 principles were determined to be consistent with cost-effectiveness.

The fundamental principles underlying the new paradigm are as follows:

- Principle 1: The assessment of service quality and value is contingent upon the perspectives and evaluations of patients and their families.
- Principle 2: The inclusion of patients and their families contributes to the enhancement of service experiences by improving their quality and value.
- Principle 3: Everyone should recognize the importance of patients and their relatives and subsequently adopt appropriate actions in response.
- Principle 4: Identify, recruit, and train competent and appropriate individuals.
- Principle 5: Patients and family members desire employees who are not only well-trained but also possess strong interpersonal skills.
- Principle 6: Patients and family members anticipate a seamless service experience.
- Principle 7: Waiting times for patients and their families seeking healthcare services should be avoided.
- Principle 8: Provide services in accordance with patients' and families' expectations.
- Principle 9: What is measured will be managed.
- Principle 10: The attainment of success should not be regarded as a final destination.

In a study by Marina and Wahjono (2013), a new paradigm in healthcare organizations was mentioned. According to the research; "Patients are the partners of the hospital" and the understanding of service needs to be developed. With this paradigm, hospitals will abandon the old paradigm of "Doctor is king". The paradigm shift in the hospital has guided the gradual transformation of the hospital

into a profit-oriented commercial enterprise. At this point, a satisfactory hospital service for patients and their relatives is possible with hospital employees and management who have a culture and value system of service and do their best (Marina & Wahjono, 2013, p. 404). According to Kumbasar's quote from Apker J., some features should be taken into consideration for patient-centeredness in health services (Kumbasar, 2016, p. 87):

Access to healthcare: The provision of patient appointment services includes offering patients the ability to select their preferred appointment time, assuring timely adherence to scheduled appointments, minimizing waiting times, and promptly responding to telephone and electronic correspondence.

Participation in the treatment process: The patient is involved in their own treatment process by allowing them to participate in treatment and care decisions, presenting different options, and clearly outlining roles and duties.

Information systems: Systems that enable access to laboratory tests and imaging services done during the diagnosis and treatment process, as well as reporting on the services obtained, are developed.

Coordination: A comprehensive system is established to enable seamless access to patient information for all healthcare personnel involved in providing care. This system facilitates the sharing of patient information among employees whenever it is required.

Possibility of feedback: A low-cost, patient/caregiver-oriented online survey is used to create a system that allows patients to evaluate the health care they have received.

In a study done in 2018, Soysal and Koçoğlu discovered a favorable correlation between the perception of customer orientation among institutional staff and patients' evaluations of service quality, reliability, enthusiasm, and assurance. A positive correlation exists between customer orientation and patients' opinion of service quality. A further noteworthy finding of the study pertains to the divergence observed in the levels of customer orientation perception between patients and healthcare personnel. The study assessed the level of consumer orientation perception among healthcare professionals and patients, finding that healthcare professionals had a higher view of customer orientation compared to patients. In their study, Bozkurt and Çolakoğlu (2020) examined the evaluation of various characteristics, including customer orientation, brand prestige, brand trust, and brand advocacy, by participants in the context of hospitals. The findings indicated a positive assessment of these variables inside the organizations. Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that customer orientation has a statistically significant impact on brand prestige, brand trust, and brand advocacy (Bozkurt & Çolakoğlu, 2020, p. 4009). The prioritization of customer orientation within health management is crucial for enhancing the overall quality of health services and optimizing patient happiness. Furthermore, from a financial perspective, health institutions place significant weight on factors such as cultivating a loyal

patient base, establishing a favorable reputation, fostering a positive image and referral network, gaining a competitive edge in the market, and assuring cost-effectiveness.

2.3. Concepts of Mission and Vision

In the realm of business, the notion of a mission serves as a guiding framework that delineates the tasks, principles, convictions, purpose, and strategies that an organization must adhere to in order to distinguish itself from other enterprises. According to Muslu (2014), a meticulously crafted mission statement can yield several advantages for a firm, including enhanced economic performance, fostering collaboration and cohesion among employees, and facilitating the establishment and reinforcement of the corporate culture. According to Kantabutra and Avery (2010), mission statements serve as a valuable management tool that contributes to the enhancement of organizational performance. The mission statement is regarded as the fundamental basis for an organization's planning procedures and articulates the role and objective of the organization (Cronin & Bolon, 2018, p. 30).

In contrast, vision offers a strategic outlook on the future trajectory of an organization. By establishing a desired future state, a firm can enhance the coherence of its decision-making process in the present. In essence, the objective is to formulate the future based on the current timeframe (Dalay, et al., 2002, p. 20). According to Muslu (2014), businesses strive to gain insight into future prospects through the formulation of vision statements, thereby fostering a sense of connection between the organization and its personnel.

As stated by Rego et al. (2016), the future outlook of an organization encompasses several key elements. These include the organization's sector of operation, the markets it intends to compete in, the goods and services it plans to offer, the value it aims to deliver to its customers, the long-term advantages it anticipates having, and its projected performance and profitability (Akgemici & Güleş, 2009, p. 14).

As can be seen in Figure 1, mission and vision both have different characteristics and differ from each other. The distinctions between mission and vision can be characterized as follows: the mission pertains to the present condition and fundamental undertakings of the organization, whilst the vision pertains to the future objectives and aspired condition of the organization. The mission statement serves to elucidate the purpose and operations of the organization, whereas the vision statement delineates the future direction and aspirations of the organization. Both the mission and vision statements are key components of an organization's strategic planning process, serving as effective means to communicate a coherent message to the stakeholders on the organization's aims and objectives. In essence, a mission statement delineates the fundamental objectives of an organization, encompassing its activities and target beneficiaries. The document articulates the aims, intended recipients, principles, spheres of operation, and enduring aspirations of the organization. A vision statement serves as a strategic tool that articulates the enduring objectives of an organization, delineating its desired future role and intended trajectory. The statement articulates the prospective trajectory of the organization, its

strategies for fostering innovation, implementing change and fostering growth, as well as its capacity to adjust to a dynamic and evolving global landscape.

Table 1. Characteristics of Mission and Vision

Mission	Vision
Idealistic. It is original. It is distinctive. It has attractive qualities. It is short and memorable. Inspiring and ambitious. Describes what is expected in the future.	It is short, clear and striking. The purpose of the service is defined. The production/service area of the business is specified. The goods/services produced by the business are defined. A meaningful discourse is created that will motivate the staff, that they will keep in mind while working and that they will be proud of.

Source: (Akgemici & Güleş, 2009, p. 14)

The significance of vision and mission statements in strategic management is widely recognized across all types of companies, including public, private, big, small, and international entities. Furthermore, it has been observed that the performance of organizations is significantly influenced by their purpose and vision statements (Darbi, 2012, p. 95). Mission and vision statements are key components of a company's strategic planning process, serving as a fundamental framework that guides and aligns all stakeholders involved in the organization. These statements serve the purpose of fostering confidence by effectively expressing the objectives and obligations of the organization to external stakeholders, while simultaneously establishing the company's distinct character and trajectory.

2.4. Concepts of Mission and Vision in Healthcare Organizations

The mission and vision of a hospital encompass its purpose, delineate its societal position, and outline its inherent obligations, specifically referring to the services it offers to the community. In this context, the individuals in question guide and steer the workforce towards a shared target, and facilitate its implementation by assisting in the formulation of organizational goals. The aforementioned study by Rego et al. (2016) examines the impact of certain factors on the interaction between health professionals and patients. Specifically, the study investigates how these factors condition the aforementioned relationship. According to Cronin and Bolon (2018), the mission and vision statement of a hospital should enable stakeholders to differentiate amongst organizations based on their articulated priorities and objectives. Mission statements serve the objective of elucidating the hospital staff's understanding of their *raison d'être*, identity, and existence, thereby offering a clear and targeted direction, as well as instilling inspiration and motivation among personnel (Bart, 2007, p. 684).

Rego et al. (2016, p. 64) emphasize the importance of hospitals making their mission, philosophy, values, principles, and rules known to the public. This is crucial because hospitals have moral, legal, and social responsibilities that they need to fulfill. In recent years, hospitals have been utilizing mission and vision statements more frequently to clearly define and effectively communicate

the desired relationships they aim to establish with their key stakeholders, including investors, customers, and employees. According to Leggat and Holmes (2015), hospitals are advised to make their mission and vision statements available online in order to effectively communicate with stakeholders and other interested parties, while keeping costs to a minimum. Many managers mistakenly believe that simply creating mission and vision statements is sufficient for effectively communicating them. Managers invest a significant amount of time and resources in order to develop mission and vision statements. However, it is often overlooked by managers that in order for a statement to have a meaningful impact, it must be effectively communicated and understood by both patients and their relatives. Managers should take advantage of every opportunity to effectively communicate the hospital's organizational mission and vision statement, ensuring that it is clearly understood by all. According to Desmidt and Heene (2006), the most crucial aspect of the statement process is not just coming up with the statement itself, but effectively managing its meaning. The study conducted by Kartal and Uğurluoğlu in 2020 evaluated the vision statements of hospitals based on their achievement of four primary objectives. The purposes were identified to guide the organization in terms of innovation, motivation, and basic ideology. According to the findings of the content analysis conducted by Kartal and Uğurluoğlu (2020), there was no significant difference observed between the ownership status of hospitals and their ability to meet the stated objectives. Demir and Öztürk (2019) conducted research that revealed private hospitals prioritize the development of vision and mission statements by carefully analyzing the external environment. Marina and Wahjono (2013) found that in order for vision and mission to effectively influence employee and management behaviors, it is crucial to first identify the core business ethics values that exist within an organization. This step is essential prior to designing and establishing the vision and mission of the organization. The definition becomes even more crucial when an organization is involved in both accommodation and hospitality businesses, as it is essential for meeting customer satisfaction. According to a study conducted by Şahin and Ocak in 2020, it was found that only 8% of hospitals have a comprehensive and well-defined vision statement. This indicates that there is a lack of understanding regarding the importance of developing a vision statement for effective strategic management. In a research conducted by Biçer in 2018, findings revealed that over 50% of health managers had not undergone any form of strategic management training. Furthermore, it was shown that a significant proportion, specifically over 33%, of these managers exhibited a lack of awareness regarding seven out of the total sixteen strategic management tools (Biçer, 2018, p. 425).

As a result of all this literature, it is clear that vision and mission statements play an important role in shaping the organizational culture of hospitals. These statements provide a road map for hospital employees and stakeholders, guide decision-making processes and orientation on a common goal. At the same time, they also clearly express what role a hospital aims to play in society and the health sector.

3. METHOD

3.1. Purpose and Importance of the Research

Within the realm of healthcare services, it is widely recognized that patients, as well as their family members or relatives, are considered clients. In highly competitive private healthcare facilities, it is crucial for healthcare professionals to prioritize customer-oriented (or patient-oriented) service delivery. This approach should be widely embraced to ensure the best possible care for patients. Mission and vision statements are of great importance as they act as guiding principles that demonstrate the hospital's dedication to client orientation and its core values. These phrases act as a reminder to hospital administrators and staff about the significance of prioritizing customer satisfaction, improving patient experience, and upholding healthcare quality. Customer orientation is a comprehensive concept that includes several important elements. These elements involve being attentive to the needs and preferences of patients, providing services that are not only safe but also of excellent quality, and fostering effective communication and teamwork among healthcare professionals. Effectively articulating mission and vision statements is crucial for hospitals to convey their approach towards these domains.

This study aims to assess the extent to which private hospitals incorporate the customer (patient) in their mission and vision statements, which articulate their purpose and future objectives. This study examines the degree to which private hospitals incorporate consumer orientation into their mission and vision statements as displayed on their websites. Incorporating consumer orientation criteria into mission and vision statements is believed to enhance customer satisfaction and yield positive outcomes for the company. Examining the customer orientation evident in the mission and vision statements of private hospitals offers substantial benefits for both organizations and patients. Furthermore, scholarly research has thoroughly investigated the connection between customer orientation and mission and vision statements. Nonetheless, research specifically investigating this connection within the context of hospitals is insufficient. The findings of this research hold significant implications for the health sector.

3.2. Type of the Research

Content analysis was used in the study. Content analysis is defined as a methodological tool and technique applied to various statements (Bilgin, 2014). The study favored content analysis as a research method because to its potential to examine a text-based large amount of data systematically, impartially, and scientifically in detail and, at the same time, provide answers to various research problems (Koçak & Arun, 2013; Ültay et al., 2021, p. 191).

Therefore, the content analysis method, which integrates both qualitative and quantitative data methodologies, was used to evaluate, code, analyze, and express the vision and mission statements of private hospitals in numerical form. So that, the underlying messages embedded in the vision and mission statements of the private hospitals can be uncovered.

3.3. Research Ethics

Ethics committee approval for this research was obtained from Istanbul Aydın University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Commission Board.

3.4. Population of the Research

This study focuses on private hospitals that are currently in operation within the geographical boundaries of Türkiye. The current study conducted an analysis of the websites belonging to a total of 494 privately owned hospitals that were listed in the Directory of Public and Private Health Institutions in Türkiye. This study does not include public hospitals and private medical centers that have fewer than 50 beds. One limitation of this study pertains to its scope, as it exclusively focuses on hospitals in Türkiye that own 50 or more beds and hold private hospital licenses.

3.5. Data Collection Tools

The present study employed the customer orientation criteria originally created by Nwankwo in 1995, which were subsequently adapted for usage in the Turkish context by Oruç and Zengin (2015). This study employed text analysis to examine the vision and mission statements of private hospitals in Türkiye, focusing on their alignment with customer orientation criteria. The evaluation of customer orientation criteria was conducted as distinct components, namely definition, sensitivity, measurement, and implementation. The "Defining" component of the criterion focuses on analyzing vision and mission statements in relation to the degree of customer-centricity exhibited by the product or market, the articulation of customer-oriented goals, the acquisition of customer feedback, and the implementation of employee training initiatives. These items pertain to the concept of "being customer-oriented". The "Sensitivity" component of the criterion assesses the efficacy of vision and mission statements in terms of their ability to anticipate consumer needs, provide clear direction, and facilitate the exploration of novel techniques. The elements inside the criterion pertain to the concept of "being proactive". The "Measurement" component of the criterion focuses on the evaluation of vision and mission statements with regard to customer research and customer-centric performance. These narratives also express "being formal". The final component of the criterion, known as "Implementation," assesses the vision and mission statements based on two key factors: the level of support provided by top management and the extent to which they are action oriented. These comments also analyze the concept of "being action-oriented". Firms that adhere to these characteristics can be classified as "Customer-focused" firms, which implies that they prioritize customer benefits and do not neglect the interests of other stakeholders (Nwokah et al., 2006, p. 70).

3.6. Analysis of the Data

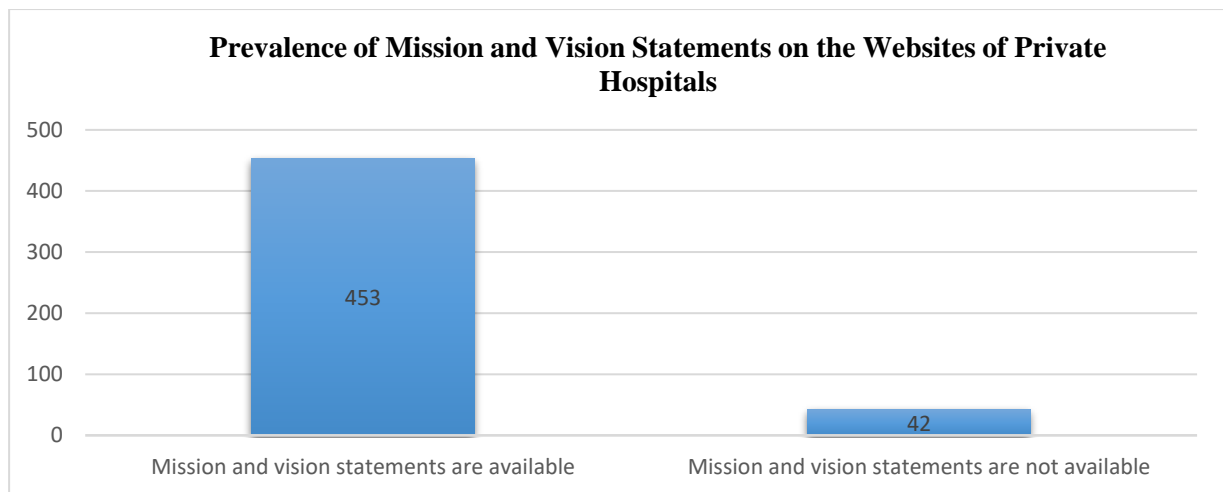
The present study involved a comprehensive analysis of the mission-vision statements found on the websites of private hospitals. Each statement was evaluated individually based on the criteria outlined in the Customer Orientation scale, which was recorded in an Excel table specifically designed

for this purpose. The examination of hospitals' vision and mission statements was conducted using the Customer Orientation Criteria developed by Nwankwo and adapted for usage in Türkiye by Oruç and Zengin (2015). Each statement was analyzed individually, and the occurrence of the criteria within the statements was systematically coded. The coded statements were analyzed in terms of percentages, and the distribution of these percentages was generated using the Excel software. The validity of this study was ensured by the fact that the coding scheme and analysis methods used were compatible with similar studies in the literature. Coding was done by considering the keywords and expressions commonly used in the literature to measure the concept of customer orientation. In addition, the coding scheme was reviewed by experts in the field and found appropriate. In order to assess the reliability of this study, the coding done by a single coder was measured by the retest method. The same data set was recoded after a certain period of time and the consistency between the two coding sets was calculated by Pearson correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient was found to be 0.82, which indicates a very good level of reliability.

4. FINDINGS

The present study involved an examination of the websites belonging to 494 private hospitals listed in the Directory of Public and Private Health Institutions in Türkiye. A total of 41 hospitals were omitted from the study due to the absence of purpose and vision statements. The research was carried out on a sample of 453 private hospitals, as depicted in Figure 1.

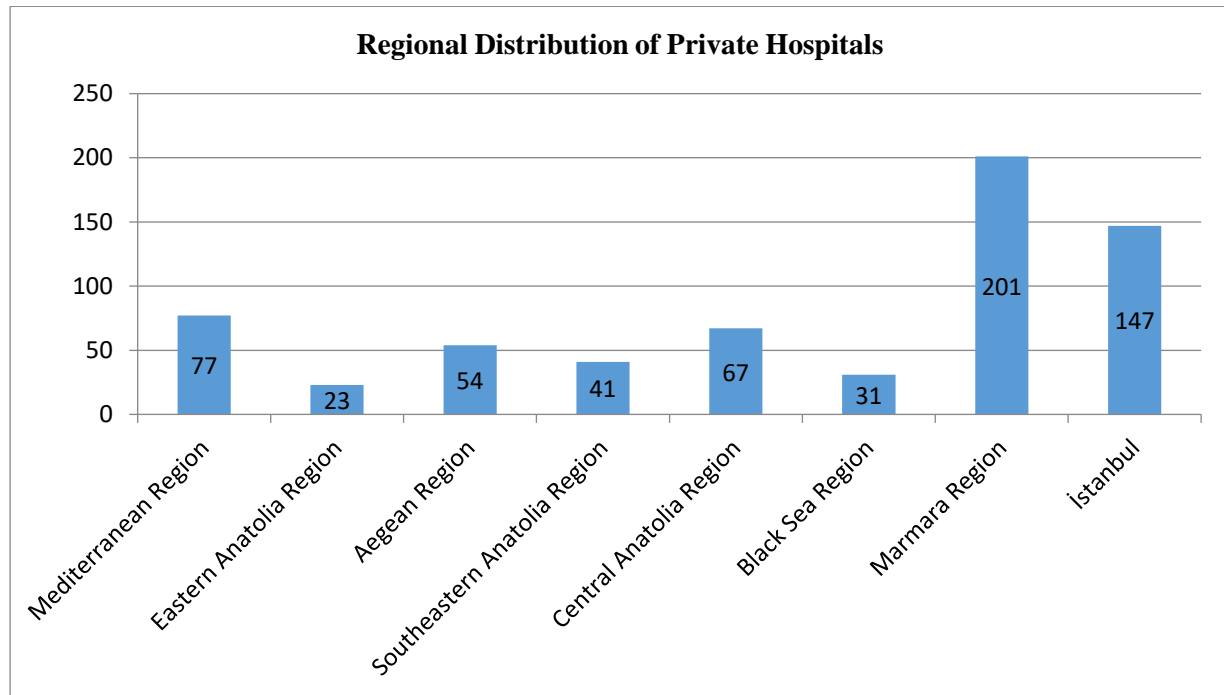
Figure 1. Prevalence of Mission and Vision Statements on the Websites of Private Hospitals



Based on the categorization of geographical regions, it can be asserted that the Marmara Region, particularly the province of Istanbul, has the greatest concentration of private hospitals. According to the data presented in Figure 2, the Marmara Region is succeeded by the Mediterranean Region and Central Anatolia Region. The Eastern Anatolia Region exhibits the lowest number of private hospitals. In terms of provincial distribution, Istanbul has the highest concentration of private hospitals, with Ankara and Antalya following suit in descending order. Certain provinces, like Artvin, Kilis, Bartın,

and Batman, lack private healthcare facilities. Based on the findings, it can be inferred that private hospitals operating in Istanbul, Ankara, and Antalya provinces, as well as in the Marmara and Mediterranean areas, demonstrate a commitment to vision and mission statements, thereby establishing long-term objectives they want to accomplish.

Figure 2. Regional Distribution of Private Hospitals Participating in the Study



The "Definition" component of the study examined the concept of customer orientation and conducted evaluations based on four distinct criteria items. Table 2 reveals that the criterion "Customer-centeredness of the product or market" was the predominant criterion employed in the vision (49.4%) and mission (57.6%) statements of the hospitals. It can be asserted that this criterion is more prominently featured in the mission statements of hospitals. When examining the relationship between mission and vision, it can be argued that the mission embodies principles and values, while the vision encompasses strategic aims and objectives. In this context, the emphasis on customer-centeredness within a product or market is primarily associated with principles and values. Within this particular section, it was seen that the criterion pertaining to the articulation of customer-oriented objectives ranked second in both the mission statement, accounting for 32% of the content, and the vision statement, accounting for 15.9% of the content. It is evident that approximately one-third of hospitals include the goals they have set for patients and their families as guiding principles and core values. Inside the part dedicated to defining key elements, it was observed that the inclusion of staff training programs as a criterion inside mission and vision statements was quite infrequent.

Table 2. Status of Mission and Vision Content According to the Definition Criterion

Identification Criteria	Mission	%	Vision	%
Customer-centricity of the product or market	261/453	57.6	224/453	49.4
Articulation of customer-oriented objectives	145/453	32	72/453	15.9
Collecting information from customers	21/453	4.6	45/453	9.9
Employee training programs	4/453	0.9	2/453	0.4

The "Sensitivity" segment examines the concept of proactivity and involves the assessment of three distinct criteria items. According to the data presented in Table 3, the criterion pertaining to "Being able to make predictions about customers" was found to be the most commonly utilized criterion in both the vision (40.8%) and purpose (49.2%) statements of the hospitals. These qualities are frequently observed in the mission statements of hospitals. Among the criteria discussed in the section on being proactive, the criterion of being directed emerged as the least prevalent among mission and vision statements. Hospitals demonstrate a tendency to prioritize the proactive provision of various services to patients and their relatives through the development of novel solutions.

Table 3. Status of Mission and Vision Content According to the Sensitivity Criterion

Sensitivity Criteria	Mission	%	Vision	%
Make predictions about customers	223/453	49.2	185/453	40.8
Being directive	28/453	6.2	37/453	8.2
Research new strategies	84/453	18.5	88/453	19.4

In the "Measurement" section, evaluations were conducted for two different criterion items to assess the level of formality. According to Table 4, the criterion of "Customer-oriented performance" was found to be the most used criterion in both the vision (93.6%) and mission (93.8%) statements of the hospitals. The high percentages suggest that hospitals prioritize patients when strategizing their operations and initiatives, as evidenced by their mission and vision statements. The mission and vision statements of hospitals often incorporate these criteria at a similar frequency. The criterion of customer research was given the least priority in the mission and vision statements, as stated in the measurement section.

Table 4. Status of Mission and Vision Content According to Measurement Criteria

Measurement Criteria	Mission	%	Vision	%
Customer research	57/453	12.6	28/453	6.2
Customer-oriented performance	425/453	93.8	424/453	93.6

The "Implementation" section encompassed evaluations that were carried out for two distinct criterion items, both of which were indicative of a strong emphasis on proactive measures. Based on the

data provided in Table 5, it can be observed that the criterion of "being activity-oriented" was the most employed criterion in the vision (93.6%) and mission (93.8%) statements of the hospitals. Private hospitals place a high emphasis on prioritizing the provision of services and endeavor to attain their objectives by assuring patient satisfaction through the delivery of these services. The findings from the implementation section indicate that the criterion of top management support was the least employed in the formulation of the mission and vision statements. Upon analysis of the mission and vision characteristics, it becomes evident that the criterion of top management support is the least frequently cited among all the criteria.

Table 5. Status of Mission and Vision Content According to Implementation Criteria

Application Criteria	Mission	%	Vision	%
Top management support	4/453	0.9	6/453	1.3
Being activity-oriented	425/453	93.8	424/453	93.6

5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study analyzed the vision and mission statements of private hospitals in Türkiye through text analysis, with an emphasis on customer orientation. Consequently, several findings were derived. Forty-one private hospitals, representing 8.2% of the sample, did not provide vision and purpose statements on their websites. The lack of these remarks, which suggest continuity, indicates insufficient adoption of strategic management within these hospitals. Mission and vision statements are crucial for hospitals as they influence patient and family satisfaction, guide future objectives, and enhance competitive advantage.

The research identified that the most frequently cited criteria were "activity-oriented" for implementation and "customer-oriented performance" for measurement. Kartal and Uğurluoğlu (2020) performed an analysis of the vision statements of hospitals. The study indicated that private hospitals prioritized the "human" aspect, corroborating our research findings. Yavuz and Döven (2018) conducted an analysis of the purpose and vision statements of public hospitals, revealing that "patient satisfaction" was the most referenced element. This finding is consistent with our research and underscores the necessity for hospitals to prioritize service delivery centered on patients and their relatives. Eren (2010) argues that vision and mission statements must encompass and clearly articulate the primary activities of organizations. Our study indicates that the most cited criterion in the purpose and vision statements of the private hospitals examined is an orientation towards activity.

The "Sensitivity" area, indicative of proactivity, demonstrates that hospitals emphasize the proactive delivery of diverse services to patients and their families through the adoption of innovative strategies. Kartal and Uğurluoğlu (2020) examined the efficacy of vision statements in fulfilling four distinct objectives. The findings indicated that two-thirds of the hospital vision statements focused on

the objectives of "guiding the organization" and "motivating." Nonetheless, the goals of "innovation" and "basic ideology" received comparatively less emphasis. This result is consistent with the findings of our study. However, the results obtained in our research are deemed insufficient for hospitals. Hospitals are essential institutions that depend significantly on advanced technology for effective operation. Hospitals ought to integrate these elements more prominently into their vision and purpose statements, aligning change and innovation with service delivery.

Analysis of the mission and vision characteristics reveals that top management support is the least frequently cited criterion among all evaluated criteria. Mission and vision statements represent the fundamental decisions made by senior management and are executed with the participation of the entire organization. The support of senior management is essential for achieving the objectives and aspirations outlined in the vision and mission. The data indicates that the hospitals in the study possess mission and vision statements, reflecting robust support from upper management. It is important to recognize that these statements lack significant substance.

The criterion related to staff training programs was the least frequently observed in the mission and vision statements within the definition section. Soylu and İleri (2010) found that 33% of hospital staff lacked awareness of their organization's vision, goals, and policies. This result supports our findings. Hospitals' reliance on labor makes a low percentage in this category unfavorable for their operations. Integrating employee training and development into customer-focused strategy planning is both suitable and recommended.

The measuring component identified the purpose and vision statements of consumer research with minimal space allocation. This situation illustrates an absence of customer behavior research undertaken by hospitals in the development of their purpose and vision statements. Decisions are primarily informed by input from patients and their relatives. Among the mission and vision statements, the criterion of being directive was the least frequently observed in the section concerning proactivity. Hospitals typically emphasize the anticipation of patient needs and appropriate responses, rather than implementing a prescriptive strategy.

Health services exhibit a notable information asymmetry between service recipients and providers. The patient's perspective may provide distinct insights into customer orientation. The essential factor is not only having a customer-centric understanding reflected in the mission and vision statements but also ensuring that this understanding is effectively conveyed to patients and their families through the content. Hospitals must develop their vision and purpose statements clearly and precisely. Hospitals should regularly evaluate and update their purpose and vision statements to align with consumer orientation. In light of client expectations and changes within the healthcare sector, it is essential to evaluate and adjust mission and vision statements accordingly. Hospitals can consistently improve customer orientation and effectively achieve their objectives.

Consequently, mission and vision statements must indicate that hospitals prioritize enhancing the customer experience in healthcare services and value customer satisfaction. These statements offer a framework for hospitals to attain their objectives and fulfill customer expectations. The vision and mission statements of hospitals are considered distinct from those of other service businesses because of unique characteristics inherent to health services, including continuous 24-hour availability, non-deferrable service requirements, and the lack of substitute options. This difference should be elucidated in future research. Future research should assess the mission and vision statements of public hospitals affiliated with the Ministry of Health regarding customer orientation and compare these with those of private hospitals.

Ethics committee approval for the study was obtained from the Istanbul Aydın University Ethics Committee on March 2, 2023, with meeting number 2023/2.

The authors declare that the study was conducted in accordance with research and publication ethics.

The authors confirm that no part of the study was generated, either wholly or in part, using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

The authors declare that there are no financial conflicts of interest involving any institution, organization, or individual associated with this article. Additionally, there are no conflicts of interest among the authors.

The authors affirm that they contributed equally to all aspects of the research.

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