

A Study on the Awareness and Consideration Sets in Relation to Employers in Air Transportation Sector

Umran UNDER¹, K. Gulnaz BULBUL², Emircan OZDEMİR³ & Ender GEREDİ⁴

Abstract

This study identifies the awareness and consideration sets for the aviation companies operating in different fields of air transportation and the factors influencing the sizes of such sets. A two-stage study was conducted with the students from the Aviation Management and Civil Air Transportation Management Departments of Turkish universities through online survey. First, the awareness sets for five different types of aviation companies in Turkey were formed. Then, the consideration set was formed by listing and asking the students to specify the companies that they might want to work with. It is found that potential employers for air transportation companies, have a more favorable opinion of the airline companies and the awareness set size is the greatest for this company type. Significant relationships between both the internship status and education program of the students and the awareness set size is identified. Top five companies in the consideration are identified as airlines and airport/terminal companies. It is found that the size of the consideration set differed based on the education program of students. The study is a pioneer in applying the set theory to employer branding context and investigating the awareness and consideration sets for the employers in air transportation industry.

Keywords: Set Theory, Awareness Set, Consideration Set, Employer Awareness, Employer Brand, Air Transportation

Hava Tařımacılıęı Sektöründeki İşverenlere İliřkin Farkındalık ve Dikkate Alınanlar Kümeleri Üzerine Bir Arařtırma

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı hava tařımacılıęının farklı alanlarındaki havacılık işletmelerinin farkındalık ve dikkate alınanlar kümelerini ve bunların boyutlarını etkileyen faktörleri tespit etmektir. Bu amaçla Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin Havacılık Yönetimi bölümü ve Sivil Hava Ulařtırma İşletmecilięi bölümü öğrencileri ile çevrimiçi anket aracılığıyla iki aşamalı bir araştırma yürütülmüřtür. Arařtırmanın ilk aşamasında Türkiye'deki beř farklı havacılık işletmesi türü için farkındalık kümeleri elde edilmiřtir. İkinci aşamada ise ilk aşamada elde edilen işletme isimleri listelenerek öğrencilerden bu listedeki işletmelerden çalışmayı düşünebilecekleri işletmeleri belirtmeleri istenmiřtir. Bu sayede dikkate alınanlar kümesine ulařılmıřtır. Hava tařımacılıęı sektörünün potansiyel çalışanlarının havayolu işletmelerine karşı daha olumlu görüşe sahip olduęu ve farkındalık kümesinin bu işletme türü için en yüksek olduęu tespit edilmiřtir. Öğrencilerin staj durumu ve eğitim programı ile farkındalık kümesinin büyüklüęü arasında anlamlı ilişkiler tespit edilmiřtir. Dikkate alınanlar kümesindeki ilk beř işletmenin havayolları ve havalimanı/terminal işletmelerinden oluřtuęu sonucuna ulařılmıřtır. Dikkate alınanlar kümesinin büyüklüęünün öğrencilerin öğrenim gördükleri programa göre farklılık gösterdięi tespit edilmiřtir. Çalışmanın, küme teorisinin işveren markası bağlamına uygulanması ve hava tařımacılıęı endüstrisindeki işverenlerin farkındalık ve dikkate alınanlar kümelerinin arařtırılması açısından öncü niteliğinde olduęu düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Küme Seti Teorisi, Farkındalık Kümesi, Dikkate Alınanlar Kümesi, İşveren Farkındalıęı, İşveren Markası, Hava Tařımacılıęı

Atıf İçin / Please Cite As:

Under, U., Bulbul, K. G., Ozdemir, E., & Gerede, E. (2025). A study on the awareness and consideration sets in relation to employers in air transportation sector. *Manas Sosyal Arařtırmalar Dergisi*, 14 (2), 675-692. doi:10.33206/mjss.1527885


Geliř Tarihi / Received Date: 04.08.2024

Kabul Tarihi / Accepted Date: 22.03.2025


¹ Assis. Prof.- Eskisehir Technical University Faculty of Aeronautics and Astronautics, ubayrak@eskisehir.edu.tr,

 ORCID: 0000-0001-9064-8182


² Assis. Prof.- University of Waterloo Faculty of Environment, gbulbul@uwaterloo.ca

 ORCID: 0000-0002-7894-287X

³ Assis. Prof.- Eskisehir Technical University Faculty of Aeronautics and Astronautics, emircanozdemir@eskisehir.edu.tr,

 ORCID: 0000-0002-1383-4712

⁴ Prof. Dr.- Eskisehir Technical University Faculty of Aeronautics and Astronautics, egerede@eskisehir.edu.tr,

 ORCID: 0000-0002-8211-8875



Introduction

Air transportation is a rapidly growing industry that offers significant economic and socio-cultural advantages to nations by acting as a catalyst for many sectors. Due to increasing competition and the pursuit of these benefits, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness has become crucial in air transportation industry. A key resource in achieving sustainable competitive advantage in this industry is skilled labor (Cable & Turban, 2001; Sommer et al., 2017). Human resource plays a vital role in the development of innovative and high-quality products and services (Abstein et al., 2014). Consequently, attracting creative, innovative, and skilled personnel is essential for aviation companies.

However, accessing skilled labor in a competitive labor market is challenging. Skilled labor is a limited resource, and companies compete to attract high potentials (Sommer et al., 2017). Research indicates that companies with larger applicant pools have a competitive edge, as these pools enable the effective use of labor selection systems (Lado and Wilson, 1994; Murphy, 1986). To expand their application pools, companies need to focus on factors that attract potential employees (Erdemir, 2006; Sommer et al., 2017).

Understanding the perceptions of potential and existing employees is critical for companies aiming to attract skilled labor. In this context, analyzing how companies are perceived by potential employees is essential. Organizational attractiveness, which involves drawing potential employees to a company during the early stages of recruitment, plays a pivotal role in achieving this goal (Gatewood et al., 1993; Cable & Turban, 2001; Lievens et al., 2005). To become a preferred employer, companies implement employer branding strategies. These efforts are more effective when they align with a deep understanding of how potential employees make their employer choices (Dawes & Brown, 2002).

Contemporary models of organizational recruitment view the recruitment process as an interaction between the job seekers and employers, with both parties aiming to meet their needs (Aldag, Schwab & Rynes, 1987; Maurer, Howe & Lee, 1992). Job seekers seek employers who align with their career aspirations, while employers aim to hire the most qualified candidates. This dynamic is analogous to the consumer decision-making process, where consumers evaluate and choose products. The parallels between employer-employee and seller-buyer interactions underscore the relevance of applying marketing principles to recruitment. Borrowing concepts from marketing, such as consumer decision-making frameworks, offers a fresh perspective to address the complexities of employer-employee relationships (Maurer, Howe & Lee, 1992).

With this study, we propose examining the recruitment process through the lens of set theory, offering a marketing-oriented perspective to understand employer attractiveness. Set theory provides a structured framework for analyzing how potential employees perceive and evaluate employers, similar to how consumers assess products (Brand & Cronin, 1997). Consumer decision-making process involves several steps, such as problem recognition, information search, evaluation, selection, and post-purchase activities (Mothersbaugh & Hawkins, 2015). In the context of recruitment, this study focuses on the initial stages where potential employees recognize their need for a job and explore available opportunities. Similar to consumers, job seekers narrow their options through a tiered decision-making process (Sheridan, Richards & Slocum, 1975; Gillbride & Allenby, 2004; Ronda Gonzalez, Valor Martinez & Abril Barrie, 2018), moving from an “awareness set” (all known employers) to a “consideration set” (employers they seriously consider to work for) (Narayana & Markin, 1975; Howard and Sheth, 1969; Campbell, 1969). This approach highlights the decision-making process in stages, emphasizing the progression from awareness to consideration. By adapting this perspective, the study bridges the fields of marketing and recruitment, providing valuable insights into the factors influencing employer branding and recruitment outcomes.

While some studies explore the existence of employer brand consideration sets using set theory (Cable & Turban, 2001; Wilden, Gudergan, & Lings, 2010) and examine factors influencing inclusion in these sets (Ronda Gonzalez, Valor Martinez, & Abril Barrie, 2018), limited attention has been paid to establishing awareness and consideration sets, as well as the elements determining the size of these sets within the context of employer branding.

This study aims to fill this gap by examining the awareness and consideration sets of employers in Turkey's air transportation industry and identifying factors that impact the sizes of these sets. The scope includes various employer types, such as airlines, airports, terminals, ground handling companies, air cargo companies and flight supervision, representation, and administration companies. The study targets

students from Aviation Management and Civil Air Transportation Management Departments in Turkish universities, representing the future workforce.

Theoretical Framework

Studies on consumer decision-making emphasize that the consumers use strategies to simplify their purchase decision process in order to cope with the large number of available alternatives (Brand & Cronin, 1997). The decision-making process is typically explained as one where the number of brands considered is gradually reduced (Roberts, 1989). Hauser and Wernerfelt (1990), suggest that consumers create choice sets based on cost-benefit analysis to simplify their decisions. Miller (1956) argues that consumers' capacity to process information is limited, leading them to rely on choice sets when making purchase decisions.

Choice sets are considered both a simplification strategy and an outcome of the decision-making process (Narayana & Markin, 1975). These sets are divided into various classifications. Narayana and Markin (1975) categorize the total choice set into awareness and unawareness sets. The awareness set includes subsets such as the evoked set (i.e., consideration set), inert set and inept set. Spiggle and Sewall (1987) expanded this model, identifying five sets: awareness set, consideration set, action set, interaction set, and chosen set. Shocker et al. (1991) organized the previously suggested structure hierarchically as the universal set, awareness set, consideration set and choice set, where each of which is a subset of the preceding set.

A consumer can either be aware or unaware of the existence of a product. The awareness set consists of the brands in a particular product category that the consumer knows. Consumers make their purchase decision from the options within their awareness set. The consideration set includes the brands that a consumer seriously considers for purchase within a specific product category. The inert set comprises brands to which consumers do not develop neither positive nor negative attitude toward, maintaining a neutral stance. While the consumer is aware of these brands, they may not have enough information about them, or they may not perceive them as superior to the brands in the consideration set. In other words, the brands in the inert set do not evoke a sense of preference or motivation to purchase. On the other hand, the inept set comprises the brands which the consumer disqualified during their process of purchase decision. The consumer has a negative experience or information regarding the brands in the unacceptable set (Narayana & Markin, 1975).

In their study on retailer preference, Spiggle and Sewall (1987) argue that the conceptualization of Narayana and Markin (1975) is functional for describing the choice process up to the consideration set. Their study focuses on the stage of decision-making involving only the options actively considered. In this context, the inert and inept sets are not relevant. However, Spiggle and Sewall (1987) define five new subsets of the consideration set. The first is the action set, which includes the brands within the consideration set that stimulate the consumers, for instance, prompt them to visit the store and view the products, get information about price levels. Another subset is the inaction set which includes the brands whose stores are not visited by the consumer. Within the action set, further subsets are defined. The interaction set includes brands from the action set that the consumer visits and interacts with a salesperson, intending to purchase. Conversely, the quiet set includes brands with which the consumer does not engage after seeing their products in the store. Additionally, Spiggle and Sewall (1987) introduce the rejection set, which comprises brands that the consumer initially considers in the evoked, action, or interaction sets but later rejects due to a negative attitude formed during the evaluation process. In other words, the rejection set is a subset of all evoked, action and interaction sets (Spiggle & Sewall, 1987).

Shocker et al. (1991) defines the decision-making process as a structure that is comprised of nested or hierarchical sets of alternatives that is processed by the decision maker before making a choice. In the suggested model, the universal set is the set that includes all the choices related to the decision (product or service companies). The awareness set, which is a subset of the universal set, is the set of items that the consumer is aware of for any reason whatsoever and that "come to mind". The information regarding the items in this set is assumed to be stored in the long-term memory of the individual. The consumer may choose this item in their memory to make evaluations in the decision-making process. On the other hand, the awareness set is a superset of the consideration set. Shocker et al. (1991) defines the consideration set as the set of items that is created for a certain purpose and that includes alternatives that are salient or accessible for this particular occasion. The study mentions that a consumer can be aware of many alternatives, but only a limited number of alternatives may "come to mind" for proper use. Therefore, it is

pointed out that the alternatives in the decision-making problem change based on the defined purpose. The authors emphasized that a more static subset that is closely related to this set should be defined due to the dynamic nature of the consideration set. Accordingly, the choice set was defined as the ultimate consideration set. In other words, the choice set is the set of those that are considered right before the decision (Shocker et al., 1991). The structure suggested by Shocker et al. (1991) is provided in Figure 1.

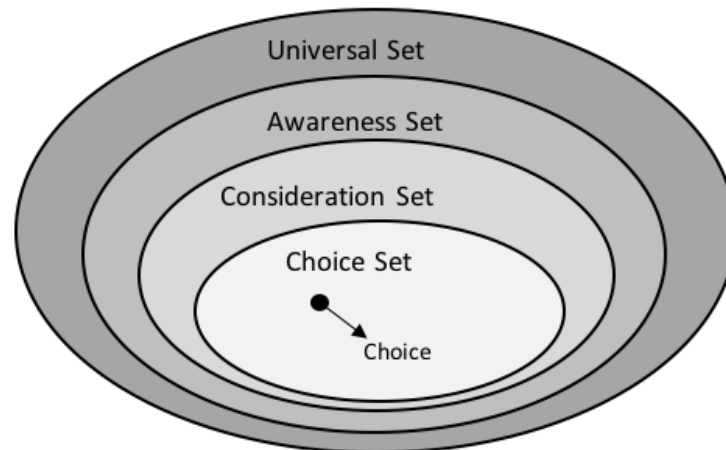


Figure 1. *Sets of The Choice Process*

Studies show that the size of the awareness set determines the size of the consideration set. It has been identified that the sizes of these two sets are positively related (Brown & Wildt, 1992; Reilly & Parkinson 1984). The sizes of both sets change depending on the area of activity, and the size of the consideration set is proportionate to the size of the awareness set between 0.26 and 0.64 (Crowley & Williams, 1991; Dawes & Brown, 2002). The consideration set is discussed in many studies in terms of its size and the factors influencing it. Several studies explore the relationship between the size of the consideration set and variables such as age, educational status, academic success, income status, size of family, gender and ethnicity, exposure to product, and previous experience with product (Gronhaug 1973; Maddox, Gronhaug, Homans, & May, 1978; Alba & Chattopadhyay, 1985; Reilly & Parkinson, 1985; Lapersonne et al., 1995; LeBlanc & Herndon, 2001; Dawes & Brown 2002; Coates et al., 2004 ; Baker & Orona 2020). In their study on university choice, Dawes and Brown (2002) emphasized the importance of explaining the change in the sizes of both sets and examined the relationship between the sizes of both awareness and consideration sets and demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, age, gender, number of parents who are university graduates, and academic skill in their study. In yet another current study, Baker and Orona (2020) analyzed the relationship between the sizes of awareness and consideration sets in the field of higher education and focusing on gender and ethnicity. Recent studies also explore the formation of consideration and non-consideration sets across various product categories, such as hemp (Kolodinsky, Lacasse & Gallagher, 2020), sports teams (McDonald et al., 2024), large choice sets (Goodman & Reczek, 2021), private labels (Stoppacher et al., 2024), product bundles (Vanunu, Urminsky and Bartels, 2024), and media (Willman-Iivarinen, 2020).

For the alternatives in each set, the decision maker may have or need different levels of information (Shocker et al., 1991). In set theory, the awareness set corresponds to the prominence component, which is one of the two fundamental components of knowledge about an employer, alongside familiarity (Mariconda & Lurati, 2014). In other words, the awareness set of the potential labor must be identified when handling the employer attractiveness, which plays an important role in employer choice. In a similar vein, the consideration set, one of the subsets of the awareness set, and the demographic characteristics that influence this set are also important in terms of understanding the tendency of the potential labor force. On the other hand, it is suggested that the set theory is applicable in high-involvement, risky situations and for relatively new tasks (Spiggle & Sewall, 1987; Crompton & Ankomah, 1993). Since the employer selection of potential employees is a high-risk decision to be made, for the first time, both conditions required for set theory are met.

Research Methodology

As is the case with consumers, it is suggested that potential employees also rely on cognitive shortcuts to cope with the extensive exposure to employer brand information due to their limited

processing capacities. This study aims to adapt the concept of set theory, to the context of employer branding. This research focuses on employers in air transportation industry, aiming to examine the size of both the awareness set and the consideration set. It further investigates which companies are included, the types of companies most frequently represented, and the factors influencing the size of these sets (e.g., Baker & Orona, 2020; Dawes & Brown, 2002, Coates et al., 2004).

The participants in the study are the third- and fourth-year students from the Aviation Management Departments and second-year students at Civil Air Transportation Management Departments in Türkiye. These students were selected because they are approaching graduation, making them a critical population of future employees in the aviation industry. As they prepare for graduation, they are likely to be actively researching potential employers, making them ideal candidates for studying awareness and consideration sets in the context of employer branding. The approval for this study was obtained from Eskisehir Technical University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee.

For the study on the awareness set, with the help of an online questionnaire, the students were asked to list the names of the airlines, airport and terminal, ground handling, air cargo, catering, flight supervision, representation and administration companies established in Turkey that come to their minds. Data was also collected regarding the participants' gender, age, school year, school, program (associate or undergraduate degree), grade point average, internship experience, and their intention to work in the aviation sector after graduation. In addition, the participants were requested to rank six different fields of operation in the air transportation sector based on their desire to work in such fields. Valid data of 454 students across 34 universities were collected through convenience sampling. The average age of the participants was 22.06 (SD = 2.53), and the sample was balanced in terms of gender (46.26% female, 53.74% male) and program (49.12% were final-year students in two-year programs, 42.51% were final-year students in four-year programs). The internship experience was also evenly distributed between those who had and had not done internships. Additionally, a significant majority of the participants (87.22%) mentioned that they wanted to work in the air transportation sector after their graduation.

The size of each awareness set for six groups of companies was investigated, and the size of the set of all the companies that comprise all six group of companies were analyzed. The average and standard deviation of the sample's set sizes were calculated based on the sizes of sets created by each participant in the sample with a size of 454. The frequency of company presence in the awareness set was also analyzed.

To understand the factors influencing the size of the awareness set, the effect of key demographic variables—such as gender, education program (associate vs. undergraduate), internship experience, and academic success—was also analyzed. These variables are considered to assess whether prior exposure to the industry (via internships) or higher academic achievement correlates with a broader or more focused awareness set. The relationship between the age variable and the set size was not analyzed since the age range of the participants was narrow. The analysis of internship experience was treated as an indicator of previous exposure to employer brands. Grade point average was included in the research as a measure of academic success. Finally, the students' education program was also included in the research as a unique aspect of the study, with the argument that receiving either undergraduate or associate degree could be related to the set sizes. A four-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the effect of the four independent categorical variables (gender, education program, internship experience, and academic success) on the size of the awareness set. This method was chosen to evaluate both the main effects and the interactions between the variables.

To identify the consideration set, the companies' names in the awareness set were listed, and the students were asked to mark the companies that they may want to work with. With convenience sampling, valid data of 504 students across 34 universities were collected. The average age of the participants was 21.94 (SD = 1.81), and the sample was balanced in terms of education program. The majority (67.06%) were undergraduate students, with a smaller proportion (31) being second-year students. The rest were primarily third- and fourth-year students. Additionally, 27.78% of participants had completed an internship with an aviation company. Just like the awareness set size, the size of the consideration set was also investigated. Based on the sizes of sets created by each participant, the average and standard deviation of the set sizes in 504 samples were calculated. Finally, the frequency of the company presence in the awareness set was also analyzed.

In addition, the relationship between the demographic variables with the potential to influence the awareness set size, and the consideration set size was investigated. For this purpose, two-way ANOVA test was used. All these statistical analyses were carried out via the RStudio 1.1.463 software.

In summary, this methodology provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the awareness and consideration sets of potential aviation employees, using demographic and experiential variables to explore their influence on employer brand perceptions. The use of ANOVA allows for detailed analysis of the relationships between these variables, offering insights into factors shaping future employees' decisions within the airline industry.

Findings and Discussion

Findings for the Awareness Set

Table 1 provides the average, standard deviation, smallest and largest values of the awareness set sizes that are identified through the data gathered from the said 454 participants.

Table 1. *Awareness Set Sizes*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Smallest</i>	<i>Largest</i>
Airline Awareness Set Size	3.47	1.56	0	7
Ground Handling Companies Awareness Set Size	2.35	0.90	0	4
Air Cargo Companies Awareness Set Size	1.52	1.12	0	5
Airport and Terminal Companies Awareness Set Size	1.34	0.86	0	4
Catering Companies Awareness Set Size	1.02	0.63	0	3
Flight Supervision, Representation and Administration Companies Awareness Set Size	0.55	0.71	0	3
<i>Companies that Provide Services in Air Transportation Sector Awareness Set Size</i>	10.24	3.85	1	22

When these data are examined, the size of the average awareness set of the airlines are larger than others (3.47). According to such data, it can be argued that the awareness regarding airlines is higher when compared to other five types of companies. When all the companies that operate within the air transportation sector are considered, the average awareness set size is 10.24. Since we could not find any studies in the literature that examined the set sizes within the context of employer brand, a comparison regarding the set sizes specific to this context cannot be carried out. Similar to how consumers' consideration set sizes vary depending on the type of seller (Brand and Cronin, 1997), it is also possible to state in this study that the size of the awareness set of potential employees differs based on the type of employer.

On the other hand, when the smallest and highest values are examined, it is striking that there are participants who are not aware of any companies within any type of company. It was identified that the participants were aware of at most seven companies within the airline set, which has the largest awareness set size. This study supports the theory that our cognitive capacity for evaluating alternatives is limited to a maximum of seven (plus or minus two) due to the limitations in our ability to discern and finite memory spans (Miller, 1956).

Table 2. *Ranking of the Company Types with which the Participants Want to Work*

<i>Company Type</i>	<i>Areas of Operation Preferred for Work (%)</i>					
	1st place	2nd place	3rd place	4th place	5th place	6th place
Airline	44.05%	19.16%	9.03%	8.15%	8.37%	11.23%
Air Cargo	13.22%	21.37%	26.65%	20.48%	11.67%	6.61%
Ground Handling	11.45%	22.25%	21.15%	21.81%	12.56%	10.79%
Flight Supervision, Representation and Administration	11.01%	14.10%	14.98%	18.28%	27.97%	13.66%
Airport and Terminal	10.13%	17.62%	21.81%	21.15%	18.94%	10.35%
Catering	10.13%	5.51%	6.39%	10.13%	20.48%	47.36%

Within the scope of the research on the awareness set, the participants were asked to rank the six company types according to their desire to work with them. The ranking of the company types with which the participants want to work is provided in Table 2.

When Table 2 is examined, it can be seen that a significant portion of the participants (44.05%) ranked working at an airline in the first place. Catering companies have become the lowest ranking company type by 47.36% of the participants. Based on these findings, we can deduce that individuals who represent the future work force for air transportation companies, have a more favorable opinion of the airlines as an employer. As the second highest ranking company type (with 22.25%), ground handling companies follow the airlines.

When the results are examined, the ranking of the companies with which the participants want to work substantially overlaps with the ranking of the awareness set sizes. The company type that has the largest awareness set size is the airlines. Airlines are followed by the ground handling companies and air cargo companies. This case can be explained with the increase in the involvement level. According to the selective perception theory, perception of an individual is argued to be influenced by values and attitudes (Hastrot, 1954; Vidmar 1974). It is possible that the perception of potential labor force could be influenced by their involvement with that company type and the value associated with that company type. Based on this, the company types with high involvement could also have higher awareness set sizes according to the selective perception theory. It is argued that the reason for high involvement could be the opportunities provided by these company types. On the other hand, in case there is more companies within a company type, awareness and involvement for that company type could be higher. The number of companies within the company types that operate in the air transportation sector are not balanced. In that sense, the current data is not sufficient to directly compare the awareness set sizes of the company types that include a higher number of companies to those company types that have fewer number of companies. However, we argue that this relationship is worth investigating with proper data and methods.

Table 3. *Awareness Set of Airlines*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Turkish Airlines	427	94.05
Pegasus Airlines	379	83.48
SunExpress	253	55.73
Onur Air	189	41.63
Anadolu Jet	150	33.04
AtlasGlobal	87	19.16
Corendon Airlines	61	13.44
Tailwind Airlines	16	3.52
Freebird Airlines	13	2.86

The awareness set of the airlines that are obtained as a result of the research and the frequency of inclusion of such companies by the participants in the set are provided in Table 3. When the data regarding the frequency of the companies in the awareness set for airlines are considered, it can be seen that Turkish Airlines is in the awareness set of 427 out of 454 participants (94.5%). Turkish Airlines is followed in the second place by Pegasus Airlines with 83.48% and in the third place by SunExpress with 55.73%. When we examine the data, it can be seen that Anadolu Jet is included in the awareness sets of 150 participants (33.03%). When we consider that Anadolu Jet is not a separate company but a trademark of Turkish Airlines, this result becomes significant in terms of Anadolu Jet's brand communication. Although it has declared bankruptcy by the date of this research, AtlasGlobal was included in the awareness set by 87 participants. The two companies with the lowest rates of inclusion in the awareness set are Tailwind Airlines with 3.52% and Freebird Airlines with 2.86%.

Table 4. *Air Cargo Companies Awareness Set*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Turkish Cargo	309	68.06
MNG Airlines	235	51.76
ULS Airlines Cargo	44	9.69
ACT Airlines	20	4.41

When Table 4 is examined, it can be seen that 309 participants (68.06%) included Turkish Cargo brand in the set. Just like Anadolu Jet brand, Turkish Cargo is a trademark of Turkish Airlines used in the cargo transportation. In that sense, it is striking that this brand is once again the element that is included in the air cargo companies' awareness set with the highest frequency. The separate inclusion of Anadolu Jet and Turkish Cargo, two different trademarks of Turkish Airlines, could be explained by the strength of these brands. For the frequency of inclusion in the set, the company in the second place is MNG Airlines with 51.76%, and the company in the third place is 9.96% ULS Airlines Cargo. ACT Airlines is included in the set by 20 participants (4.41%).

Table 5. *Ground Handling Companies Awareness Set*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Turkish Ground Services	360	79.30
Çelebi Aviation Holding	359	79.07
HAVAŞ	322	70.93
Pegasus Airlines	24	5.29

As it can be seen in Table 5, the ground handling companies' awareness set comprises of four companies. The first three companies, which are similar in terms of their frequency of inclusion in the set, are Turkish Ground Services (79.30%), Çelebi Aviation Holding (79.07%), and HAVAŞ (70.93%). Pegasus Airlines is the ground handling company that is included in the set by the least number of participants (24). It is important to mention that the main field of operation for the said company is passenger transport.

Table 6. *Airport and Terminal Companies Awareness Set*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
TAV Airports	283	62.33
Istanbul Grand Airport (İGA)	151	33.26
General Directorate of State Airports Authority	84	18.50
YDA Group	71	15.64
Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport	40	8.81
Fraport TAV	31	6.83
Airport Management & Aeronautical Industries Inc. (HEAŞ)	18	3.96
TAV Gazipaşa Airport	8	1.76
IC İÇTAŞ	4	0.88

As it can be seen in Table 6, the airport and terminal companies are evaluated in the same group. TAV Airports is the company that is included in the awareness set in relation to this group by the highest number of participants (283). TAV Airports is a holding that undertakes the management of many different airports. In the list of terminal companies published by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of Turkey, all these different airports are shown as different companies (DGCA). All such companies operate under the umbrella holding TAV Airports. Istanbul Grand Airport is the second in terms of frequency of inclusion in the set by being included in the awareness set by 151 participants (33.26%). The General Directorate of State Airports Authority follow Istanbul Grand Airport with 18.50%. The fact that Fraport and TAV, which jointly undertake the management of Antalya Airport, are included in 31 students' awareness set as 'Fraport TAV' can be attested to such students providing answers based on airports not on companies. In a similar vein, Gazipaşa Airport is also included in the awareness set by eight students as an airport operated by TAV Holding. Finally, IC İÇTAŞ, included by four students in the awareness set, was a company that undertook the management of the Antalya Airport jointly with Fraport before 2018, and this company currently does not engage in airport or terminal operation separately.

Table 7. *Catering Companies Awareness Set*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
THY Do&CO	339	74.67
LSG Sky Chefs	64	14.10
Sancak Inflight Service	59	13.00

The catering companies' awareness set comprises three companies (Table 7). By being included in the set by 74.67% of the participants, THY Do&CO is the catering company that is included in the set by the highest number of participants. The other two companies LSG Sky Chefs and Sancak Inflight Service are included in the set by similar number of participants: 64 and 59 respectively. It is known that LSG Sky Chefs, which was operational during the data collection period of the research, has stopped their operations in Turkey as of the date on which the results are reported.

Table 8. *Flight Supervision, Representation and Administration Companies Awareness Set*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Gözen Air Services	162	35.68
Bilen Air Services	33	7.27
Adriyatik Aviation	23	5.07
Merkür Aviation	21	4.63
Fly Service Turkey	4	0.88
Casio Air Service	2	0.44
Airmark Airline Marketing & Services	2	0.44
Maple Group	1	0.22
Silkway West Airlines	1	0.22

The awareness set of the final company group, flight supervision, representation, and administration companies, can be found in Table 8. With 35.68%, Gözen Air Services is the company that is included in the flight supervision, representation and administration companies' awareness set by the highest number of participants (162). When the data are examined, it can be seen that the weakest awareness set is for this company group. Gözen Air Services is followed in the second place by Bilen Air Services with 7.27%, and in the third place by Adriyatik Aviation with 5.07%. The frequency of inclusion for other companies is below 5%.

Table 9. *10 Companies that Are Most Frequently Included in the Awareness Set*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Turkish Airlines	427	94.05
Pegasus Airlines	379	83.48
Turkish Ground Services	360	79.30
Çelebi Aviation Holding	359	79.07
THY Do&CO	339	74.67
HAVAŞ	322	70.93
Turkish Cargo	309	68.06
TAV Airports	283	62.33
SunExpress	253	55.73
MNG Airlines	235	51.76

Table 9 shows the first 10 companies which managed to be included in the awareness set of the highest number of students from among 454 participants when all company types that operate within the air transportation sector are considered. These 10 companies are also the companies that are included in the set by at least 50% of the participants. In that sense, it can be argued that the awareness regarding these companies is higher in comparison with others. However, we must remind that Turkish Cargo, ranked 7 in Table 9, is not a separate company and is a sub-brand of Turkish Airlines, ranked in the first place.

On the other hand, it is considered that the size of the awareness set is influenced by different demographic variables. Within the scope of this study, four-way ANOVA test was used to investigate whether gender, program, internship status and academic success influence the awareness set size. To test the assumptions of the four-way ANOVA test, a residuals analysis was carried out. The normal distribution was tested with Shapiro Test and the homogeneity of variables was tested with Levene's Test. It is concluded that the residuals have normal distribution ($p > 0.05$), and the variances are homogeneous ($p > 0.05$).

As a result of this analysis, a significant relationship between the internship status of the students and the awareness set size ($F=14.84$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2=.032$) was identified. According to the data, while the average

set size for those participants who did internships was 10.81, the average set size for those participants who did not do any internship is lower (9.41). This finding does not overlap with those findings in relation to the size of the awareness set created for products. According to Brand and Cronin (1997), the awareness set size decreases as the customer experience increases. If internships are considered as experiences, it can be argued that the influence of experience on the employer choice and product (brand) choice operate differently. Because while employer choice is not a decision taken as frequent as product choice, the attested importance (level of involvement) is also different. It is expected that the individuals go through a more comprehensive decision-making process as the involvement increases (Zaichowsky, 1985). Thus, as the value attributed to the element that is the subject of the decision (in this case, the employer) increases, the size of the awareness set is expected to increase. (Brand and Cronin, 1997). Through internships, potential employees are able to obtain more direct and realistic insights about employers, as opposed to relying on indirect or inferred information (Sekiguchi, 2023). This access to firsthand experiences enhances the likelihood that the information will be more deeply processed and integrated into their decision-making framework. In addition, it is argued that the number of companies that the participants who did internship are aware of increase as the number of companies they are exposed to during the internship increase.

Also, it was identified that the awareness set size changed depending on the program at which the students received education (associate or undergraduate degree) ($F=6.09$, $p<0.05$). While the average set size for the students who study in undergraduate programs is 10.68, this set size becomes 9.68 for students who study at the level of associate degree. The larger size of the awareness set for the undergraduate students can be explained by the higher level of experience. When compared to the associate degree students, undergraduate students receive an education that is two years longer. This increases their chances to gain experience and knowledge. No significant relationship was identified between the grade point average and gender variables and the awareness set size ($p>0.05$). In that sense, it can be argued that internships are an important factor in creating awareness for the companies with which the students will work in the future.

Findings for the Consideration Set

In this study, the companies presented to the participants to identify the consideration sets are comprised of companies that have a frequency of presence higher than 4% in the awareness set. In other words, the companies that have a frequency of presence lower than 4% in the awareness set are excluded from the scope. On the other hand, the sub-brands of Turkish Airlines (Turkish Cargo and Anadolu Jet), which are included in the awareness set even though they are not separate companies, were also excluded from the scope. A similar situation is also true for different airport and terminal companies that operate under TAV Airports. Finally, currently non-operational AtlasGlobal, and IC İÇTAŞ, which is currently not a partner of the Antalya Airport, are excluded from the scope of the study. As a result, 23 companies were included in the scope of the study.

The consideration set size average is 9.50, and the standard deviation value is 5.72. As it can be seen, the participants eliminated the alternatives from the awareness set and included fewer number of companies in the consideration set (Average awareness set=10.24; Average consideration set=9.50). Unlike the literature, there is not so much difference between the sizes of both sets (Brand and Cronin, 1997, Dawes and Brown, 2002). This finding can be explained by the participant's evaluation and comparison of all the companies, of which the participants are aware as the potential employees of the aviation industry, as worthy of working at. Also, the said research was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. As it is known, airport transportation is one of the most affected systems during this process. In this context, it is argued that the participants could have considered a higher number of companies due to their unemployment concern.

Table 10. *Frequency of Inclusion in the Consideration Set for Companies*

<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Turkish Airlines	478	94.84
General Directorate of State Airports Authority	337	66.87
Pegasus Airlines	336	66.67
SunExpress	303	60.12
Istanbul Grand Airport (İGA)	302	59.92
TAV Airports	283	56.15
Turkish Ground Services	271	53.77
Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport	262	51.98
HAVAŞ	255	50.60
MNG Airlines	250	49.60
Corendon Airlines	229	45.44
Çelebi Aviation Holding	211	41.87
YDA Group	176	34.92
ULS Airlines Cargo	171	33.93
Onur Air	156	30.95
ACT Airlines	132	26.19
THY Do&CO	130	25.79
Adriatik Aviation	109	21.63
Gözen Air Services	94	18.65
Merkür Aviation	73	14.48
Sancak Inflight Service	69	13.69
Bilen Air Services	66	13.10
LSG Sky Chefs	57	11.31

The participant who included the least number of companies in the set included only one company. The participant who included the highest number of companies in the set included 23 companies. The frequency of presence in the consideration set for the 23 companies presented to the participants can be found in Table 10.

There are nine companies with at least 50% frequency of inclusion in the consideration set. When these companies are examined, Turkish Airlines is still ranked the first with a large margin just like in the awareness set. In other words, 98.84% of the participants stated that they wanted to work at Turkish Airlines. Turkish Airlines is followed by the General Directorate of State Airports Authority (66.87%), Pegasus Airlines (66.67%), and SunExpress (60.12%), respectively. The vast majority of the companies ranked in the top 10 in the list are airlines and airport/terminal companies.

The relationship of the internship status and education program variables, which were identified to be correlated to the awareness set size in the previous investigation, to the size of the consideration set was also investigated. For this purpose, two-way ANOVA test was used. Normal distribution tests were checked via the Skewness and Kurtosis values. The data in the dependent variable of set size are normally distributed (kurtosis=0.046, skewness=0.734). The data in relation to internship status show a reasonable level of normal distribution (kurtosis=-1.014, skewness=-0.995). This is also true for data in relation to the education program status (kurtosis=-1.475, skewness=-0.728) (George and Mallery, 2010). The homogeneity of the variances is verified via Levene's Test ($p>0.05$).

As a result of the analysis, it was identified that the size of the consideration set differed based on the education program of the students (undergraduate or associate degree) ($F=2.87$, $p<0.1$, $=.006$). Since the purpose of associate degree programs is to meet the need of semi-skilled workers within the industry, the students of these programs might think that they can only work for certain company types, producing the above result. No significant relationship between the internship status of the students and the consideration set size was identified ($p>0.1$).

Conclusion and Discussion

In today's fiercely competitive environment, employing skilled employees is one of the highest priorities of companies (Kravariti et al., 2022; Dassler et al., 2022). When we consider that skilled labor is a limited resource, companies must first understand the job-seeking behavior of potential employees to effectively access this resource (Hollstein et al., 2025). Especially in a context where many companies

compete with each other to include the best talents in their companies, it is critical to understand how the job seekers make their employer choice (Laroche et al., 2003). This understanding aligns with the broader employer branding literature, which emphasizes the strategic role of employer image and attractiveness in shaping employee decisions (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Berthon et al., 2005; Knox and Freeman, 2006; Buitek et al., 2025). Organizational attractiveness is particularly important in the aviation industry, which operates under standardized rules for employee training, operations, and management across countries, faces crises concerning the sustainability of attracting and retaining skilled labor, and requires employees to work in an environment fraught with numerous physical and psychological threats (Vatankhah et al., 2024).

Just as consumers have limited capacity to process information (Miller, 1956), job seekers also seek ways to simplify the decision-making process when they encounter a vast amount of information about employer brands (Ronda Gonzalez et al., 2018). Similar findings have been reported in studies focusing on the role of information overload in decision-making (Eppler and Mangis, 2004; Roetzel, 2019). One effective method of simplifying these processes is set theory, which posits that individuals reduce the number of considered options by narrowing down an initial "awareness set" (Dawes and Brown, 2002; Quiroz and Soubeyran, 2025). Research in consumer behavior and employer branding suggests that individuals often rely on heuristics to manage this cognitive load, forming awareness and consideration sets as part of their decision-making framework (Cable and Turban, 2001; Wilden et al., 2010; Shocker, et al., 1991; Moore and Hastie, 2024).

According to this theory, potential employees (consumers) create an awareness set from the universal set, or in other words, from all the employers in the market. The awareness set is the set that includes the employer brands known or recognized as an employer by the potential employee. On the other hand, the consideration set is the set formed by reducing the number of companies in the awareness set to those with which the potential employee considers working for. The potential employees make their choice by comparing the employer brands in the consideration set.

Applying set theory to the recruitment process benefits both researchers and organizations. For researchers, it enhances the understanding of potential employees' decision-making processes. For organizations, it helps identify strengths and weaknesses, improve strategic decisions, and refine employer branding efforts. Analyzing awareness and consideration sets enables organizations to better understand how potential employees perceive their efforts to become attractive employers. Such analysis can reveal gaps between organizational strategies and employee expectations, helping companies optimize their branding and recruitment approaches (Brand and Cronin, 1997; Jang, 2024).

In our study, we applied this theory to the Turkish air transportation sector, focusing on the awareness and consideration sets of potential employees. Consistent with prior research in other sectors, such as retail and technology, we found that airlines had a larger average awareness set size compared to other company types (e.g., ground handling, catering). This mirrors findings from other industries, where leading brands tend to dominate awareness sets due to stronger employer branding efforts and greater market visibility (Mariconda and Lurati, 2014; Lievens et al., 2007; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Thang and Trang, 2024; Fuller et al., 2023).

Our findings revealed that Turkish Airlines, Pegasus Airlines, and Turkish Ground Services were the top three companies in terms of brand awareness. This result is consistent with prior research, which demonstrates that well-established and widely recognized firms tend to enjoy higher levels of brand recognition (Mariconda and Lurati, 2014; Cable and Turban, 2001). Furthermore, our study supports existing literature emphasizing the impact of internship experiences on employer selection and organizational attractiveness (Gault et al., 2010; Sekiguchi et al., 2023). Specifically, we identified a significant relationship between the size of the awareness set and participants' internship experience, highlighting that internships enhance potential employees' perceptions of employer attractiveness, thereby reinforcing recognized employer branding efforts (Tekbiyık, 2024). Additionally, we found a correlation between participants' awareness sets and their educational background (undergraduate vs. associate degree). This finding aligns with previous studies, which suggest that as education level increases, potential employees are exposed to more employer information and have access to broader networks and resources (Cable and Turban, 2001; Collins and Han, 2004). When considering the formation of consideration sets, our findings align with previous research in that candidates tend to narrow their choices (Shocker et al., 1991; Parkinson and Reilly, 1979; Gilbride and Albeny, 2004; Mercedý et al., 2024). Turkish Airlines, the

General Directorate of State Airports Authority, and Pegasus Airlines were the most frequently mentioned employers in the consideration sets, indicating their dominant position in the sector. These finding parallels employer branding studies that emphasize the importance of a strong brand image in attracting top candidates (Agrawal and Swaroop, 2009; Cable and Turban, 2001; Silva and Dias, 2023).

Theoretical and Practical implications

Our empirical findings contribute to the literature by providing a comprehensive understanding of how set theory can be applied to employer branding in the air transportation industry. Similar to studies that have applied set theory in marketing and consumer behavior (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987; Brand and Cronin, 1997; Parkinson and Reilly, 1979; Shocker et al., 1991), we demonstrate its relevance in the employment context, offering valuable insights for practitioners aiming to strengthen their employer brand positioning.

Through this study a tool to the companies operating in air transportation services in Turkey is presented by which they can evaluate their position in the decision-making process of the potential employees. Unarguably this is the first step to evaluate and develop human resources policies to attract and recruit qualified employees in order to gain competitive advantage in this highly competitive market where creating a strong employer brand and being recognized as an attractive employer is essential.

The findings of this study are important for understanding and interpreting the employer attractiveness in the sector in terms of measuring the awareness regarding the aviation companies in Turkey and presenting the degree of their consideration. These findings are planned to be used in research that will measure and compare the attractiveness of the companies in the industry. In that sense, this study can be considered as the starting point in understanding the attractiveness of the employers in the Turkish air transportation industry towards the potential labor force. Presenting the aspects of attractiveness by identifying the attractiveness of the companies in the air transportation sector could provide important clues for ensuring competitive advantage through human resources in the sector.

In the scope of determining the awareness set, companies recognized by students as potential employees are listed. Companies that are not included in this list are the employers that the potential employees are not aware of, thus do not consider working for. Then in determining the consideration set, companies that potential employees might consider working for are listed. Companies that are not included in this list are employers that the participants are aware of but do not see as an alternative to work. Companies can benefit by evaluating these lists to detect gaps between their targeted market position and their actual position as employers. Furthermore, a major issue noted is that certain organizations have communication issues as an employer brand. Despite not being a distinct brand, respondents regarded several sub-brands as distinct employers. This study has demonstrated the importance of having more specific and open communication not only as a service brand but also as an employer. This finding highlights the need for companies to clearly communicate their brand identity, ensuring that potential employees correctly understand who they would be working for.

In conclusion, while our study contributes significantly by applying set theory to the employer branding context in the Turkish air transportation industry, there are limitations. This study examined the relationship between awareness and consideration sets in terms of program type and internship status. Beyond these factors, future research could explore how variables such as job market conditions, employer reputation, and personal values influence the formation of awareness and consideration sets. Additionally, this study focused solely on potential employees in the aviation industry, specifically students of Aviation Management and Civil Air Transportation Management Departments. Future research could include other departments within Turkish aviation faculties (e.g., pilotage, air traffic control, and aviation electronics). As this study focused on students from specific aviation-related departments, it may not fully capture the perspectives of potential employees in other sectors within the industry. Future research could explore whether the same patterns hold in other sectors and employee groups. Additionally, including current employees, as done in other studies (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003), could provide a more comprehensive view of how awareness and consideration sets evolve over time.

Ethical Declaration

During the writing process of the study “*A Study on the Awareness and Consideration Sets in Relation to Employers in Air Transportation Sector*” scientific rules, ethical and citation rules were followed. No falsification was made on the collected data and this study was not sent to any other academic publication

medium for evaluation. In addition, permission was obtained from the Eskişehir Teknik University Social and Humanities Sciences Ethics Committee (Date: 30/06/2020 and Decision no: 4/10) to conduct the research

Statement of Contribution Rate of Researchers

The contribution rates of the authors in the study are equal.

Declaration of Conflict

There is no potential conflict of interest in the study.

Note

This work presents a part of the results from a research project funded by Eskişehir Technical University Scientific Research Projects (numbered 20ADP168, entitled Developing Prominence Scale for Air Transportation Organizations' Potential Employees).

References

- Abstein, A., Heidenreich, S., & Spieth, P. (2014) Innovative work behaviour: the impact of comprehensive HR system perceptions and the role of work-life conflict. *Industry and Innovation*, 21, 91-116. doi: 10.1080/13662716.2014.896159
- Agrawal, R. K., & Swaroop, P. (2009). Effect of employer brand image on application intentions of business school undergraduates, *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective* 13(3), 41-49.
- Alba, J.W., & Chattopadhyay, A. (1985). Effect of context and part-category cues on recall of competing brands. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 22, 240-249. doi: 10.2307/3151430
- Alba, J. W., & Hutchinson, J. W. (1987). Dimensions of consumer expertise. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(4), 411-454. doi: 10.1086/209080
- Aldag, R., Schwab, D., & Rynes, S. (1987). Theories and Research on Job Search and Choice. In K. M. Rowland, & G. R. Ferris (Eds.) *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management* (pp. 120-166). JAI Press. doi:10.13140/RG.2.1.1004.4323
- Backhaus, K., & Tikoo, S. (2004). Conceptualizing and researching employer branding. *Career Development International*, 9(5), 501-517. doi: 10.1108/13620430410550754
- Baker, R., & Orona, G. A. (2020). Gender and racial differences in awareness and consideration of curricular programs: Exploring a multistage model of major choice. *AERA Open*, 6(3), 1-19.
- Brand, R.R. & Cronin, J.J. (1997). Consumer-specific determinants of the size of retail choice sets: an empirical comparison of physical good and service providers. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 11(1), 19-38. doi: 10.1108/08876049710158349
- Brown, J. J., & Wildt, A. R. (1992). Consideration set measurement. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 20(3), 235-243. doi: 10.1007/BF02723410
- Buitek, E. A., Kaliyeva, S. A., Turginbayeva, A. N., Meldakhanova, M. K. & Shaikh. A. A. (2025). How much does an employer's attractiveness matter to youth employment? Evidence from a developing country. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, 17 (1), 258-283. doi: 10.1108/APJBA-02-2023-0086
- Cable, D.M. & Turban, D.B. (2001). Establishing the dimensions, sources and value of job seekers' employer knowledge during recruitment. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, 20, 115-163. doi: 10.1016/S0742-7301(01)20002-4
- Campbell, B. M. (1969). *The existence of evoked set and determinants of its magnitude in brand choice behavior* (Doctoral dissertation). Columbia University.
- Coates, S. L., Butler, L. T. ve D.C. Berry (2004). Implicit memory: A prime example for brand consideration and choice. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 18, 1195-1211. doi: 10.1002/acp.1044
- Collins, C. J., & Han, J. (2004). Exploring applicant pool quantity and quality: The effects of early recruitment practices, corporate advertising, and firm reputation. *Personnel Psychology*, 57(3), 685-717. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2004.00004.x
- Crompton, J. L., & Ankomah, P. K. (1993). Choice set propositions in destination decisions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 20(3), 461-476. doi: 10.1016/0160-7383(93)90003-L
- Crowley, A. E., & Williams, J. H. (1991). An information theoretic approach to understanding the consideration set/awareness set proportion. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 18(1).
- Dassler, A., Khapova, S.N., Lysova, E.I. and Korotov, K. (2022). Employer attractiveness from an employee perspective: a systematic literature review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.858217
- Dawes, P. L., & Brown, J. (2002). Determinants of awareness, consideration, and choice set size in university choice. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 12(1), 49-75. doi: 10.1300/J050v12n01_04
- Eppler, M. J., & Mengis, J. (2004). The concept of information overload: A review of literature from organization science, accounting, marketing, MIS, and related disciplines. *The Information Society*, 20(5), 325-344. doi:10.1080/01972240490507974

- Erdemir, E. (2006). Bilgi toplumunda insan kaynakları yönetiminin yeni rolü: yetenek savaşları olgusu ve Türkiye'deki yansımaları. *5. Uluslararası Bilgi, Ekonomi ve Yönetim Kongresi*, Turkey, 2, 29-39.
- Fuller, R., Stocchi, L., Gruber, T. & Romaniuk, J. (2023). Advancing the understanding of the pre-purchase stage of the customer journey for service brands. *European Journal of Marketing*, 57 (2), 360-386. doi: 10.1108/EJM-10-2021-0792
- Gault, J., Leach, E., & Duey, M. (2010). Effects of Business Internships on Job Marketability: The Employers' Perspective. *Education & Training*, 52(1), 76-88
- Gatewood, R. D., Gowan, M. A., & Lautenschlager, G. J. (1993). Corporate image, recruitment image and initial job choice decisions. *Academy of Management Journal*, 36(2), 414-427. doi: 10.2307/256530
- George, D., & Mallery, M. (2010). SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference, 17.0 update (10a ed.) Boston: Pearson.
- Gilbride, T. J., & Allenby, G. M. (2004). A choice model with conjunctive, disjunctive, and compensatory screening rules. *Marketing Science*, 23(3), 391-406. doi: 10.1287/mksc.1030.0032
- Gronhaug, K. (1973). Some Factors Influencing the Size of the Buyer's Evoked Set. *European Journal of Marketing*, 7, 232-241. doi: 10.1108/EUM00000000005116
- Hastorf, A. H., & Cantril, H. (1954). They saw a game; a case study. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 49(1), 129-134. doi: 10.1037/h0057880
- Hauser, J.R., & Wernerfelt, B. (1990). An evaluation cost model of evoked sets. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(4), 393-408. Howard, J. A., & Sheth, J. N. (1969). The theory of buyer behavior. John Wiley & Sons: New York.
- Hollstein, A. S., Schade, M., Kanitz, C., & Burmann, C. (2025). Identification as a Sword in the War for Talent: Understanding Organizational Identification Through a Prospective Employee Lens. *Psychology & Marketing*, 42 (4), 9955-969. doi: 10.1002/mar.22160
- Goodman, J. K., & Reczek, R. W. (2021). Choosing what to choose from: Preference for inclusion over exclusion when constructing consideration sets from large choice sets. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, 34(1), 85-98. doi: 10.1002/bdm.2199
- Jang, M. (2024). *Inconsistencies in consumer intertemporal decisions and marketplace inferences* (Doctoral dissertation). The University of Chicago, Illinois.
- Khan, S., & Digout, J. (2018). The corporate reputation reporting framework (CRRF). *Corporate Reputation Review*, 21(1), 22-36. doi: 10.1057/s41299-017-0041-4
- Knox, S., & Freeman, C. (2006). Measuring and managing employer brand image in the service industry. *Journal of marketing management*, 22(7-8), 695-716. doi: 10.1362/026725706778612103
- Kolodinsky, J., Lacasse, H., & Gallagher, K. (2020). Making hemp choices: Evidence from Vermont. *Sustainability*, 12(15), 6287. doi: 10.3390/su12156287
- Kravariti, F., Voutsina, K., Tasoulis, K., Dibia, C. and Johnston, K. (2022). Talent management in hospitality and tourism: a systematic literature review and research agenda, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34 (1), 321-360. doi: 10.1108/IJCHM-03-2021-0365.
- Lado, A. A., & Wilson, M. C. (1994). Human resource systems and sustained competitive advantages: A competency-based perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 19, 699-727. doi: 10.2307/258742
- Lapersonne, E., Laurent, G., & LeGoff, J.J. (1995). Consideration set of size one: An empirical investigation of automobile purchases. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 12, 55-66. doi: 10.1016/0167-8116(95)00005-M
- LeBlanc, R.P., & Herndon, N.C., Jr. (2001). Cross-cultural consumer decisions: Consideration sets – a marketing universal? *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 19, 500-506. doi: 10.1108/EUM00000000006216
- Lievens, F., Van Hove, G. & Schreurs, B. (2005), Examining the relationship between employer knowledge dimensions and organizational attractiveness: An application in a military context. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 78, 553-572. doi: 10.1348/09631790X26688
- Lievens, F., ve Highhouse, S. (2003). The relation of instrumental and symbolic attributes to a company's attractiveness as an employer. *Personnel Psychology*, 56, 75-102. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2003.tb00144.x
- Lievens, F., Van Hove, G., & Anseel, F. (2007). Organizational identity and employer image: Towards a unifying framework. *British Journal of Management*, 18(S1), S45-S59. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8551.2007.00525.x
- Maddox, R.N., Gronhaug, N.K., Homans, R.E., & May, F.E. (1978). Correlates of information gathering and evoked set size for new automobile purchasers in Norway and the US. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 5, 167-170.
- Mariconda, S., & Lurati, F. (2014). Being known: A literature review on media visibility, public prominence and familiarity with implications for reputation research and management. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 17(3), 219-236. doi: 10.1057/crr.2014.11
- Martin, J. H., & Franz, E. B. (1994). Attracting applicants from a changing labor market: A strategic marketing framework. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 6, 33-53.
- Maurer, S. D., Howe, V., & Lee, T. W. (1992). Organizational recruiting as marketing management: An interdisciplinary study of engineering graduates. *Personnel Psychology*, 45(4), 807. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.1992.tb00969.x
- McDonald, H., Pallant, J., Funk, D. C., & Kunkel, T. (2024). Who doesn't like sport? A taxonomy of non-fans. *Sport Management Review*, 27(1), 67-89. doi: 10.1080/14413523.2023.2233342

- Mercedý, P., Wright, M., Feetham, P. & Stern, P. (2024). Remembering less, or needing less? Age-related differences in the purchase funnel. *Marketing Letters*, 35,171–186. doi: 10.1007/s11002-023-09681-8
- Miller, G.A. (1956). The magical number seven, plus or minus two: some limits in our capacity to process information. *The Psychological Review*, 63(2), 81-97. doi: 10.1037/h0043158
- Mishina, Y., Dykes, B. J., Block, E. S., & Pollock, T. G. (2010). Why “good” firms do bad things: The effects of high aspirations, high expectations, and prominence on the incidence of corporate illegality. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(4), 701-722. doi: 10.5465/amj.2010.52814578
- Moore, A. K., Hastie, R. (2024). Navigating choices: a framework of consumer search. *Marketing Letters*, 1-12. doi: 10.1007/s11002-024-09741-7
- Mothersbaugh, D. L. & Hawkins, D. (2015). *Consumer Behavior: Building Marketing Strategy* (11th Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Murphy, K. A. 1986. When your top choice turns you down: Effect of rejected job offers on the utility of selection tests. *Psychological Bulletin*, 99, 128-133. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.99.1.133
- Narayana, C.L., & Markin, R.J. (1975). Consumer behavioral and product performance: an alternative conceptualization. *Journal of Marketing*, 39(4), 1-6. doi: 10.2307/1250589
- Parkinson, T.L., & Reilly, M.E. (1979). An information processing approach to evoked set formation. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 6, 227-231.
- Quiroz, E. P., Soubeyran, A (2025). Local proximal algorithms in Riemannian manifolds: Application to the behavioral traveler’s problem. *Evolution Equations and Control Theory*, In press, ff10.3934/eect.2024072ff. fffhal-04930974f
- Reilly, M., & Parkinson, T.L. (1985). Individual and product correlates of evoked set size for consumer-packaged goods. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 12(1), 492-497.
- Rindova, V. P., Williamson, I. O., Petkova, A. P., & Sever, J. M. (2005). Being good or being known: An empirical examination of the dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of organizational reputation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(6), 1033-1049. doi: 10.5465/AMJ.2005.19573108
- Roberts J. (1989). A grounded model of consideration set size and composition. *Advances in Consumer Research* Volume, 16(1), 749-757.
- Roetzel, P. G. (2019). Information overload in the information age: A review of the literature from business, accounting, marketing, MIS, and related disciplines. *Business Research*, 12(2), 479-522. doi: 10.1007/s40685-018-0069-z
- Ronda Gonzalez, L., Valor Martinez, C., & Abril Barrie, C, (2018). How do employees choose employers?-Building the consideration and non-consideration set of employer brands. *EMAC 2018 - People Make Marketing*: University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK <http://hdl.handle.net/11531/26192>
- Ronda, L., Valor, C., & Abril, C. (2018). Are they willing to work for you? An employee-centric view to employer brand attractiveness. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 27(5), 573-596. doi: 10.1108/JPBM-07-2017-1522
- Sheridan, J. E., Richards, M. D., & Slocum, J. W. (1975). Comparative analysis of expectancy and heuristic models of decision behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 60(3), 361. doi: 10.1037/h0076632
- DGCA (n.d.), *Terminal Companies*. Retrieved from http://web.shgm.gov.tr/documents/sivilhavacilik/files/havacilik_isletmeleri/terminal_isletmeleri.pdf on 16.07.2021.
- Sekiguchi, T., Mitate, Y., & Yang, Y (2023). Internship experience and organizational attractiveness: A realistic job fit perspective. *Journal of Career Development*, 50(2), 353-371. doi: 10.1177/08948453221094311
- Shocker, A. D., Ben-Akiva, M., Boccara, B., & Nedungadi, P. (1991). Consideration set influences on consumer decision-making and choice: Issues, models, and suggestions. *Marketing letters*, 2(3), 181-197.
- Silva, A. J. & Dias, H. (2023). The relationship between employer branding, corporate reputation and intention to apply to a job offer. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 31 (8), 1-16. doi: 10.1108/IJOA-01-2022-3129
- Sommer, L.P., Heidenreich, S., & Handrich, M. (2017). War for talents—How perceived organizational innovativeness affects employer attractiveness. *R&D Management*, 47(2), 299-310. doi: 10.1111/radm.12230
- Spiggle, S., & Sewall, M.A. (1987). A choice-sets model of retail selection. *Journal of Marketing*, 51(2), 97-111. doi: 10.2307/1251132
- Stoppacher, L., Foscht, T., Eisingerich, A. B., & Schloffer, J. (2024). Always on your mind?—investigating consideration sets and private labels at the retailer and category level. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 1-23. doi: 10.1080/09593969.2024.2345122
- Thang, N. N. & Trang, P. T. (2024) Employer branding, organization’s image and reputation, and intention to apply: the moderating role of the availability of organizational information on social media. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 9:1256733. doi: 10.3389/fsoc.2024.1256733
- Tekbiyık, M. (2024). From internship to employment: from internship to employment: the role of talent management in retaining interns as full-time employees. *TABAD Journal*, 1(1), 33-61.
- Turban, D. B. (2001). Organizational attractiveness as an employer on college campuses: An examination of the applicant population. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58(2), 293-312. doi: 10.1006/jvbe.2000.1765
- Turban, D. B., & Greening, D. W. (1997). Corporate social performance and organizational attractiveness to prospective employees. *Academy of management journal*, 40(3), 658-672. doi: 10.2307/257057

- Vanunu, Y., Urminsky, O., & Bartels, D. (2024). Coping With Complexity: A Selective Sampling Account of Consideration Set Formation for Product Bundles. doi: 10.31234/osf.io/5t6cv
- Vatankhah, S., Roodbari, H., Rahimi, R., & Oraee, A. (2024). Decoding organisational attractiveness: a fuzzy multi-criteria decision-making approach. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. doi: 10.1108/IJCHM-02-2024-0258
- Vidmar, N., & Rokeach, M. (1974). Archie Bunker's bigotry: A study in selective perception and exposure. *Journal of Communication*, 24(1), 36-47. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.1974.tb00353.x
- Wilden, R., Gudergan, S., & Lings, I. (2010). Employer branding: strategic implications for staff recruitment. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 26(1-2), 56-73. doi: 10.1080/02672570903577091
- Willman-Iivarinen, H. (2020). Consumer Media Choice: Towards a comprehensive model (Doctoral dissertation). Tampere University, Finland.
- Yang, S. U. (2007). An integrated model for organization—public relational outcomes, organizational reputation, and their antecedents. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 19(2), 91-121. doi: 10.1080/10627260701290612
- Zaichowsky, J.L. (1985). Conceptualizing involvement. *Journal of Advertising*, 15 (2) 4-14. doi: 10.1080/00913367.1986.10672999

TÜRKÇE GENİŞ ÖZET

Günümüzde işletmeler için en önemli rekabet avantajlarından biri nitelikli insan kaynağına ulaşmaktır. İşletmeler çalışanlar tarafından tercih edilen, çalışılacak en iyi işletme, cazip ve çekici bir işveren olabilmek için rekabet halindedirler. Bu noktada işletmeler kıt olan nitelikli işgücü kaynağına erişim için harekete geçmeden önce, potansiyel ve mevcut çalışanlarını anlamaları gerekmektedir. Bu bağlamda mevcut ve potansiyel çalışanların zihinlerinde hangi işletmelerin nasıl yer ettiğinin analiz edilmesi büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bireylerin zihinlerinde işletmelere ait iki tür bilgi bulunmaktadır. Bunlar örgüte ilişkin farkındalık ve örgüte ilişkin aşinalıktır. Örgüte ilişkin farkındalık, bireyin işletmeden haberdar olması ve işletmenin bireyin aklında yer tutmuş olmasını ifade ederken; aşinalık, bireyin zihninde işletme hakkında yer eden derinlemesine bilgiye karşılık gelmektedir. Tüketici karar verme sürecine ilişkin literatür incelendiğinde tüketicilerin bu süreci basitleştirmek için yararlandığı yaklaşımlardan bir tanesi olarak seçim kümesi teorisi karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu teoriye göre tüketiciler nihai karara varmadan önce (seçim yapmadan önce) farklı kümeler oluşturmakta ve seçenekleri eleyerek karar vermektedir. Bu çalışmada ilgili kümelerden farkındalık ve dikkate alınanlar kümelerine odaklanılmıştır. Bir ürün grubunda, tüketicinin haberdar olduğu markaların oluşturduğu küme farkındalık kümesi olarak nitelendirilmektedir. Farkındalık kümesinin bir alt kümesi olarak dikkate alınanlar kümesi ise, tüketicilerin satın almayı düşündüğü markaların yer aldığı küme olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Tıpkı bir ürünün varlığından haberdar olan ya da olmayan bir tüketici gibi iş arayışındaki bir kişi de işverenin farkında olabilir ya da olmayabilir. İş arayışındaki potansiyel çalışanın farkında olduğu bu işveren grubuna farkındalık kümesi adı verilmektedir. Tüketiciler doğrudan farkında oldukları markalar arasından seçim yapmak yerine, farkında oldukları bu kümeyi küçülterek seçimlerini daha az sayıdaki marka arasından yapmayı tercih etmektedirler. Potansiyel çalışanın işveren seçimi yaparken farkında olduğu işveren grubu içinden dikkate aldığı işveren markalarının oluşturduğu gruba ise dikkate alınanlar kümesi ismi verilmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı küme teorisini işveren markası bağlamına uyarlayarak havacılık endüstrisinin farklı alanlarında faaliyet gösteren işletmelerin farkındalık ve dikkate alınanlar kümelerini içerik ve büyüklük açısından ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmada ayrıca bu kümelerin büyüklüklerini etkileyen faktörlerin tespit edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda potansiyel çalışanlar olarak Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde Havacılık Yönetimi (lisans) ve Sivil Hava Ulaştırma İşletmeciliği (önlisans) bölümlerindeki son sınıf öğrencileri ve örgüt olarak Türkiye'de havayolu taşımacılığı sürecinin farklı kısımlarında faaliyet gösteren, havayolu, havaalanı, terminal, yer hizmetleri, hava kargo, ikram, temsil, gözetim ve yönetim işletmeleri araştırmanın kapsamına dâhil edilmiştir. Çalışmanın amacını gerçekleştirmek için ilgili öğrencilerle çift aşamalı bir araştırma yürütülmüştür. Bu kapsamda ilk aşamada, Havacılık Yönetimi ve Sivil Hava Ulaştırma İşletmeciliği bölümlerindeki son sınıf öğrencilerinin her bir faaliyet alanında en çok farkında oldukları havacılık işletmesinin belirlenebilmesi için akıllarına gelen ilk işletmeleri listelemeleri istenmiştir. Böylelikle farkındalık kümesi elde edilmiştir. İkinci aşamada ise öğrencilere işletme isimlerinin yer aldığı listeler verilerek bu işletmeler içerisinde hangisinde çalışmayı düşünebilecekleri sorulmuştur. Böylelikle dikkate alınanlar kümesi elde edilmiştir. Farkındalık kümesine yönelik yapılan analizler sonucunda havayolu işletmelerinin ortalama farkındalık kümesi boyutunun diğer işletme türlerinden daha büyük olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Aynı zamanda bu altı işletme türü içerisinde, öğrencilerin çalışmayı en çok tercih ettiği işletme türü de havayolu işletmesi olarak saptanmıştır. Her bir işletme türü için farkındalık kümesinde dahil edilen işletmeler ve kümeye dahil edilme sıklıkları da verilmiştir. İşletme türü gözetmeksizin sektördeki bütün işletmeler ele alındığında en çok farkında olunan ilk üç işletmenin sırasıyla THY, Pegasus Havayolları ve TGS Yer Hizmetleri olduğu saptanmıştır. Ayrıca

farkındalık kümesi boyutu ile katılımcıların öğrenim gördükleri program (lisans-önlisans) ve staj yapıp yapmamış olmaları arasında ilişki olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Staj yapanların ortalama farkındalık kümesi boyutuna kıyasla staj yapmayan katılımcıların ortalama farkındalık kümesi boyutu daha küçüktür. Yine farkındalık küme boyutunun öğrencilerin eğitim gördükleri programa (lisans veya önlisans) göre de değişiklik gösterdiği saptanmıştır. Lisans programındaki öğrencilerin ortalama farkındalık kümesi boyutu önlisans programında eğitim gören öğrencilerin küme boyutuna kıyasla daha büyüktür. Dikkate alınanlar kümesinin tespitinde ise farkındalık kümesinden elde edilen veriler kullanılarak, bir işletme listesi hazırlanmış ve katılımcılara bu işletmelerin hangilerinde çalışmayı düşünebilecekleri sorulmuştur. Elde edilen verilere göre işveren olarak en çok dikkate alınan üç işletme sırasıyla THY, Devlet Hava Meydanları İşletmesi ve Pegasus Havayolları şeklinde tespit edilmiştir. Diğer bir ifadeyle, katılımcılar farkındalık kümesi içerisinde alternatifleri eleterek daha az sayıda işletmeyi dikkate alınanlar kümesine dahil etmişlerdir. Dikkate alınanlar kümesi boyutunun farkındalık kümesi boyutuna göre daha küçük olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Diğer yandan dikkate alınanlar kümesi ile öğrenim görülen program arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu ancak öğrencilerin staj yapıp yapmaması ile anlamlı bir ilişki olmadığı ortaya konmuştur. Bu çalışmanın işveren markası bağlamında hem farkındalık hem de dikkate alınanlar kümesini tespit ederek küme boyutlarını etkileyen faktörleri belirlemeye çalışan ilk çalışma olması dolayısıyla literatüre önemli katkılar sunacağı düşünülmektedir. Diğer yandan, bu çalışmayla Türkiye'deki havacılık örgütlerinin hangilerinin farkındalık ve dikkate alınanlar kümelerine girebildiğinin, potansiyel çalışanların zihinlerindeki ortalama küme boyutunun ve bu küme boyutunda etkili olan değişkenlerin tespit edilmesiyle uygulayıcılara da katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.