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## Example of institutionalization of a family business: EKA NDT Gözetim Müm. San. Tic. Ltd. Şti.<sup>1</sup>

Bir aile şirketinin kurumsallaşması örneği: EKA NDT Gözetim Müm. San. Tic. Ltd. Şti.

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1. Yazarın katkısı: Makaleyi yazdı, verileri topladı ve sonuçları analiz etti/raporladı (% 50).  
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### Çıkar çatışması / Conflict of interest

Yazar(lar) bu çalışmada olası bir çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan ederler.  
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**Example of institutionalization of a family business case: Eka Ndt Gözetim Müm. San. Tic. Ltd. Şti.****Abstract**

Today, we see that most businesses in our country and many countries are family businesses. Family businesses significantly support the growth of the country's economy. Family businesses are essential for societies due to their functions. However, it is difficult for family companies, which play an essential role in the country's economy, to last long.

Family businesses need institutionalization to successfully transfer their assets to the next generations and survive in harsh competitive conditions. Corporate communication is critical for organizations to grow and differentiate themselves from others.

This study investigated the relationship between institutionalization and corporate communication in family businesses.

This study will discuss the concept, importance, and characteristics of family companies. The concept of institutionalization, the importance of institutionalization in family companies, and the importance of corporate communication will also be discussed.

**EXTENDED ABSTRACT**

Family businesses are critical in both economic and social life. They constitute an important part of the country's economy in terms of employment and business volume. Their unique management systems and structures are necessary for both economic and social life. However, their lives are concise. According to the research, the biggest reason is that they need to be more institutionalized and pay the necessary attention to this issue. They need to be managed professionally and institutionally to extend their lifespan. Since family businesses cannot be institutionalized, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) need help maintaining sustainability. This study investigated the relationship between institutionalization and corporate communication in family businesses. Corporate communications helps the company grow by professionalizing both internal and external communications.

Information about the demographic characteristics of the study participants was tested with the help of frequency analysis. Demographic characteristics consist of gender and educational status variables.

Participants think that institutionalization is a necessary and critical component for businesses. In order for an institution to grow, provide job opportunities for future generations, benefit the country as an investment, work systematically, progress, and develop its services and products, institutionalization is necessary, and non-institutional companies have less chance against their competitors and may be easier to grow and develop they said.

In family companies, corporate communication, an effective organizational chart, managers should act impartially and fairly, management consultancy should be obtained, training should be organized, the processes in the performance of work should be written and traceable, kinship relations should not be used and assigned duties should be carried out correctly.

Corporate communication improves the company vision, speaks the same language with its employees and competitors, demonstrates the same quality, and increases employee motivation. It also ensures the coordination of work. It increases employees' awareness of responsibility and eliminates unnecessary information pollution. Eliminating the hierarchy within the family prevents unauthorized persons from interfering with the procedure and enables companies to achieve their goals. Institutionalization can work through corporate communication, recognizing deficiencies, and improvement. Every company that wants to become institutionalized must use corporate communication at every step.

The research aims to determine the elements required to determine and increase the institutionalization levels of family companies. The relevant case study is thought to shed light on other future studies.

Corporate communication is exchanging ideas regarding common goals between individuals and groups working in an organization. This allows the development of creative power, solving problems, and sustaining actions. Communication forms the basis of effective management. Corporate communications can help companies keep up with rapidly changing competitive and environmental conditions.

**Keywords:** Family companies, Institutionalization, Corporate communication

## INTRODUCTION

Family businesses are critical in both economic and social life. They constitute an essential part of the country's economy regarding employment and business volume. Their unique management systems and structures are necessary for both economic and social life. However, their lives are concise. According to the research, the biggest reason is that they need to be more institutionalized and pay the necessary attention to this issue. They need to be managed professionally and institutionally to extend their lifespan. Since family businesses cannot be institutionalized, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) need help maintaining sustainability. This study investigated the relationship between institutionalization and corporate communication in family businesses. Corporate communications helps the company grow by professionalizing both internal and external communications.

## THE IMPORTANCE, STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY BUSINESSES

Family businesses comprise many companies worldwide and play an important role in countries' economies and workforce production. According to a report published by the European Commission in 2008, approximately 60% of companies worldwide are family businesses, and more than 70% of companies in Europe are family businesses (Aksoy, 2018, p. 7). Additionally, family businesses there make up nearly half of the European workforce. According to a report published by PwC in 2016, 95% of companies in Türkiye are family businesses, and 75% of publicly traded organizations are family businesses. This indicates family businesses' impact on the global economy (Aksoy, 2018, p. 7).

Family businesses cause internal conflict when they cannot balance family members' logic and emotions (Ak, 2010, p. 52). The events from establishing family companies to their operations are called "phases."

A family company consists of eleven stages (Fındıkçı, 2017, pp. 41-48). Starting a business, achieving success, growth, expansion of ownership, satisfaction, waiting for old successes, searching for system and professionalization, transferring to new generations, and liquidating.

- **Starting a Business Phase:** In this process, called "zero point" in family businesses, the entrepreneur starts the business. To achieve success, one must work hard and strive for it passionately, and it is very important to keep up the work.
- **Achieving Success Phase:** The entrepreneur, who works in a busy work tempo, takes his family members with him and ensures continuity in the workplace. Families' business choices also shape growth.
- **Growth Phase:** The family, whose business ventures are successful, is financially comfortable. This mutual interaction between work and family ensures the progress and development of the business. It is essential to achieve controlled growth during this period.
- **Ownership Expansion Phase:** While family companies work with an intense work tempo, grow, and develop, their turnover and profits increase in this period. There was greater company ownership during this period, and the assets of the entrepreneurial family increased.
- **Satisfaction Phase:** In general, companies that have established a business, become successful, grow and develop, and expanded in terms of ownership have reached the saturation point. What they do and where they go from this point on is very important.
- **Waiting for Old Successes Phase:** In the life curve of family businesses, the satisfaction phase usually marks the top point. After this point, businesses will begin to decline. Businesses that cannot develop a new initiative, a leap, a new initiative, or an innovative idea will fail. During this period, the entrepreneur is generally retrospective. There is nostalgia.
- **System Search and Professionalization Phase:** The necessity of institutionalization is realized. At this point, entrepreneurs should take institutionalization seriously, eliminate their complex structures, and bring their companies into systematic order.
- **Transfer to New Generations:** The last stage of family businesses is transitioning to new generations. Entrepreneurs have now started to hand over their companies to the new generation. This process can be like the revival or reboot of a company.
- **Liquidation Phase:** It is usual for companies to emerge and grow. Family businesses need to have a lifespan as long as possible. The liquidation phase is the most brutal phase of establishing and growing family businesses. There is a sharing of property among family members.

Family companies have different structures as they go through different stages of development since their establishment. Family companies can be categorized according to their partnership structure and development stages (Karpuzoğlu, 2004, pp. 93-124):

▪ **First-Generation Family Companies Owned and Managed by the Entrepreneur:**

First-generation family companies are where the control of a single boss is dominant, and most of the shares and control are in the hands of the entrepreneur (Ateş, 2005, p. 26). Management and ownership are fundamental. Spouse partnership may be possible, but it is generally a result of procedures on paper. The founder makes Management practices and decisions (Çalışkanel, 2018, p. 21). When an entrepreneur dedicates himself to every job, he gets more customers. Company efforts will soon increase, and work will become busier. An entrepreneur transfers some of the existing business to new managers from his family or outside because he cannot manage on his own due to the intensity of the work. A sibling partnership is when two or more siblings have company control and the majority share in growing and developing family businesses. Sibling partnership may be another type of family business (Ateş, 2005, p. 28).

▪ **Growing and Developing Family Businesses (Partnership of Siblings):** Sibling partnerships are generally seen in small and medium-sized businesses. Although this is not said directly, the family's values affect the child's background and make him feel he should be a part of the company. The company has neither initiated a formal process nor established a publicly known system. Work serves only as a tool to strengthen, protect, and integrate family ties (Karpuzoğlu, 2004, pp. 102-103).

▪ **Complex Family Companies (Cousin Partnership) and Continuing Family Companies:** In complex family companies, many shareholders are partners, and the separation of employee shareholders is more evident (Ateş, 2005, p. 31). Formalization is necessary because the management of such businesses is more professional and complex. Departments to collaborate with, authorities, and responsibilities are determined.

### **Essential Characteristics of Family Businesses**

Family businesses have specific characteristics that make them different from others. Karpuzoğlu (2004, p. 20-21). These features have in common that a single family dominates the management and control of a significant part of the company.

Family businesses continue because family values are more important than business values. When family businesses survive for a long time, they plan their activities to benefit society and maintain and improve their positive company image. It is more critical for the company as a whole to succeed than for individuals and departments to succeed on their own.

*Table 1. Essential characteristics of family businesses*

<b>BASIC FEATURES OF FAMILY BUSINESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually at least two generations of the family run the company. Mother-child partnerships, sibling partnerships, cousin partnerships, and continuing partnerships are family businesses that span at least two generations. Family businesses founded by husband and wife are considered family businesses due to their other characteristics, without generation differences.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The family usually supports the company's policies. Most family businesses were established to protect the existence and unity of the family. The family's beliefs and values are very important.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family ties play an important role in selecting managers. Family members that the company owner likes and trusts are often close to the entrepreneur.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children of executives are often involved in company management. Company owners want to get to know the business they intend to leave to their children.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually, the name and prestige of the family is paired with the name and prestige of the company. Therefore, the position of family members in society also affects the position of their companies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The roles of family members in the company also affect their place in the family. Those who are strong in the company and family are more likely to be strong.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working conditions in family businesses can be arranged in a way that does not endanger the health of employees, and flexibility can be provided regarding leave and working hours.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family beliefs and values, relationships in the company, way of doing business. and affects other factors. This creates the company culture.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family businesses appear closed because they are mostly founded by family members. When faced with financial difficulties, these businesses prefer to seek financial support from family members. It is essential not to share company information with others.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In family businesses, managers are usually chosen from relatives. In family businesses, reliability goes beyond expertise. Hiring staff from outside the family while family members are present is not welcome. Family members often have priority in selection and placement of staff.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In family businesses, the top manager and the owner of the company are usually the same person. Company founders do not think of giving their companies to others when they are in a good situation.</li> </ul>

**Source:** Karpuzoğlu, E. (2004). Institutionalization in Growing and Developing Family Companies. Hayat Publications, p. 20-21.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of Family Businesses**

When family businesses are compared to other companies, many differences stand out. Compared to other companies, family businesses grow faster economically. However, their lifespan is shorter. The speed of growth and extinction of family businesses is directly proportional to how they can use their strengths and eliminate their weaknesses. For this reason, family companies should make choices in this direction by knowing their strengths and weaknesses and putting these choices into practice in their management (Akça, 2010, pp. 30-35).

*Table 2. The strengths and weaknesses of family companies*

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
High desire for success and the number of people who take their job seriously,	Institutional problems arising from the involvement of company owners in the business,
Rapid development and growth trends,	Boss's guidance hinders new directions,
The power that comes from family unity and the rapid development of the concept of "we"	Failure or inadequate development of logics such as forecasting, planning, budgeting and reporting in the company,
Not to lose their amateur spirit,	Bosses compete with professionals and tend to belittle them,
Mutual respect and obedience develop faster in top management,	Decreased attractiveness of the company.
Determining the new generation, that is, the candidates who will be managers, in advance and preparing them for this situation.	The determination of the new generation, that is, the candidates who will become managers, and this harms the system.

**Source:** Fındıkçı, İ. (2017). Family Businesses. Istanbul: Alfa Publishing House, p.100.

The purpose of determining the strengths and weaknesses of family companies is to protect their strengths and reduce the effects of their weaknesses. Without leaving the family format, which is essential for companies, They can be institutionalized and reduce their weaknesses (Fındıkçı, 2017, p. 99).

## INSTITUTIONALIZATION

In today's business world, the concept of institutionalization is widely used. Globalization in the early 1990s also affected Türkiye.

Institutionalization refers to the application of specific rules in all types of interactions. In other words, specific rules prevail in a person's individual life, family life, institutions and organizations, societies, and relations between societies. (Fındıkçı, 2017, p. 102).

Institutionalization helps companies create an organizational structure that suits their goals, creates job and job descriptions, creates internal regulations, and authorizes the right people. This means transitioning to professional management (TKYD, 2011, p. 11).

### Institutionalization Process in Family Companies

In family businesses, the family and the company attach importance to institutionalization. Family businesses, like other companies, carry out institutionalization as a process. Institutionalization in family businesses occurs in two stages.

The first stage concerns the family's status, position, and company authority.

The second stage is related to the company's workflow and operations. In the institutionalization phase of the family business, the family needs to solve its internal problems.

The company becomes institutionalized by determining the job descriptions of its employees, determining the person or persons who will make the final decisions of the company, making company-specific rules become a habit, applying unique rules for company management, and applying overtime and holiday rules (Fındıkçı, 2017, pp. 104-105).

Institutionalization can provide the change necessary for long-term success. The most important thing required for family businesses to survive is their institutionalization. Recently, they have made significant progress towards institutionalization. Companies that have completed the institutionalization phase comply with specific standards and procedures. Thus, institutionalized businesses become less dependent on individuals. Companies established solely for economic purposes will not resist these difficulties when they encounter difficulties in the future. Companies gain long-lasting life and power by determining their employees' behavior and continuity levels to make themselves a sustainable community (Koyuncu, 2015, p. 27).

Family companies must have a say in their sectors, regions, and countries to maintain their existence in an age of intense competition. This is only possible with professional management (Altınkaynak, 2007, p. 61). In addition, when people working in family companies make decisions about the changes occurring in the company and the material and emotional consequences of these changes, it becomes challenging to make decisions due to the intense family relations in the company. In these cases, help from professionals is required to make a decision. This example may show the importance of institutionalization (Karpuzoğlu, 2004, p. 126).

### **Corporate Communication Techniques**

We can divide corporate communication techniques into Formal and Informal communication.

- **Formal Communication:** Formal communication defines who will communicate with whom within the institution and how, who has authority on which issues, who will obtain what kind of information, and how they will use this information (Vural & Bat, 2015, p. 144). The purpose of formal communication is to provide the necessary information and understanding for the groups, to create the necessary attitude for the employees of the



institution to be satisfied with their jobs, and to convey the information to the relevant people when needed (Vural & Bat, 2015, p. 144).

**- Informal Communication (Non-Formal Communication):** Informal communication is a type of unofficial communication that occurs intra-institutional or inter-institutional. Since this communication is not official, it is not easy to regulate or control it (Çalışkan, 2016, p. 78).

### **Corporate Communication Tools**

Written, verbal, audio-visual, social media, and electronic communication tools are known as corporate communication tools.

### **The Importance of Corporate Communication in Terms of Institutionalization**

The ability of institutions to communicate effectively requires institutionalization. In institutions with a sound communication system, misunderstandings are eliminated, and healthy communication occurs. (Özcan, 2014, p. 41).

### **METHOD**

The In-Depth Interview technique was used in qualitative research, and Eka Ndt Gözetim Müm was used. San. Tic. Ltd. Ltd. company was used as a case study technique, and the limitation of the research is that it consists of employees of the relevant company.

In this context,

- Is corporate communication important for institutionalization?
- Is there a need for corporate communication methods and tools to ensure and maintain institutionalization?
- What are the difficulties experienced in institutionalization in family businesses?
- Can institutionalization in family companies be achieved through corporate communication management practices? Answers to your questions: It emphasizes the importance of corporate communication in family companies by reflecting the honest opinions of those who participated in the research during the in-depth interview.

### **Purpose and Importance of the Research**

The research aims to determine the elements required to determine and increase the institutionalization levels of family companies. The relevant case study is thought to shed light on other future studies.

### **Assumptions and Limitations of the Research**

In our study, where institutionalization and corporate communication in family companies are discussed, the problem of institutionalization, which is the problem of the research, constitutes an essential problem for all family companies both in our country and the world. However, since keeping the sample this large would create time constraints, high costs, and difficulty in control, the research was limited to Eka Ndt, a small and medium-sized family company operating on the Anatolian Side of Istanbul.

Another limitation is that the majority of employees were working in the field outside the company, which caused difficulties in arranging the appropriate time for the interview. Employees who could not be interviewed in depth answered the interview questions via e-mail. Answering questions in the busy work environment has also created another obstacle.

### **Research Type and Study Group**

It is a qualitative research conducted with the in-depth interview technique to determine the opinions of the people who participated in the study - working in a family business - regarding "institutionalization and corporate communication in family companies." Data collection continued until the "saturation" point was reached without calculating the sample size, and the research was concluded with 14 (fourteen) people working in the company.

### **Data Collection and Data Analysis**

The researcher collected data between 10.04.2019 and 10.05.2019 by conducting individual interviews with the study participants. During the interviews, an interview form was used, which used straightforward and semi-structured questions to guide the interview and help collect information suitable for the research.

The data was analyzed using the descriptive analysis method to organize and explain the results obtained, and the results were collected as a result of interviews in a room where the researcher and the participant were present. The interviews lasted approximately one hour, and the participants were informed about how the study would be conducted. Written interview records were examined.

Validity and reliability were ensured using methods such as peer review (expert review) and participant approval. The data sets were examined to check for any incorrect or missing answers. Since it was not deemed appropriate to use the names of the participants in the study, the participants were numbered.

### **FINDINGS**

Information about the demographic characteristics of the study participants was tested with the help of frequency analysis. Demographic characteristics consist of gender and educational status variables.

When the data was examined, most participants defined institutionalization as businesses carrying out their business without depending on individuals. Participants said that job descriptions in corporate businesses are clear, work is carried out by specific rules, principles, or corporate culture, professionalization is essential, and experts carry out work.

Participants think that institutionalization is a necessary and vital component for businesses. Institutionalization is necessary for an institution to grow, provide job opportunities for future generations, benefit the country as an investment, work systematically, progress, and develop its services and products, and non-institutional companies have less chance against their competitors. They said it may be easier to grow and develop.

Employees, obstacles to institutionalization It is defined as dependence on professionals, old habits, discouragement, indecision, employees not being experts, common goals not being developed, management being unprofessional and non-professional managers not having the necessary knowledge and skills, avoiding the costs of specialization, lack of qualified personnel, insufficient financial resources and lack of necessary personnel.

Regarding what is done for institutionalization and corporate communication in the company they work for, the participants stated that duties, authorities, and responsibilities are determined, new regulations are made to adapt to developing problems, professional help is received from outside, an accessible working environment is provided, and quality management systems by international standards are provided to develop and implement new ideas. I saw it implemented. They stated that regular evaluation meetings, use of social media and media tools, and customer surveys are held to measure the performance of their companies.

## **CONCLUSION**

Family businesses are corporate structures established by an entrepreneur from a family, and the family is involved in most of the business. The role of family businesses in the economy and social life worldwide and Türkiye is crucial. The average life expectancy of family businesses in our country is 25 years. For family businesses to survive for a long time, they must be institutionalized and professionally managed. The ability of businesses to survive in markets where competition is fierce is closely related to their ability to meet the demands and expectations of the market. For family companies to continue their existence, they must adapt

to changing environments and become institutionalized. The most effective method for the growth and sustainability of family companies is institutionalization.

In family companies, corporate communication, an effective organizational chart, managers should act impartially and fairly, management consultancy should be obtained, training should be organized, the processes in the performance of work should be written and traceable, kinship relations should not be used and assigned duties should be carried out correctly.

Considering the contributions of corporate communication to institutionalization, corporate communication should be done in the right way, at the right time, by the right person, to the right target audience, using the right tools. Corporate communication evaluates its target audience, policies, deficiencies, and competitors and makes new arrangements and corrections to address these issues. Corporate communication improves the company vision, speaks the same language with its employees and competitors, demonstrates the same quality, and increases employee motivation. It also ensures the coordination of work. It increases employees' awareness of responsibility and eliminates unnecessary information pollution. Eliminating the hierarchy within the family prevents unauthorized persons from interfering with the procedure and enables companies to achieve their goals. Institutionalization can work through corporate communication, recognizing deficiencies and improving them. Every company that wants to become institutionalized must use corporate communication at every step.

Most participants stated that corporate communication can contribute to the institutionalization of family businesses and that communication is where institutionalization contributes the most to successful family businesses. Corporate communication is exchanging ideas regarding common goals between individuals and groups working in an organization. This allows the development of creative power, solving problems, and sustaining actions. Communication forms the basis of effective management. Corporate communications can help companies keep up with rapidly changing competitive and environmental conditions.

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