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EVALUATING PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES FROM A DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PERSPECTIVE: AN ANALYSIS OF HOLDING AND INVESTMENT COMPANIES IN TÜRKİYE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the extent to which the diversity and inclusion approach is reflected in the corporate policy documents and public relations practices of holding and investment companies operating in Türkiye. Designed as a qualitative case study, the research questions whether corporate commitments to diversity and inclusion remain at a discursive level or translate into concrete communication practices. The sample was determined through criterion sampling among organizations that are members of the UN Global Compact Network Türkiye Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and are listed on the Borsa Istanbul Sustainability Index. Following a three-month ESG score monitoring process, three holding and investment companies (Sabancı Holding, Anadolu Group Holding, Koç Holding) that achieved an overall ESG score of 80 or above and a social category score of 90 or above were included in the study. The dataset consists of 8 diversity and inclusion policy documents and 45 public relations practices compiled from these companies' 2022 sustainability reports. Data were content-analyzed with MAXQDA 24 Analytics Pro and coded according to diversity types, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the social category criteria of ESG. Findings indicate that policy documents concentrate mainly on social-category (demographic) differences and the workforce criterion, whereas public relations practices foreground community-oriented projects and the Quality Education goal. Partial inconsistencies between policy commitments and practice, along with the limited representation of knowledge/skill and value/belief differences,

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are discussed within the framework of diversity washing. The study offers an original perspective for public relations scholarship by combining the multiple-factor diversity approach with sustainability and ESG frameworks.

Keywords: Diversity and Inclusion, Public Relations, Corporate Communication, Sustainable Development Goals, ESG, Diversity Washing

ÇEŞİTLİLİK VE KAPSAYICILIK YAKLAŞIMI AÇISINDAN HALKLA İLİŞKİLER UYGULAMALARININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: TÜRKİYE'DEKİ HOLDİNG VE YATIRIM ŞİRKETLERİ ÜZERİNE BİR ANALİZ

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, çeşitlilik ve kapsayıcılık yaklaşımının Türkiye'deki holding ve yatırım şirketlerinin kurumsal politika belgeleri ile halkla ilişkiler uygulamalarına ne ölçüde yansıdığını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma, kurumların çeşitlilik ve kapsayıcılık taahhütlerinin yalnızca söylemsel düzeyde mi kaldığını yoksa somut iletişim pratiklerine mi dönüştüğünü sorgulayan nitel bir durum çalışması (vaka analizi) olarak tasarlanmıştır. Örneklem, BM Global Compact Network Türkiye Çeşitlilik ve Kapsayıcılık Çalışma Grubu üyesi olan ve Borsa İstanbul Sürdürülebilirlik Endeksi'nde yer alan kuruluşlar arasından ölçüt örnekleme yöntemiyle belirlenmiştir. Üç aylık ESG skor takibi sonucunda toplam ESG skoru 80 ve üzeri, sosyal kategori skoru 90 ve üzeri olan kuruluşlar arasından holding ve yatırım sektöründeki üç şirket (Sabancı Holding, Anadolu Grubu Holding, Koç Holding) araştırmaya dahil edilmiştir. Veri seti, bu kurumların yayımladığı 8 çeşitlilik ve kapsayıcılık politika belgesi ile 2022 yılına ait sürdürülebilirlik raporlarından derlenen 45 halkla ilişkiler uygulamasından oluşmaktadır. Veriler, MAXQDA 24 Analytics Pro programı aracılığıyla içerik analizi yöntemiyle, çeşitlilik türleri, Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma Amaçları (SKA) ve ESG'nin sosyal kategori kriterleri ekseninde kodlanmıştır. Bulgulara göre kurumların politika belgeleri ağırlıklı olarak sosyal kategori farklılıklarına ve iş gücü kriterine odaklanırken, halkla ilişkiler uygulamalarında toplum odaklı projeler ve Nitelikli Eğitim hedefi öne çıkmaktadır. Politika belgeleri ile uygulamalar arasındaki kısmi tutarsızlıklar, bilgi-beceri ile değer-inanç farklılıklarının sınırlı temsili ve taahhütlerin uygulamaya tam olarak yansımaması, bulguların çeşitlilik aklama (diversity washing) kavramı çerçevesinde tartışılmasına zemin hazırlamıştır. Çalışma,

halkla ilişkiler yazınında çok faktörlü çeşitlilik yaklaşımını sürdürülebilirlik ve ESG çerçeveleriyle bir arada incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çeşitlilik ve Kapsayıcılık, Halkla İlişkiler, Kurumsal İletişim, Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma Amaçları, ESG, Çeşitlilik Aklama

INTRODUCTION

Diversity refers to an inclusive perspective that advocates for respect toward individuals' biological, cultural, and environmental differences—such as age, gender, ethnicity, and disability status—and promotes the fair representation of these differences in social life. Inclusivity, on the other hand, extends beyond the mere recognition of these differences; it fundamentally entails integrating them into organizational policies and strategies to ensure equal access to opportunities for all individuals. When addressed together, these two concepts hold a transformative potential toward constructing a fair, participatory, and sustainable social structure. For contemporary organizations, achieving sustainable development goals is not merely a matter of fulfilling legal obligations; it requires the integration of diversity and inclusion principles into every layer of organizational culture. In line with the principle of "leaving no one behind," the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) position the fight against social exclusion, inequality, and discrimination—and the promotion of diversity and inclusion—as a core component of this effort. In this context, it is vital for organizations to develop diversity and inclusion policies that respect human rights, focus on justice, and are shaped by a sense of social responsibility.

In the academic literature, the topic of diversity and inclusion has long been addressed predominantly through the lenses of human resources and organizational behavior, leaving the discipline of public relations relatively in the background. However, public relations serves a strategic function by strengthening an organization's communication with its target audiences, making its social responsibilities visible, and building a sustainable corporate identity. Within this framework, public relations should be evaluated not merely as a technical communication tool, but as a discursive realm where cultural meanings are produced and social transformation is nurtured.

In public relations literature, diversity has generally been examined within limited subfields. Early studies focused heavily on gender issues and progressed within a

feminist theory framework; Hon's (1995) proposal for a feminist public relations theory addressing the discrimination faced by female public relations practitioners, Grunig, Hon, and Toth's (2001) study on gender equality and women's professional status, O'Neil's (2003) research examining the relationship between organizational influence and gender, and Place and Vardeman-Winter's (2018) edited work on leadership and gender in public relations serve as primary examples of this trend. Research focusing on cultural diversity is represented by Sha's (2006) study, which discusses how cultural identities can be addressed within the framework of the excellent public relations theory. Moving from a requisite variety (workforce diversity) perspective, Roberson (2006), Bear, Rahman, and Post (2010), and Ashley and Empson (2012) analyzed organizational diversity along the axes of demographic composition and governance structure. Examining diversity alongside the Sustainable Development Goals, Geiger, Grossman, and Schrader (2019), Zaid et al. (2020), Yarram and Adapa (2021), and Daniel-Vasconcelos, Ribeiro, and Crisóstomo (2022) discussed the topic mostly within corporate governance and finance literature. In Turkey, Kurtuldu and Poyraz (2022) examined the intercultural communication strategies of local governments, Summak (2024) studied the role of cultural symbols in public relations, Bıçakçı and Kuyucu (2024) analyzed the socially oriented restructuring of public relations education, and Demiroğlu (2024) investigated local equality action plans of municipalities.

The common denominator uniting these studies is that diversity is often restricted to a single dimension (mostly gender or demographic composition) and that the focus remains on the internal organizational status of public relations practitioners rather than public relations practices themselves. Departing from this trend, this research builds upon a multi-factor diversity approach to simultaneously examine both internal policy documents—which serve as the legal and political foundation of organizations—and external public relations practices. Furthermore, it evaluates both domains in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals and the social category criteria of ESG.

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate how the diversity and inclusion approach is reflected in the policy documents and public relations practices of holding and investment companies in Turkey by revealing the consistencies or inconsistencies between these two domains. Accordingly, the study seeks answers

to five research questions: (1) Which types of diversity do organizations incorporate?, (2) Which Sustainable Development Goals do organizations address?, (3) Which social category criteria of ESG do organizations include?, (4) What similarities and differences do organizations' policy documents and public relations practices exhibit internally?, and (5) What are the similarities and differences between policy documents and public relations practices.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Identity, Diversity, and Inclusion in a Postmodern Context

The concept of modernity refers to a period in post-Enlightenment Western societies shaped by processes such as industrialization, urbanization, secularization, and democratization; modernism, on the other hand, denotes the intellectual and aesthetic movement accompanying this era. Postmodernism emerged through its critique of modernity's understanding of universal reason, progress, and singular truth, redefining individual identity not as a fixed and holistic entity, but as a plural, fluid, and context-sensitive phenomenon. Within this framework, postmodern identity discussions focus on how individuals construct their identity through social interactions and symbolic processes.

The concept of post-colonialism introduces a perspective that questions relations of power, representation, and othering in post-colonial societies, thereby adding a historical and political dimension to diversity debates. Post-humanism, moving beyond the classical humanist perspective that centers human subjectivity, advocates for the recognition of different forms of existence and subjectivities. The intersection of these theoretical lines is the intersectionality approach: this approach posits that different social categories such as gender, race, class, and disability shape individual experiences not independently, but in an intertwined manner. Intersectionality serves as the primary interpretative framework in this study to evaluate how organizations address different types of diversity together.

Among the fundamental processes underpinning diversity, stereotypes and generalizations, unconscious/implicit bias, and the concepts of discrimination and othering stand out. These processes explain how individuals are perceived through social categories and how these perceptions seep into organizational practices. Furthermore, debates on essentialism versus social constructivism and cultural

relativism versus universalism raise the question of whether diversity should be addressed through fixed categories or in a context-sensitive manner.

Types of Diversity, Sustainability, and the ESG Framework

Two primary approaches stand out in the literature regarding diversity categories and dimensions: the factor approach and the proportions approach. The factor approach is internally divided into the two-category diversity approach (the distinction between visible/invisible or surface-level/deep-level diversity) and the multi-factor diversity approach. Without reducing diversity to a single axis, the multi-factor approach addresses it within a multidimensional structure consisting of social category differences (gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, religion, race, sexual orientation), knowledge and skill differences (knowledge/expertise, capability, experience, education, functional knowledge, development), and value-belief differences (cultural background, ideological beliefs). In this study, the policy documents and public relations practices of organizations were coded based on this multi-factor diversity approach.

Diversity and inclusion are also directly linked to the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To guide organizations, the UN Global Compact Network Turkey Diversity and Inclusion Working Group highlights SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) (UN Global Compact Turkey, 2023). These five goals constitute the second analysis theme of the study.

Another critical framework in corporate sustainability discussions is ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance). ESG provides a non-financial yet measurable framework that evaluates a company's environmental impact, social responsibilities, and governance structure (Nasdaq, 2019). The social dimension of ESG is divided into four sub-criteria: workforce, human rights, community, and product responsibility (LSEG Data & Analytics, 2023), and these four criteria constitute the third analysis theme of the study. In the literature, it is argued that organizations may reflect diversity discourses in their communication materials without concrete goals, which can lead to an organizational legitimization practice termed "diversity washing" (Baker, Larcker, McClure, Saraph, and Watts, 2022). This concept serves as a central point of reference in interpreting the findings of this study.

Diversity and Inclusion Approach in Public Relations

In public relations theory, traces of diversity and inclusion can be traced through the relationship management approach and excellence theory. The excellence theory developed by Grunig (1992) posits that organizations should establish symmetrical, two-way communication with their stakeholders, consider the needs of different publics, and develop strategies tailored to distinct public segments within the framework of the situational theory of publics. This theoretical foundation indicates that diversity should be integrated into public relations practices not merely as a discourse, but also at the level of target audience segmentation and communication strategy.

The importance of public relations practices in terms of diversity and inclusion is discussed along two main axes: the requisite variety (business case for diversity) approach and the co-design approach. While the requisite variety approach argues that diversity is a strategic necessity in terms of corporate performance, innovation, and reputation, the co-design approach emphasizes that diversity and inclusion practices should be developed through a participatory process together with the target audience. However, there are also critiques directed at the diversity and inclusion discourse in public relations practices. These critiques assert that diversity is often restricted to visible and measurable categories (especially gender), that organizations may instrumentalize diversity communication for reputation management and marketing purposes, and that, as a result, the holistic potential of inclusion becomes limited. This study aims to carry these theoretical debates into a testable empirical framework.

METHODOLOGY

Purpose and Questions of the Research

This research aims to comprehensively examine organizations' diversity and inclusion policy documents alongside their diversity and inclusion-focused public relations practices, grounded in the diversity and inclusion approach. In this framework, the alignment between the understanding of diversity committed to and embedded within the corporate culture by organizations, as expressed in their policy documents and public relations practices, was evaluated. The research questions were formulated as follows:

Table 1. Research Questions

Code	Research Questions
RQ1	Which types of diversity do organizations incorporate? (<i>RQ1.1 in policy documents; RQ1.2 in public relations practices</i>)
RQ2	Which Sustainable Development Goals do organizations address? (<i>RQ2.1 in policy documents; RQ2.2 in public relations practices</i>)
RQ3	Which social category criteria of ESG do organizations include? (<i>RQ3.1 in policy documents; RQ3.2 in public relations practices</i>)
RQ4	What are the similarities and differences in organizations' diversity and inclusion criteria? (<i>RQ4.1 among policy documents; RQ4.2 among public relations practices</i>)
RQ5	What are the similarities and differences between organizations' policy documents and public relations practice contents?

Research Design

This study adopts a case study design, one of the qualitative research approaches. A case study is a method that enables an in-depth, multifaceted examination of a specific phenomenon or situation using multiple sources of data (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014; Baxter & Jack, 2008). In this study, the three organizations comprising the sample were treated as individual cases, and the diversity and inclusion policy documents along with the diversity and inclusion-focused public relations practices of each organization were analyzed both individually and comparatively.

Population, Sample, and Limitations

The sample of the study was constructed using criterion sampling, a type of purposeful sampling commonly employed in qualitative research. Criterion sampling is based on the investigation of cases that meet predetermined criteria (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2018). The sample selection process was carried out in three stages. In the first stage, commercial entities that are members of the UN Global Compact Network Turkey Diversity and Inclusion Working Group were identified, and their official websites were searched to verify whether they possessed a diversity and inclusion policy document. In the second stage, entities holding a policy document were filtered among companies listed on the Borsa Istanbul (BIST) Sustainability Index and rated by the Refinitiv (LSEG) sustainability assessment system. During this stage, ESG scores were tracked daily over a three-month period between November 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024.

Out of a total of 34 organizations listed according to sectoral distribution, 12 organizations were identified following the three-month tracking period as having a overall ESG score of 80 or above and a social category score—encompassing performance in workforce, human rights, community, and product responsibility simultaneously—of 90 or above. In the third stage, among these 12 organizations, 3 companies operating in the holding and investment sector (Sabancı Holding, Anadolu Grubu Holding, and Koç Holding) constituted the final sample of the study; the rationale for this limitation is that these three organizations are comparable in terms of their conglomerate/group structure. The public relations practices of certain subsidiaries included in the ESG tracking (e.g., Akbank, Coca-Cola İçecek, Migros) were incorporated into the analysis under the umbrella of their respective parent holdings.

Table 2. Dataset of the Research

Organization	Number of Policy Documents	Public Relations Practices
Sabancı Holding	3 (<i>Declaration of Equality at Work; Board of Directors Diversity Policy; Sabancı Group Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Regulation</i>)	14
Anadolu Grubu Holding	2 (<i>Equal Opportunity Policy; Board of Directors Diversity Policy</i>)	27
Koç Holding	3 (<i>Partnership for the Future Strategy; Together for People; Together for Society</i>)	4
Total	8	45

Data Collection Technique

The study employed document analysis, a qualitative data collection technique. Document analysis is a method based on the systematic examination of written sources (Watch, 2013; Muşmal & Gürbüz, 2018). The organizations' diversity and inclusion policy documents were accessed through their official websites, while their public relations practices were retrieved from 2022 sustainability reports and relevant corporate/NGO websites.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using content analysis via the MAXQDA 24 Analytics Pro software (MAXQDA, 2022). The analysis relies on a code-theme model combining both inductive and deductive elements. The first theme, types of diversity, was structured into 6 main categories and a total of 24 sub-codes derived from the multi-factor diversity approach. The second theme comprises the 5 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 1, 4, 5, 8, 10) designated by the UN Global Compact Network Turkey. The third theme encompasses the 4 sub-criteria belonging to the social category of ESG (workforce, human rights, community, product responsibility). The coding results were categorized to reveal the frequency with which each organization utilized specific themes, forming the basis for comparative analyses both across organizations and between data sources (policy documents vs. public relations practices).

FINDINGS

Types of Diversity in Policy Documents and Public Relations Practices (RQ1)

Upon examining the policy documents, it was observed that all three organizations shaped diversity around social category differences, knowledge and skill differences, and value and belief differences; however, they significantly prioritized social category differences (gender, physical ability, age, religion, race, sexual orientation) among these three dimensions. Sabancı Holding emerged as the organization incorporating all types of diversity most broadly, committing to social category, knowledge-skill, and value-belief differences simultaneously. Anadolu Grubu Holding focused predominantly on social category differences in its policy documents and stood out as the sole organization to explicitly address sexual orientation. Koç Holding, on the other hand, adopted an almost exclusively gender-based understanding of diversity in its policy documents, included knowledge and skill differences to a limited extent, and omitted value and belief differences entirely.

In public relations practices, types of diversity were structured primarily around social category differences as well as knowledge and skill differences, whereas value and belief differences (cultural background, ideological beliefs) present in policy documents were completely absent in practice. Anadolu Grubu Holding

stood out both in terms of the variety of diversity types and the emphasis placed on knowledge-skill differences; Sabancı Holding addressed gender most extensively, framing a significant portion of these practices intersectionally with age. Koç Holding incorporated the gender theme in all of its public relations practices, thereby exhibiting a practice pattern consistent with the narrow scope of diversity articulated in its policy document.

Table 3. Prominent Components of Diversity Types Across Organizations

Organization	Prominent Components in Policy Documents	Prominent Components in Public Relations Practices
Sabancı Holding	Social category + knowledge-skill + value-belief (holistic)	Gender (intersectional with age), limited emphasis on knowledge-skill
Anadolu Grubu Holding	Social category (including sexual orientation)	Broadest scope of diversity types; emphasis on knowledge-skill
Koç Holding	Exclusively gender	Focused on gender across all practices

Sustainable Development Goals (RQ2)

When policy documents were examined within the framework of the SDGs, it was observed that organizations predominantly addressed SDG 5 (Gender Equality), with Sabancı Holding additionally committing to SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) were not included in the policy documents. Anadolu Grubu Holding made no reference to any SDG in its policy documents.

In public relations practices, however, the picture reverses: all five SDGs designated by the UN Global Compact Network Turkey were represented in practices, with SDG 4 (Quality Education) being the most emphasized goal. In addition to Quality Education, Sabancı Holding and Anadolu Grubu Holding incorporated Gender Equality, Reduced Inequalities, and Decent Work and Economic Growth; Sabancı Holding also developed practices addressing No Poverty. All of Koç Holding's practices focused on Gender Equality, accompanied by Reduced Inequalities, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Quality Education. The fact that Anadolu Grubu Holding, which made no mention of SDGs in its policy

documents, represented four SDGs in its public relations practices constitutes a remarkable finding regarding policy-practice consistency.

ESG Social Category Criteria (RQ3)

When policy documents were evaluated in terms of ESG's social criteria, it was determined that all three organizations focused primarily on the workforce criterion; Koç Holding was the only organization to include all four criteria—community, human rights, workforce, and product responsibility—simultaneously. In public relations practices, the order of priority shifts, with organizations engaging most heavily in community-oriented practices, followed by workforce, human rights, and product responsibility, respectively. Sabancı Holding and Anadolu Grubu Holding expanded the ESG criteria that remained limited in their policy documents (only workforce or workforce-human rights) to encompass all four criteria in their public relations practices. Koç Holding, on the other hand, was the sole organization that consistently addressed all four criteria in both its policy documents and its practices.

Inter-Organizational Similarities and Differences (RQ4)

Among policy documents, the most prominent common denominator is that diversity is defined predominantly through social category (demographic) differences. Differences emerge in the breadth of scope: while Sabancı Holding adopts a multidimensional understanding of diversity, Koç Holding largely restricts diversity to gender. Among public relations practices, Anadolu Grubu Holding stands out regarding the scope of diversity types, Sabancı Holding in terms of reflecting an intersectional approach in practice, and Koç Holding through the consistency of its gender focus.

Comparison of Policy Documents and Public Relations Practices (RQ5)

A comparison between policy documents and public relations practices reveals three important patterns. First, SDG 5 (Gender Equality), which is most emphasized in policy documents, is replaced by SDG 4 (Quality Education) in practices; this demonstrates that committed priorities do not directly overlap with priorities reflected in communication. Second, value and belief differences (cultural background, ideological beliefs) along with social category components such as religion, race, and ethnicity present in policy documents were not translated into public relations practices; furthermore, the topic of sexual orientation committed

to in Anadolu Grubu Holding's policy document found no counterpart in its practices. Third, regarding ESG social criteria, the scope kept narrow in policy documents (mostly workforce only) expands in public relations practices to include community, human rights, and product responsibility. When evaluated together, these three patterns indicate that organizations' public relations practices partially exceed commitments in policy documents; however, this expansion does not cover all diversity dimensions, and low-visibility, hard-to-measure dimensions (value-belief differences, sexual orientation, religion, race) are marginalized in both documents and practices.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the extent to which and how the diversity and inclusion approach is reflected in the corporate policy documents and public relations practices of holding and investment companies in Turkey. The findings reveal that organizations' diversity and inclusion commitments remain largely restricted to social category differences and a workforce perspective; knowledge-skill and particularly value-belief differences remain secondary in policy documents and virtually invisible in public relations practices. This indicates that organizations limit inclusion to individuals' external and easily measurable identity traits, staying distant from a multidimensional understanding of inclusion that encompasses internal experiences and value systems.

Partial inconsistencies between policy documents and public relations practices—especially the lack of practice reflection for some committed SDG and ESG criteria, or conversely, the emergence of goals in practice that are absent in policy documents—provide a foundation for discussing the findings within the framework of "diversity washing" (Baker et al., 2022). The fact that organizations adopt a limited understanding of diversity yet present it with an impression of broader inclusion in communication materials suggests that public relations practices may serve as strategic tools for reputation management rather than genuine social transformation. This interpretation also aligns with "decoupling" debates in organizational theory literature, which examine the divergence between corporate discourse and organizational practice.

When compared with existing literature, the findings display both parallels and unique differences. In public relations literature, diversity has generally been

addressed along the gender axis and through the internal organizational status of public relations practitioners (Hon, 1995; Grunig, Hon, & Toth, 2001; O'Neil, 2003; Edwards & Hodges, 2011; Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018). This study departs from the literature by analyzing public relations practices themselves through a multi-factor diversity approach based on externally oriented communication content. Studies combining SDGs and diversity have typically focused on board diversity and financial performance relationships (Zaid et al., 2020; Yarram & Adapa, 2021; Daniel-Vasconcelos, Ribeiro, & Crisóstomo, 2022); this research offers a distinct unit of analysis by addressing SDGs at the level of corporate communication content. Compared to national literature conducted specifically on local governments and public institutions (Kurtuldu & Poyraz, 2022; Demiroğlu, 2024), conducting this study on private sector holding structures serves as a distinct contribution.

The research was limited to three holding companies selected via criterion sampling; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all commercial entities in Turkey. Furthermore, data sources were restricted to corporate-published policy documents and sustainability reports, which do not allow for direct observation of the actual, ground-level implementation of these documents.

In light of these limitations, several recommendations can be offered for future research. First, examining diversity and inclusion practices not only through self-declared content but also via field research supported by employee and stakeholder interviews could test policy-practice consistency more robustly. Second, comparative studies covering organizations across different sectors (e.g., banking, manufacturing, retail) could reveal the impact of sectoral differences on diversity discourse. Finally, research focusing on the concepts of diversity washing and woke-washing—which remain relatively understudied in Turkey—could shed deeper light on the tension between corporate communication and social responsibility.

In conclusion, this study makes an original contribution to the literature by treating the diversity and inclusion approach not merely as an internal strategic goal, but as a holistic corporate communication issue linked to the Sustainable Development Goals and ESG social criteria. The findings demonstrate that major conglomerate structures in Turkey translate their diversity and inclusion discourses into

practice in a largely limited and selective manner; thus, the transformative potential of the public relations discipline in this domain is currently only partially realized.

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