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## MANAGEMENT STYLE AND COLLECTIVISM AT TURKISH SMES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

Republic of Turkey is one of those countries where SMEs are flourishing and acting as a driving force of development. In this paper, we explore management style and collectivism at Turkish SMEs. Being an intersection of eastern and western cultures and with the recent liberalization of domestic markets, we believe this exploration can lead to interesting results. In this paper authors take a glance at Turkish SMEs. We investigate the relationship between collectivism and management style at Turkish SMEs. We have gathered data from 421 SMEs located in Republic of Turkey, using a 13 item questionnaire. This study is an exploratory one and no hypothesis are configured. There are significant results regarding the relationship management style and collectivism. Individuals are more likely to work within a group and formal organizational structures and management policies are implemented as SMEs grow larger.

**Keywords:** SMEs; collectivism, management style, small and medium sized business

## TÜRK KOBİ'LERİNDE YÖNETİM ŞEKLİ VE KOLLEKTİVİZM: KEŞİFSEL BİR ÇALIŞMA

### ÖZET

Türkiye, sayısı hızla artan küçük ve orta ölçekli işletmelerin (KOBİ) ekonominin itici gücü olarak görev yaptığı ülkelerden biridir. Bu çalışmada, yazarlar Türkiye'deki KOBİ'lerin yönetim tarzlarını ve kollektivist davranışlarını araştırmışlardır. Türkiye gibi Batı ve Doğu kültürlerinin kesişim noktasında yer alan ve son yıllarda pazarların liberalleştiği ülkelerde, araştırmanın ilginç bulgulara ulaşabileceği düşünülmüştür. Yönetim tarzı ve kollektivizm arasındaki ilişkiler araştırmanın odak noktasını oluşturmuştur. Araştırma kapsamında, 421 KOBİ'ye, 13 sorudan oluşan anket uygulaması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yönetim tarzı ve kollektivizm arasında bazı anlamlı sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır. Özetle, Türk KOBİ'lerinde işgörenlerin gruplar halinde çalışmayı tercih ettiği, işletmeler büyüdükçe biçimsel örgüt yapılarının ve yönetim politikalarının tercih edildiği söylenebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** KOBİ, kollektivizm, yönetim tarzı, küçük ve orta ölçekli işletmeler

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## INTRODUCTION

Many businesses start their journey as a small one. Based on founder's radical management skills, knowledge, resources and opportunities available, they grow and turnout as larger ones. Some even dominate international markets and evolve into multinational enterprises (Acs et.al, 1997:7). In today's world, small and medium sized firms (SMEs) are important actors of innovation (Acs et al, 1997:11; Buckley, 1997:67), job creation (Buckley, 1997:67), regional development and international trade (Buckley, 1997:67).

SMEs are important job creators because they are usually labor intensive compared to larger institutions. Even though technology created by SMEs is harder to advertise and export, they are still considered as innovators (Buckley, 1997:67). Thanks to globalization efforts, barriers to enter global markets are lower. This creates international trade opportunities for SMEs. On 21st century, SMEs can interact with global economy faster and easier. Even though some scholars state that SMEs are overestimated (Harrison, 1994), it is believed they are crucial for development of both regional and international economies and job creation. Thus, in this paper we focus on management style and collectivism at Turkish SMEs. Authors' main enquiry is to understand the management style of Turkish SMEs and further dig for a relationship between management style and collectivism.




### 1. Theoretical Background

#### 1.1. SMEs and SMEs in Turkey

There are various governmental and private sector institutions that define and work with SMEs in different countries. In Turkey, KOSGEB (Presidency of Developing and Progressing Small and Medium Sized Enterprises), being a division of Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology focuses on supporting SMEs financially and educationally can be accepted as a prominent of these organizations. According to KOSGEB standards, Turkish SMEs are divided into three categories based on number of employees, annual turnover and balance sheet. There are micro firms that employ either less than 10 people and annual turnover/balance sheet is smaller than 1 million Turkish Liras. Small firms are described as businesses that employs less than 50 workers and annual turnover/balance sheet is smaller than 8 million Turkish Liras. Finally, medium sized enterprises, according to KOSGEB definitions are those that employ less than 250 workers and annual turnover/balance sheet is smaller than 40 million Turkish Liras. "Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises constitute 99.9% of total number of enterprises, 76% of employment, 53% of wages and salaries, 63%

of turnover, 53.3% of value added at factor cost and 53.7% of gross investment in tangible goods” (Şener et al., 2014:214).

SMEs constitute significant portions of the economy in both developed and developing countries and their contribution to employment may reach to 93% in some economies. According to World Bank records, globally, SMEs are the biggest contributors to employment across countries and this contribution is greater in low-income countries than the higher-income ones. SMEs with 250 employees or fewer generate 86% of the jobs worldwide (Ayyagari et al., 2011). SMEs are the backbone of the European economy with 20.7 million firms accounting for more than 98% of all enterprises, 67% of total employment and 58% of gross value added. 98% of all enterprises, 67% of total employment and 58% of gross value added (European Commission, 2013). More than 95% of enterprises in the OECD area are SMEs. They account for almost 60% of private sector employment, make a large contribution to innovation and support regional development and social cohesion. In low-income countries, the SME sector makes a critical contribution to GDP and employment (Şener et al., 2014:213).



Republic of Turkey is a special example being a hybrid of western and eastern cultures. Turkey is the world’s 16th and Europe’s 6th largest economy. According to HSBC’s “The World in 2050” report, Turkey will be the world’s 12th and Europe’s 5th biggest Economy by 2050 (Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 2014). Sitting on the throne of Ottoman Empire, country is a unique blend of many national and religious cultures. The economy of Turkey is expanding and since military coup of 1980, national economy is being liberalized and privatized each day. This creates opportunities for businesses, including small and medium sized ones.

According to OECD’s Western Balkans and Turkey SME Policy Index, Turkey has developed a sound and well-structured SME policy, supported by a range of well-established institutions. Turkey scored above average in all measures except for bankruptcy regulations and the operational environment. This reflects its power in areas such as advocating SMEs, adoption of standards, export promotion and internationalization. It has done less well on policies aimed at improving the broader business environment – regulatory reform, company registration and e-government services – as the pace of reform slowed. The regulatory burden on small enterprises remains relatively heavy in Turkey. Figure below demonstrates Turkey SME’s score on several items (OECD, 2012).

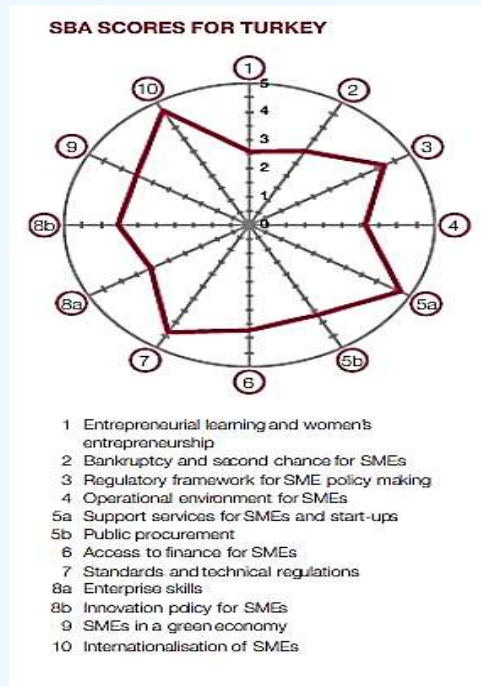


Figure 1: SBA Scores for Turkey

### 1.2. Individualism - Collectivism

Individualism and collectivism in social behaviour was initially proposed to explain cultural differences across nations (Hofstede, 1980). Since the 1960s when Hofstede first measured individualism and collectivism on different nations, the original two-dimensional conceptualization has been a useful and famous predictor of behavioral patterns. Although Hofstede's cultural investigation work included other dimensions, individualism and collectivism have been the most popular among them for researchers (O'Neill et al., 2016:449). Even though the 1980s were already called 'the decade of individualism-collectivism in cross-cultural psychology' (Kagitcibasi, 1994:52), the research on the two constructs continued to flourish through the 1990s and shows only vague signs (if any at all) of calming down at the beginning of the third millennium (Realo et al., 2002:163).

Individualism-collectivism studies are pretty common in areas such as marketing and management research and individualism/collectivism (I/C) framework has been influential in social sciences since the late 1980s (Sivatas et al, 2009:202). There is a vast amount of literature regarding individualism and collectivism. In marketing and consumer behavior research, the influence of individualist/collectivist orientations has been well explained with empirical research on information processing, persuasion, values, motivation, attribution and behavioral outcomes (Sivadas et al, 2008:201).



Although Hofstede (1980) originally conceptualized individualism and collectivism as unidimensional, other scholars have suggested two dimensions and used separate scales for each dimension. As a result, dimensionality of individualism / collectivism is still a question that requires further investigation (O'Neill et al., 2016:449). Since Hofstede's ground breaking work (1980), the individualism and collectivism constructs have undergone a series of elaborations. In the present age, for instance, individualism and collectivism are conceptualized not as two opposite poles of a unidimensional factor as done by Hofstede (1980) but as two relatively independent factors at both the cultural and individual levels. Also, it has been argued that individualism and collectivism are not completely generalizable and context-free dispositions. According to Triandis (2001:909), 'there are as many varieties of collectivism as there are collectivist cultures' and individualism and collectivism have various subforms that manifest themselves predominantly in one particular area of social relations or in relations with a specific target group (Realo et al., 2002:164).

To start with a better understanding of individualism, it is obvious that the term has a rich semantic history, having been 'used in a great many ways, in many different contexts and with an exceptional lack of precision' (Lukes, 1971:45). According to Lukes (1971), the first uses of the term grew out of the general European reaction to the French Revolution and more specifically, to its declared source, the thought of Enlightenment. The early ideas of individualism in social and political theory included the ideas of the maximum welfare and freedom of the individual, with society existing only for the sake of its members (Realo et al., 2002:164). Individualism is to prioritize the creation and maintenance of a positive self-image (O'Neill et al., 2016:449). Ideas, actions and beliefs of an individualist is self based rather than group based.

According to Hofstede (1980), individualism pertains to a society in which the ties between individuals are loose and everyone is expected to look only after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. This definition is obviously narrower than those used in political and philosophical literature.

Collectivism is the degree to which individuals build their identities on group memberships (Hofstede, 1984). Collectivism can be interpreted as a cultural value orientation. Collectivists consider themselves as interdependent with their groups or community, whereas individualists adopt a more independent view of the self (Erdoğan and Liden, 2006:2 from, Triandis, 1995). For collectivists, interpersonal relations are the key



mechanisms to attach workplace (Erdoğan and Liden, 2006:2 from Boyacıgiller and Adler, 1991; Wasti, 2003).

Individualistic societies emphasize “I or me” consciousness, autonomy, emotional independence, individual initiative, right to privacy, pleasure seeking, financial security, need for specific friendship and universalism. In contrast, collectivistic societies focus on “we or us” consciousness, collective identity, emotional dependence, group action, sharing and caring for others, duties and obligations, need for stable and predetermined friendship, group decisions, and particularism. I/C was originally conceptualized as the two poles of a unidimensional construct. However, after empirical progress, many researchers have argued that I/C may represent two distinct constructs, each with a constellation of component features (Chen and West, 2008:261).

The construct of individualism–collectivism expresses the distinction between prevalent cultural orientations that value the importance of an individual versus those that value group harmony. People with individualist values tend to see themselves as independent of others and generally behave according to personal attitudes and preferences, whereas people with collectivistic values see themselves as interdependent with others and usually behave according to social norms (Sivadas, 2008:201 from Triandis, 1995).

In individualistic societies, personal goals, wishes and desires dominate over in-group goals, whereas in collectivist societies, in-group goals take precedence over those of the individual, with personal goals secondary. That being said, individualistic societies are “me or I”-oriented and collectivist societies are “we or us”-oriented. Cultures that score high on individualism include most Western countries such as the United States and Australia, and those that score high on collectivism include many Asian countries such as China and South Korea. Moderately collectivist countries include India and Brazil and moderately individualistic countries include Denmark and Belgium. (Sivadas et al, 2008:201-202). Turkey is a special nation with a mixture of western and eastern cultures. With a rich background and legacy of many Anatolian nations, Turkey is now a country where economy is expanding and professional business culture is blooming. According to the Hofstede Centre, Turkey is a collectivist country with a score of 37 on individualism (The Hofstede Centre, 2016). Turkey has attracted other collectivism related research. For an example cross-cultural study see Li and Aksoy, (2007). Through confirmatory factor analyses, Li and Aksoy (2007) found that conceiving I/C as separate constructs with multiple dimensions is superior and better fits research data. Another study focused on collectivism as a moderator of responses to organizational justice. Researchers reported that



interactional justice had a weaker positive relationship with leader member exchange for individuals high in collectivism (Erdoğan and Liden, 2006). Turkey's collectivism score and a brief explanation can be seen below (The Hofstede Centre, 2016).

*“Turkey, with a score of 37 is a collectivistic society. This means that the “We” is important, people belong to in-groups (families, clans or organisations) who look after each other in exchange for loyalty. Communication is indirect and the harmony of the group has to be maintained, open conflicts are avoided. The relationship has a moral base and this always has priority over task fulfillment. Time must be invested initially to establish a relationship of trust. Nepotism may be found more often. Feedback is always indirect, also in the business environment.”*

### **1.2. Management Style**

It is difficult to define or classify management styles. Many studies in literature considered a different part of an organization and organizational issues. There is a lack of convergence in the academic field on a precise definition of management style. Yet, there are numerous studies that try to classify, identify and study different management styles.

Management style is an organizational term often used to describe the “how” of management. It is a function of behaviour associated with personality (McGuire, 2005). Management style can be understood as a way to operate the daily routines of an organization. According to another definition, management styles are collectively learnt behaviours and includes all the limitations and opportunities of human learning. Management styles include both contents and processes of decision making (Jain and Premkumar, 2010:328).

Beginning with the time of the Egyptian pharaohs and extending through the Dark Ages and the early stages of the feudal system, the only dominant managerial style being used was the autocratic rule. The autocrat was ruler supreme. The system by which he ruled was inseparable from his own desires, whims, and fancies. “His” leadership was total and absolute. During days of Industrial Revolution, there emerged this grass roots reaction to the excesses of practicing autocrats and authoritarians. Amongst our general society arose the views that child labor, worker exploitation, sweatshops, and the like were morally unjust. The exercise of absolute authority was no longer to be tolerated in either industry or government (Duft, 2016).

After the industrial revolution and the foundation process of democratic nation-state, management styles changed dramatically. Voters were able to choose the ruler party of the nation, while autocrat was nothing more than the owner of a symbolic throne, of course if



that throne still exists. All these developments led to a new understanding of the term “management”. Times, people and organizations were changing rapidly and so did management in throughout all 1900s and 2000s.

According to Shahmohammadi (2015:248), management style is a certain and regular type of behavior that managers adopt to motivate employees to achieve organizational goals. Rebetak and Farkasova (2013) demonstrate that management style can be very effective on success or failure of a business.

Management style is also related to organizational culture and organizational identity (Ramos et al., 2016:902) which we argue that partly or completely affected by national culture. Management scholars and researches contend that management styles are culturally determined and vary differently from culture to culture (Morris and Pavett, 1992:170). Management styles are dramatically influenced by the distinctive social culture, life style and climate in which an organization operates (Jain and Premkumar, 2010:328). While some of the empirical work on management style focuses on single nation or culture, other studies are cross-cultural and often use a comparative approach (Bakhtari, 1995; Morris and Pavett, 1992).

Religion also can serve as a backbone of management style. As an important aspect of culture, religion has significant impacts on life style, social climate and behaviors of a society. Brown (1984) investigated and compared protestant, humanist and evangelic management styles through a perspective of ethics. Management styles vary from culture to culture, religion to religion and within the specific culture from industry to industry (Jain and Premkumar, 2010:328).

Cultures may dictate a core management style to the organizations that operate within. Based on organizational climate and culture, this core management style usually has variations such as conservative style, professional style, entrepreneurial style, familiar style etc (Jain and Premkumar, 2010:328). Managerial actions, industrial conditions also may affect the management style of a firm. With the choices above and under the impact of culturally dictated core management style, an unlimited number of management styles can be built upon.

To understand, how culture controls management style, famous comparisons of American and Japanese enterprises can be analyzed. Some scholars (Pascale and Athos, 1981) studied Japanese management style after the success of Japan in late 1900s. These scholars highlighted that the Japanese management style includes paternalism, collectivism, lifetime employment, seniority, lifelong learning, collective decision making, hard work, co-



operation ethics, continuous adaptation and improvement. The management style of the American companies differed markedly from Japanese style and it pays attention to core values, individuals, a highly competitive work environment, high flexible structure, business unit autonomy, interactivity and innovation (Nwadukwe and Timinepere, 2012:200). Despite both nations have many successful enterprises, it is clear that those organizations are achieving their goals with different management styles.

Driver et al. (1990, from Ramos et al., 2016:903) identifies five different types of management styles that can be implemented and further adds that available information and number of alternatives are two key factors that define the management style of an organization. According to their work, management styles can be classified as decisive, flexible, hierarchical, integrative and systemic. While decisive and flexible styles uses less information, systemic and integrative styles are more complex and uses much more information and selectable alternatives. Hierarchical style makes plans at the right time and focuses on a single and best solution.

Klijn et al. (2008) argue that management style is a key element of management type and is determined by some organizational features. These features can be summarized as result orientation of organization, organization's externality or internality level, organization's reactive capacity and flexibility.

Olmedo-Cifuentes and Martínez-Léon's (2014) management style classification is simpler. They propose that management style is either participative or competitive. While participative style (Rolkova and Farkasova, 2015) is more democratic and relationship oriented, competitive style is autocratic and task oriented. Participative style includes commitment, autonomy, self-management and engagement (Rolkova and Farkasova, 2015:1384). Shahmohammadi (2015:248) also argues that management style is categorized based on two ranges of task-oriented and relationship-oriented categories with a degree of strength and weakness.

According to Schleh, management style is “like a tie that binds diverse operations and functions all together”. It is the philosophy or set of principles by which the manager capitalizes on the abilities of the workforce. Management style is not a procedure on how to do but it is the management framework for doing things.

A management style is a way of life operating throughout the enterprise and permits an executive to rely on the initiative of human resources of an organization. Management style is a phenomenon where several theories were built on. Different management styles have evolved as distinct managers utilized unique approaches in performing responsibilities in





the course of their official work. Sequel to the emergence of styles of management, scholars have identified and described a variety of formal styles of management since the 1950's (Nwadukwe and Timinepere, 2012:199).

Likert (1967) classified four approaches of management that constitute a continuum of participative, paternalistic, exploitative and autocratic, and consultative management style while Burn and Stalker (1961) identified organic and mechanistic styles of management. Furthermore, Mintzberg (1973) considered entrepreneurial and strategic planning as forms of management styles adopted by managers in organizational entities. In recent times, commonly exhibited styles of management includes authoritarian, coercive, authoritative, democratic, affiliative, permissive, indifferent, coaching, pacesetter, visionary, bureaucratic and defensive styles of management (Nwadukwe and Timinepere, 2012:199).

As demonstrated above, a large variety of management style definitions and studies are included in social sciences literature. While some research is culture based, others focus on intra-organizational, managerial and/or human resources issues

## 2. Methodology and Study Design

### 2.1. Measurement of Constructs

To measure collectivism and management style, a quantitative mentality has been used. A questionnaire was prepared which includes four items for collectivism and four items to measure management style. Collectivism scale was previously used by Zhang et al (2012) and management style scale was used by Lavie et al (2012). Rest of the questionnaire included items to gather information about the participant age, employee count, work experience and similar demographics. All the analysis on the gathered data was conducted via SPSS software version 22.

Items of management style scale (Cronbach's Alpha=0,714) can be seen below (Lavie et al., 2012)

1. The firm/partner relies on an informal organization (e.g., has few managerial layers, loose control and monitoring; would settle for a handshake instead of sticking to bureaucratic procedures, contracts and legal documentation).
2. The firm/partner uses consensus seeking rather than authoritarian decision making (e.g., many people are democratically involved in decisions instead of one senior person making all the calls).



3. The firm/partner has an apolitical organization (e.g., decisions are guided by concrete considerations and planned processes rather than by personalities and hidden agendas).
4. The firm/partner prefers informal over formal communication (e.g., bullet-point presentations or verbal communication instead of lengthy written reports).

Items to measure collectivism (Cronbach's Alpha=0,698) can be seen below (Zhang et al., 2012);

1. Working with a group is better than working alone.
2. Individuals are responsible for the successes or failures of work groups.
3. One should live one's life independent of others as much as possible (reverse coded).
4. Each worker is responsible for the outcomes of his or her company.

### ***2.2. Sample Group and Administration of Survey***

The target population of this study is small and medium sized enterprises that operate in Turkey. Authors focused on an exploratory understanding of the research matter instead of building hypothesis and chosen questionnaire method. The questionnaire was administrated via hard copy papers and through an online survey tool link personally sent to participants of the sample group. Authors received 421 completely filled in questionnaires, out of 600 sent. Firms were selected randomly, from different regions of Turkey. However, to reflect the current economic activity based on geography, researchers tried to select participating firms from more developed regions of Turkey.

Most of the participants were young employees, reflecting Turkey's dynamic and energetic work force. 45,8% of the participants were aged between 25-30. 74,1% of the responders were male workers. Work experience was another question of our survey to better understand the effect of experience on collectivistic behaviour. A majority of responders (35,25%) had 2-5 years of work experience. Most of the responders were from service sector (70,02 %) which also reflects the rise of service sector in Turkish economy. A majority (29,4%) of the respondents were working in medium sized firms with a personnel count between 51-250, followed by micro firms (25,8%) with a personnel count of 1-10.

### ***2.3. Limitations***

It must be noted that findings of this study are bound with some limitations. First of all, authors used a random sampling method which may not reflect a complete mirroring of Turkish SMEs despite all the efforts. Secondly, through a critical scope, it can be argued that number of items in each scale might not cover the topic completely. Both management style



and collectivism are an important part of management literature and include vast amount of sub topics. Conceptualizing both constructs with four items per each may render findings of the study shallow.

#### **2.4. Hypothesis**

This study uses two key constructs (management style, collectivism) and two key elements to build hypothesis on. Therefore, authors have built following hypothesis for inquiry.

H1: Based on firm type, significant differences are expected on embracing formal/informal organization.

H2: Based on firm type, significant differences are expected regarding decision making

H3: Production firms with several different branches are expected to act more politically.

H4: Trading firms, which tend to be simpler and smaller are expected to use an informal communication style.

H5: As firms grow bigger on personnel count, they are expected to embrace a more formal management style which includes getting political, implementing a formal communication style and authoritarian decision making.

H6: Firms with lesser employees are expected to be more collectivist.

H7: Trading firms are expected to be more collectivist than service sector firms and production firms, respectively.

### **3. Findings**

First, by using ANOVA analysis, authors have searched for differences on collectivism and management style based on firm type. No significant differences were found on any items of collectivism scale. Therefore, H7 is falsified. Also for management style, three out of four items produced insignificant results. Results demonstrate that H1, H2 and H3 are falsified. But for one of the management style scale items (communication style), a significant difference was visible (Sig=0,01488073).



Table 1: ANOVA Analysis Based on Firm Type and Management Style

ANOVA (Firm Type / Management Style)						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Management Style Item 1	Between Groups	3,065834233	2	1,532917117	0,666127	0,51423865
	Within Groups	961,9175387	418	2,301238131		
	Total	964,9833729	420			
Management Style Item 2	Between Groups	8,145091979	2	4,07254599	2,102825	0,12340085
	Within Groups	809,5413688	418	1,936701839		
	Total	817,6864608	420			
Management Style Item 3	Between Groups	9,166195188	2	4,583097594	2,597594	0,07565408
	Within Groups	737,5036385	418	1,764362772		
	Total	746,6698337	420			
Management Style Item 4	Between Groups	15,59479483	2	7,797397413	4,25033	0,01488073
	Within Groups	766,8375092	418	1,834539496		
	Total	782,432304	420			

This means that industrial production firms, service sector firms and trading companies have a significantly different communication style which can be considered as a key element of management style. Interestingly, service sector firms seem to adapt a more formal communication style (Mean=3,08). Trading firms have the most informal communication style (Mean=3,67). Production firms are in between, with a mean of 3,35. These results imply that H4 is true for the sample group participated.

Second, authors used employee count of firms to search for differences. Once again, no significant differences regarding collectivism were detected. Therefore H6 is falsified. However, according to ANOVA results, firms with different employee numbers differ significantly. See Table 2 and Table 3 below for more details.

Table 2 : ANOVA Analysis Based on Employee Count and Management Style

ANOVA (Employee Number / Management Style)						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Management Style Item 1	Between Groups	194,5305786	4	48,63264466	26,25882	0
	Within Groups	770,4527943	416	1,852049986		
	Total	964,9833729	420			
Management Style Item 2	Between Groups	25,62435691	4	6,406089227	3,364551	0,01
	Within Groups	792,0621039	416	1,903995442		
	Total	817,6864608	420			
Management Style Item 3	Between Groups	71,33829947	4	17,83457487	10,98599	0
	Within Groups	675,3315343	416	1,623393111		
	Total	746,6698337	420			
Management Style Item 4	Between Groups	96,93212138	4	24,23303035	14,70596	0
	Within Groups	685,5001827	416	1,647836978		
	Total	782,432304	420			

Table 2 demonstrates that differences between firms are significant for all aspects of management style, based on employee count.

Table 3: Descriptives for Management Style and Employee Count

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval		Minimum	Maximum
						Lo. Bo.	Up. Bo.		
Management Style Item 1	1-10	79	<b>3,7468</b>	1,409385704	0,1585683	3,4311502	4,06252064	1	5
	11-25	47	<b>3,2553</b>	1,421390702	0,2073311	2,8379832	3,67265509	1	5
	26-50	42	<b>3,1667</b>	1,39540477	0,2153156	2,7318279	3,6015054	1	5
	51-250	68	<b>2,5294</b>	1,397979226	0,1695299	2,1910287	2,86779483	1	5
	251 or more	185	<b>2,0324</b>	1,301765952	0,0957077	1,8436068	2,22125811	1	5
	Total	421	<b>2,6841</b>	1,51577685	0,0738744	2,5388758	2,82929521	1	5
Management Style Item 2	1-10	79	<b>3,1772</b>	1,318113392	0,1482993	2,8819739	3,4724565	1	5
	11-25	47	<b>3,1702</b>	1,324011509	0,1931269	2,7814684	3,55895711	1	5
	26-50	42	<b>2,9048</b>	1,393530764	0,2150265	2,4705071	3,33901666	1	5
	51-250	68	<b>2,7794</b>	1,279524028	0,1551651	2,469701	3,08912256	1	5
	251 or more	185	<b>2,5946</b>	1,449502528	0,1065695	2,3843392	2,80484997	1	5
	Total	421	<b>2,829</b>	1,39530374	0,0680029	2,6953101	2,96264713	1	5
Management Style Item 3	1-10	79	<b>3,4557</b>	1,298889746	0,1461365	3,1647608	3,74663165	1	5
	11-25	47	<b>2,9362</b>	1,308903546	0,1909232	2,5518617	3,32047869	1	5
	26-50	42	<b>2,8333</b>	1,247762225	0,1925339	2,4445033	3,22216341	1	5
	51-250	68	<b>2,7353</b>	1,276862375	0,1548423	2,4262276	3,04436066	1	5
	251 or more	185	<b>2,3459</b>	1,25944143	0,092596	2,1632596	2,5286323	1	5
	Total	421	<b>2,7316</b>	1,333336161	0,0649828	2,6038594	2,85932353	1	5
Management Style Item 4	1-10	79	<b>3,9494</b>	1,164636338	0,1310318	3,6885028	4,21023141	1	5
	11-25	47	<b>3,8085</b>	1,135174721	0,1655823	3,4752109	4,14181042	1	5
	26-50	42	<b>3,2857</b>	1,235367315	0,1906213	2,9007467	3,67068184	1	5
	51-250	68	<b>3,0294</b>	1,304076138	0,1581425	2,7137581	3,34506544	1	5
	251 or more	185	<b>2,7784</b>	1,367148559	0,1005148	2,5800687	2,97668803	1	5
	Total	421	<b>3,2043</b>	1,364893423	0,0665208	3,0735203	3,33503077	1	5

Table 3 shows that, small firms embrace informal organizations better than larger ones. As firms grow bigger on employee count, they switch to favor formal organization. This is clearly visible on Table 3 (see means for item 1). Means for second item of management style show that firms have a tendency to act as a political organization as they grow bigger on personnel number. A political organization is the kind of organization where power battles are visible and decisions are made by those who have the power.

Results for third item of management style are consistent with previous ones. As firms employ more personnel, they favor a more authoritarian decision making process. Firms with fewer personnel are using a more participative decision making approach. This approach is compatible with adapting a formal organization. Fourth and finally, firms with more employees tend to use formal communication channels. Firms with lesser employees are more likely to adapt informal communication routes such as verbal communication and group meetings. However, as firms employ more personnel they switch to a formal communication approach which favors written communication, intranet e-mailing, official memos etc. These findings support that H5 is true for the sample group of this study.

An intriguing result is that, firms seem to be more political as they get bigger regarding personnel number. This means, an individual can play a bigger role in decision making or can hold the complete power in decision making process. Small firms seem to be more apolitical, decisions are based on facts, analysis and goals, instead of power conflicts and



personal ambitions. This result is intriguing because our findings show that businesses get more formal as they evolve and improve towards a bigger structure. This formal organization means a stronger bureaucracy, more standards on decision making, strict rules and guidelines for almost any process in management and production line. A more political organization on the other hand means conflicts of power, clash of inter-individual goals and ambitions, informal group activities to seize power etc. which are not suitable for a bureaucratic and formal organization.

Further comments are needed on results of decision making process. Decision making process is an essential element of any management style. Some firms/managers use authoritarian decision making processes while others implement a more pluralist approach and encourage employees to get involved in decision making process. Our study demonstrates that in Turkish SMEs, small firms use a more pluralistic approach on decision making. Firms with more employees use stricter and authoritarian decision making processes. This means that decisions are made via top management or the entrepreneur himself/herself on medium sized businesses. Micro firms with 1-10 employees have the most democratic decision making process (Mean=3,46) while medium sized businesses with more than 250 employees employ singularity and/or less democratic decision making process (Mean=2,35).

Based on firm type or size, authors were not able to reach a significant difference regarding collectivistic behaviour. Please see Table 4 below:

Table 4: Collectivistic Behaviour at Turkish SMEs

Age		Col. Item 1	Col. Item 2	Col. Item 3	Col. Item 4
18-24	Mean	3,114285714	3,742857143	3,342857143	3,042857143
	N	70	70	70	70
	Std. Deviation	1,324713337	1,09921862	1,360793825	1,355992757
25-30	Mean	3,269430052	3,803108808	3,29015544	2,968911917
	N	193	193	193	193
	Std. Deviation	1,338511372	1,142270525	1,314485196	1,294647377
31-40	Mean	3,269565217	3,730434783	3,173913043	3,104347826
	N	115	115	115	115
	Std. Deviation	1,391211381	1,094818251	1,326258883	1,340161767
41-50	Mean	3,62962963	3,703703704	2,962962963	3,37037037
	N	27	27	27	27
	Std. Deviation	1,213645118	0,992851946	1,192330668	1,114524671
50 and more	Mean	3,5	3,6875	2,6875	3,0625
	N	16	16	16	16
	Std. Deviation	1,316561177	1,078192933	1,078192933	1,388944443
<b>Total</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>3,275534442</b>	<b>3,762470309</b>	<b>3,22327791</b>	<b>3,047505938</b>
	N	421	421	421	421
	Std. Deviation	1,341674509	1,106525053	1,312043006	1,308443169

Employees prefer working in a group rather than alone (Mean=3,28). This implies that SME employees enjoy working in groups. Also employees think one must feel responsible for the success or failure of a group one is in (Mean=3,76). They feel obliged to attach themselves to the result group has reached. On the scale item where it says “one must live as independent as possible from the others”, participants seem to have disagreed with this statement. Reverse coded, this item is an expression of individualism and was rejected by a majority of respondents (Mean=3,22; 2,78 before reverse coding). Finally, most of the respondents tend to agree with the statement which implies that “all employees are responsible for the actions of the firm they work within”. This statement dictates a strong bond between business and the employee, keeping the employee responsible for steps taken by the business (Mean=3,05). Based on these answers, one can argue that collectivistic behaviour at the work place is wide and accepted in Turkish SMEs. Both small and medium sized businesses have a collectivistic work environment and employees are okay with it. They like to work in groups, they prefer to take full responsibility for the groups and businesses they are working in.

#### **4. Conclusion And Suggestions For Future Research**

In this paper, authors focused on investigating management style and collectivism, at Turkish SMEs. SMEs are particularly important on contemporary economy because they provide the most of employment, production and taxes of a nation. Using an eight item scale (four items for collectivism and four items for management style), authors were able to get valuable insight regarding management style and collectivistic behavior at Turkish SMEs.

Based on our sample group, we can argue that SMEs implement a more bureaucratic, more political and formal management style as they grow. Smaller firms are more likely to use employee participation for decision making process. Trading SMEs adapt the most informal communication style and the most democratic decision making process. In general, we can say that firm size (number of employees) is a key variable that determines management style on Turkish SMEs.

We were not able to find differential results on collectivistic behaviour. Firm size and business sector does not make a significant difference on collectivistic level of work environment. About collectivism on Turkish SMEs, we can say that work environment is pretty collectivistic and employees are collectivists. Compatible with Hofstede’s score card, workers and managers create a collectivistic environment and feel good working in it. Groups are important and employees prefer being part of a group. Employees are also eager to take responsibility for the groups and firms they work for.



Further research can focus on collectivism on Turkey businesses since we were unable to find any differential elements. Are there any individualistic work environments in Turkey? In which sectors/branches are they hidden and what pushes/motivates those businesses and employees to create such an environment in a clearly collectivistic culture? Future research can also rely on better sampling methods. Instead of using a random selection method, new studies can focus on certain industries, geographies or other micro levels.





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