



# SOSYAL MUCIT ACADEMIC REVIEW



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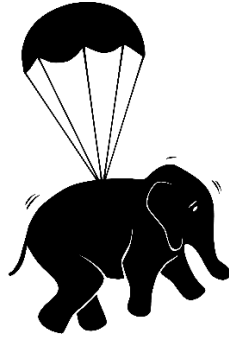
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AND ORGANIZATIONS**”



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# SOSYAL MUCİT ACADEMIC REVIEW



SOSYAL MUCİT ACADEMIC REVIEW  
SMAR®

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**Sosyal Mucit Academic Review (SMAR)**, yılda dört kez yayınlanan (Mart, Temmuz, Ekim ve Aralık) çift kör hakemli uluslararası hakemli bir dergidir. Dergi kapsamında özellikle toplum, ekonomi, politika, eğitim ve kuramlar ile ilgili kavramsal, kuramsal ve nitel çalışmalara yer verilmesi hedeflenmektedir. Bunun temel nedeni, SMAR'ın sadece akademisyenler, yüksek lisans ve doktora öğrencileri değil aynı zamanda toplumdaki bireylerin anlayabileceği makaleler yayınlayabilme amacından ileri gelmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra dergi kapsamına giren nicel çalışmalar da kabul edilmektedir. Derginin dili hem İngilizce hem de Türkçedir ve Türkçe makalelerin genişletilmiş İngilizce özete sahip olması gerekmektedir.

**Sosyal Mucit Academic Review (SMAR)** is a double-blind peer review international refereed journal published four in a year (March, July, October and December). This journal aims at publishing conceptual, theoretical and qualitative studies related to society, economics, politics, education and institutions. The main reason for this aim stems from publishing studies that are understood by not only academicians, graduate and PhD students, but also individuals and practitioners in society. In addition, quantitative studies within the scope of the journal have been accepted. In addition, quantitative studies within the scope of the journal have been accepted. The language of this journal is both English and Turkish, and the Turkish articles need to have an extended English abstract.

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Dear Readers,

Sosyal Mucit Academic Review (SMAR) SMAR is glad to present the fifth volume and first issue to the readers. The SMAR continues to increase its committee members with national and international participants day by day.

As it is known, "Sosyal Mucit" (in English: Social Inventor) refers to the individuals who have systematic perspectives on the challenges that societies face in the field of politics, economics, sociology, technology and environment. The main understanding of a "Sosyal Mucit" as an individual is to diagnose social problems and suggest potential solutions by creating a link between scholarly discussion and society. For this reason, SMAR aims at creating systematic knowledge by raising critical questions and exploring the potential answers to the questions. I indicate the aforementioned questions as follows:

- 1) What is the problem?
- 2) Why is the problem important?
- 3) What is your suggestion to overcome the problem?

These questions guide the potential authors of the SMAR to structure their research. I emphasise them as critical questions because a paper's clarity and communication are important to reaching more academic and non-academic individuals. I hope the SMAR journal will achieve its aims day by day. Having adopted the aforementioned aims, the journal publishes five articles on this issue. Within these articles, the authors focus on the topics of "Gaining Competitive Advantage in SMEs", "Enhancing Organizational Sustainability", "Understanding the Why and How of Entrepreneurs", "Intersectionality of Gender Pay Gap among Women Knowledge Workers" and "Gender-Based Digital Violence Against Women".

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and also, we look forward to seeing your contribution to the SMAR journal.

With kindest regards,

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erhan AYDIN, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruoqi GENG and Dr. Mushfiqur Rahman

Sevgili Okurlar

Sosyal Mucit Academic Review, beşinci cilt birinci sayısını sizlere takdim etmekten mutluluk duyuyoruz. SMAR ulusal ve uluslararası katılımcılarla her geçen gün kadrosunu geliştirmeye devam etmektedir.

Bilindiği üzere SMAR; politika, ekonomi, sosyoloji, teknoloji ve çevre gibi toplumsal konularda sistematik bakış açısına sahip bireyleri sosyal mucit olarak adlandırmaktır. Sosyal Mucit'in temel hedefi, akademik tartışma konuları ile toplum arasında bir bağ kurarak toplumsal sorunları tespit etmek ve bu sorunlara karşı çözüm önerileri geliştirmektir. Bu bağlamda SMAR, sistematik bilgi oluşturmaya amaçlamaktadır. Bu amacı gerçekleştirebilmek için SMAR kritik sorunları gündeme getiren ve bu sorunlara çözüm önerisi sunan araştırmalara yer vermektedir. Söz konusu araştırmalara ait araştırma soruları şu üç ana kapsama odaklanmalıdır;

- 1) Problem nedir?
- 2) Bu problem neden önem arz ediyor?
- 3) Bu problemi aşmak için çözüm öneriniz nedir?

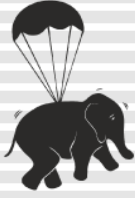
Yazar adayları bu araştırma sorularını rehber edinerek çalışmalarını yapılandırabilirler. Soruları özellikle vurguluyorum çünkü dergiye gönderilecek olan makalelerin yalnızca akademik camiaya değil aynı zamanda toplumsal tabana da ulaşmasını önemsemekteyiz. Umarız her geçen gün SMAR dergisi hedeflerine emin ve sağlam adımlarla ulaşır. Bu amaç ve vizyon doğrultusunda SMAR'ın bu sayısında beş makale yer almaktadır. Bu makalelerde, yazarlar "KOBİ'lerde Rekabet Avantajı Elde Etmek", "Örgütsel Sürdürülebilirliği Artırma", "Girişimcilerin Nedenini ve Nasılını Anlamak", "Kadın Bilgi Çalışanlarında Cinsiyete Dayalı Ücret Eşitsizliğinin Kesişimselliği" ve "Kadına Yönelik Toplumsal Cinsiyet Temelli Dijital Şiddet" konularına odaklanmışlardır.

Sayıyı okumaktan keyif almanızı diliyoruz ve SMAR dergisine katkı sağlamanızı dört gözle bekliyoruz.

En içten dileklerimizle,

Doç. Dr. Erhan AYDIN, Doç. Dr. Ruoqi Geng ve Dr. Mushfiqur Rahman





## *Organizational Ambidexterity, Digital Transformation, and Strategic Agility for Gaining Competitive Advantage in SMEs\**

F. Oben Uru<sup>1</sup> Ebru Gozukara<sup>2</sup> Ali Anıl Unsal<sup>3</sup>

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the effects of strategic agility and environmental dynamism on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and digital transformation and competitive advantage in small-scale SMEs. A quantitative research method is used in the study. The research population is the managers of 17451 small-scale SMEs in the wholesale and retail trade sector within the provincial borders of Istanbul, which employ less than 50 employees annually and whose annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet does not exceed 25 million Turkish Liras according to the data of the end of 2020. An online survey was sent to the managers of 450 small-scale SMEs reached by convenience sampling method and the data obtained from 366 valid surveys were analyzed through the Smart PLS program. According to the research results, organizational ambidexterity and digital transformation are positively related to competitive advantage. In addition, it is determined that digital transformation has a partial mediating role on the relationship between small-scale SMEs' ambidexterity and competitive advantage, and strategic agility has a moderating role on this relationship. On the other hand, it is concluded that environmental dynamism does not have a moderating role on the relationship between small-scale SMEs' ambidexterity and competitive advantage.

**Keywords:** organizational ambidexterity, digital transformation, competitive advantage, strategic agility, environmental dynamism

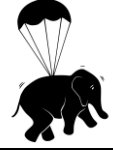
\* This study was approved on 07/09/2021 by the Ethics Committee of Istanbul Arel University (DECN-08\_2021/12) and adheres to the Turkish Higher Education Institutions Codes for the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research. The study was derived from a part of Ali Anıl UNSAL's (2022) Ph.D. Thesis entitled "Investigation of the Effects of Organizational Ambidexterity and Digital Transformation on Competitive Advantage in SMEs under the Moderating Roles of Strategic Agility and Environmental Hostility", conducted under the supervision of Prof. Dr. F. Oben ÜRÜ at Istanbul Arel University Graduate School of Education.

\* This study is an extended and revised version of the paper titled "Investigating the Effects of Strategic Agility and Environmental Dynamism on the Relationship between Organizational Ambidexterity and Digital Transformation and Competitive Advantage in SMEs " published in the 31st National Management and Organization Congress on September 21-23, 2023.

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# ***KOBİ'lerde Rekabet Avantajı Elde Etmek için Örgütsel Çift Yönlülük, Dijital Dönüşüm ve Stratejik Çeviklik***

## **Özet**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, stratejik çevikliğin ve çevresel dinamizmin, örgütsel çift yönlülük ve dijital dönüşüm ile rekabet avantajı ilişkisindeki etkilerini KOBİ'lerde irdelemektir. Çalışmada, nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma evreni, 2020 yılı sonu verilerine göre İstanbul il sınırları içerisindeki 50 kişiden az yıllık çalışan istihdam eden ve yıllık net satış hasılatı ya da mali bilançosu 25 Milyon Türk Lirasını aşmayan ve toptan ve perakende ticaret sektöründe yer alan 17451 küçük ölçekli KOBİ'lerin yöneticileridir. Kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle ulaşılan 450 küçük ölçekli KOBİ'lerin yöneticilerine çevrimiçi anket gönderilmiş ve geçerli sayılan 366 anketten elde edilen veriler Smart PLS programı aracılığıyla analiz edilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre, örgütsel çift yönlülük ve dijital dönüşüm ile rekabet avantajının pozitif yönde ilişkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca, dijital dönüşümün, KOBİ'lerin çift yönlülüğü ve rekabet avantajı ilişkisinde kısmi aracı rol üstlendiği ve stratejik çevikliğin ise bu ilişkide düzenleyici rolü olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Buna karşın, çevresel dinamizmin, KOBİ'lerin çift yönlülüğü ve rekabet avantajı ilişkisinde düzenleyici rolünün olmadığı sonucuna varılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** örgütsel çift yönlülük, dijital dönüşüm, rekabet avantajı, stratejik çeviklik, çevresel dinamizm



## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the great change after the COVID-19 pandemic, especially small-scale SMEs have started to look for ways to survive and keep up with the digitalized world. Both in our country and all over the world, SMEs are of great importance in terms of both quantity and quality in the economic system. SMEs have important roles in healthy and continuous growth, increasing the level of development and welfare of the people. New and different business lines and professions have emerged through the realization of production with different techniques under the influence of technological developments, and the ability of SMEs to adapt to these innovations and capture change emerges as a key factor in their survival. Although this change may initially seem to reduce the need for manpower, it is an inevitable fact that the need for people who can ensure this transformation will increase, as well as the need for new regulations in the field of labor and social security. Concepts such as the Internet of Things, cloud computing, and augmented reality are frequently used concepts in SMEs experiencing digital transformation. The development of these new technologies contributes to the development of digital transformation at the same rate. In evolutionary models of organizational forms and technologies, discussions of the choice between exploration and exploitation are framed in terms of balancing the twin processes of variation and selection. Effective selection among forms, routines, or practices is essential to survival, but so also is the generation of new alternative practices, particularly in a changing environment. Because of the links among environmental turbulence, organizational diversity, and competitive advantage, the evolutionary dominance of an organizational practice is sensitive to the relation between the rate of exploratory variation reflected by the practice and the rate of change in the environment (March, 1991) Today, when SMEs frequently ask the question of how to be effective and efficient, the use, form, and timing of information within the organization is of great importance. SMEs have the leading role in capturing change and spreading it throughout the society. The vast majority of enterprises are far from the mission of capturing and leading change, adapting it to business processes, and ensuring its ownership throughout the enterprise.

Digital transformation of SMEs should not be seen as a random task but should be managed by individuals with a strategic perspective. Digital transformation should not be left to the responsibility of a single person or department, but steps should be taken to ensure that it is adopted and implemented by the entire organization (Berghaus and Back, 2016). It is seen that there is a gap in the literature in terms of studies in which digital transformation is different from the concept of digital technology, its definition and components are revealed, and the relationship between this concept and different variables is revealed (Morakanyane et al., 2017).

It would be an incomplete definition to express the digital transformation of SMEs only as the redesign of business processes. It would be more comprehensive to consider digital transformation from a more holistic perspective and to see it as the organizational structure, organizational culture, customer service, human resources, sales, and production operations that



SMEs are affected as a whole. Digital transformation that is not realized or owned in one or more of these concepts will negatively affect the whole of that structure (Henriette et al., 2016).

Knowing the skills, abilities, and technology to create a competitive advantage and be one-step ahead of competitors does not mean anything on its own. It is necessary to know when and how to use which skill or technology to realize the opportunities in the market and have them before their competitors. Skills or technology that are not used at the right time and in the right way will create a disadvantageous situation for SMEs, let alone a competitive advantage. The skill should be developed and made effective with technology and used at the right time to be one-step ahead of competitors at the point of making a difference.

Each SME's reaction to an opportunity in the market and the time it takes to absorb it varies. Reducing this time and prioritizing the opportunity is important in creating a competitive advantage. The skills, abilities, and technology alone may not be sufficient in this regard. It is very important to know which one or which one will be used and which technology will take a step forward. The strategic mind comes into play at this point and decides how the business will react, what to use, and when to use it. However, strategy formulation alone is not enough; the ability to implement these strategies and the advantages they possess is critical in creating a competitive advantage (Rosing and Zacher, 2017). Organizational ambidexterity has been defined as the ability to use skills simultaneously to achieve goals harmoniously and efficiently (Moreno-Luzon and Pasalo, 2011).

While there are many studies in the literature investigating the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and digital transformation (Bråthen et al., 2021); it is seen that there is a lack of studies investigating the effects of various moderating variables on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and digital transformation with a competitive advantage as a whole in a single model. In this respect, this study aims to fill this gap in the literature by investigating whether strategic agility and environmental dynamism have moderation effects on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity, digital transformation, and competitive advantage.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1. Organizational Ambidexterity**

In the post-pandemic competitive environment, SMEs need to use their human, technological, and information resources effectively and efficiently. At the same time, SMEs should design their short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategies integrated with innovative processes and seek ways to benefit from these integrated strategies to gain new competencies and markets. In today's world, creating competitive advantage is only possible through the selection and successful implementation of the right strategy. Being able to correctly build the relationship between gaining competitive advantage and the right strategy formation, selection and implementation also means being 'ambidextrous' (Probst and Raisch, 2005).



Frequent and rapid changes in environmental conditions cause SMEs to have trouble in decision-making processes. Structures that are not only innovative but also pioneering, creative, active, and able to approach problems from different points of view are one step ahead of others. SMEs that not only develop strategies but also differentiate these strategies and have the ability to use several or more of them at the same time penetrate the market they operate in more than their competitors and gain a competitive advantage. SMEs need this competency, referred to as organizational ambidexterity, to ensure sustainability, to achieve medium-term and long-term goals, and to reach financial targets faster and more easily. Duncan (1976) first mentioned this concept in the literature and introduced the concept as the harmonization of management competencies in ambidextrous structures simultaneously with productivity and innovation (Hughes, 2018). Ambidexterity is defined in the literature as the ability to use both hands quickly and equally (Bodwell and Chermack, 2010). Organizational ambidexterity refers to the flexibility and efficiency of organizations in adapting to change. While the ability to use one or more skills at the same time means ambidexterity, organizational ambidexterity is the simultaneous execution of innovation and strategies to achieve short and long-term goals (Gibson and Birkinshaw, 2004).

In the literature, ambidexterity is initially defined as the ability to be harmonious and efficient in the operations carried out by the organization after Duncan (Rosing and Zacher, 2017, p.696). Later, as a result of the research on the subject, this concept is expanded and updated as the ability of organizations to do two different jobs at the same time (Moreno-Luzon and Pasalo, 2011, p.928). Organizational ambidexterity is generally considered as two dimensions in the literature. The first dimension is exploratory strategies and the other dimension is beneficiary strategies. The expression of ambidexterity as organizational ambidexterity is possible by balancing the two dimensions of the concept to the same extent (Lavikka et al., 2015, p.1145; Fourné et al., 2019, p.568). At this point, what is meant to be expressed by balance is the capabilities of the human resources that organizations have.

Contextually, ambidexterity involves the ability of everyone in the organization to think and act in multiple ways at the same time (Gibson and Birkinshaw, 2004, p.214). In the literature, there are many studies (Preda, 2014; Junni et al., 2015; Clauss et al., 2021) pointing to the positive relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Organizational ambidexterity is positively related to competitive advantage.

In addition, it is seen that there is a gap in the literature in this field and that there is a very limited number of studies on the ambidexterity of organizations and their digital transformation, which has become a necessity in almost every field, especially with the pandemic process. In this context, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Digital transformation is positively related to organizational ambidexterity.



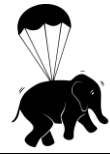
## 2.2. Digital Transformation

While all business processes, industrial components, and entire industries are changing with digital transformation, organizations are trying to adapt to this change. Digital transformation means that organizations produce products and give services by taking advantage of digital transformation. Digital technologies help organizations to reduce their costs, achieve above-average profits, gain competitive advantage, and stay one-step ahead of their competitors.

Digital transformation implies a comprehensive and detailed transformation in SMEs, including business processes, organizational culture and structure, human resources, and customer relations. In the face of such a profound and comprehensive change in businesses, redesigning all processes can have a disruptive effect and as a natural consequence, resistance to change can occur within the business. Digital transformation or digital technologies alone are not enough to realize this change. This transformation needs to be supported by different, sustainable, and measurable strategies that create a competitive advantage (Kofler, 2018). Businesses need to have digital transformation strategies that help them achieve their goals, enable them to continue their activities in the long term, reduce the risk of failure, and include planning, organizing, leading, and controlling stages, which are functions of management. SMEs that make use of information technology infrastructures, technologies such as virtual reality, or software programming while implementing these strategies are one step ahead in both capturing change quickly and ensuring that it is realized within the business.

SMEs can implement digital transformation in different ways. At this point, using a specific roadmap accompanied by a centralized strategy can help avoid confusion across SMEs (Fitzgerald et al., 2014). To diversify this situation, while a different business realizes its digital transformation at the point of providing feedback to the customer in after-sales service by using social media more actively, another business can include digital transformation from a different unit and in a different way by minimizing the need for human resources and starting to perform some or all of the production by robots supported by artificial intelligence. In this case, it is important to ensure that the planning, execution, and control of digital transformation carried out by different units and individuals are implemented in line with the chosen strategy.

Digital transformation is an effort to maximize efficiency by incorporating digital technologies and developments into business processes (Liu et al., 2011, p.1728). Schuchmann and Seufert (2015, p.31) use the term “digital transformation” to refer to the reorganization of technology and business processes to reach both suppliers and consumers using digital technologies in a way that meets all their needs and requirements. When the concepts of digital transformation and digitalization are examined in the literature, it is understood that there is a confusion of meaning and there are problems in terms of when and where to use which concept. Digitalization and new technologies that develop as a natural consequence are phenomena that facilitate and contribute to the digital transformation of organizations. Considering the advantages it provides to organizations, ensuring that digital transformation is realized and



owned throughout the organization is among the primary duties of managers. The decisions to be made about when and how digital transformation will be carried out and at what level are important for the organization to create competitive advantage and achieve success. In this context, research shows that with digital transformation, problem-solving, fast decision-making, and making maximum use of human talents become much easier and this situation reflects positively on the competitive advantage of the organization. These arguments suggest the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Digital transformation is positively related to competitive advantage.

### **2.3. Competitive Advantage**

Gaining a competitive advantage is extremely important for SMEs and especially for new market entrants. In this period of intense and ruthless competition, companies attach importance to R&D activities and innovative product and service development to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Firms that sell more products and services than their competitors sell have more favorable costs and as a result, earn above-average profits are defined as firms with competitive advantage. The basis of the concept of competitive advantage is that companies have a value or skill that other companies do not have and that they have the key to success in the market and the ability to sustain it. Competitive advantage is defined as an organization's unique position against its competitors in the market in which it competes (Hofer and Schendel, 1978, p.64). Competitive advantage is one of the competencies that organizations must have to become advantageous against their competitors in the sector. This advantage is above the average profit of the organizations' competitors in the market and also refers to sustainable profit (Fleisher and Bensoussan, 2003, p.2).

Creating competitive advantage can be achieved by differentiating or redesigning products and processes. SMEs are in a race to be one step ahead in intensely competitive markets, not only to catch the change but also to make a difference in leading the change. By developing innovative strategies to attract and retain consumers in the long term, SMEs can increase their market share and achieve their long-term goals. Gaining competitive advantage and financial concepts such as profitability, sustainability, healthy cash flow, efficiency, and productivity are closely and linearly related.

For SMEs operating in geographies where uncertainty, competition, and financial and political factors are difficult to predict, it is of key importance to be aware of their competencies and skills and to be able to use the advantages they possess to create a competitive advantage. Businesses that do not stick to a specific strategy, are flexible, and can make quick decisions are more long-lasting than others, and the share they get from the market they are in increases at the same rate owing to the competitive advantage they gain. Managers who have the main goals of sustainable success, above-average profits, and customer satisfaction have the duty and responsibility to develop and implement flexible strategies and at the same time to check whether these strategies create a competitive advantage.



The concepts of creativity and innovation are among the indispensable concepts for companies that want to gain competitive advantage. Companies that internalize these concepts will be one step ahead in creating products and services and achieving quality. Businesses with competitive advantage include knowledge and innovation-oriented structures that have a modern, innovative perspective, develop and disseminate knowledge, and support a learning work environment (Gil-Gomez et al., 2020, p.2735). The process of organizational development refers to the absorption, sharing, and redevelopment of the knowledge created by human resources elements in line with the organizational culture to provide a competitive advantage within the organization. This process of organizational development is of vital importance for achieving competitive advantage (Stähle and Grönroos, 2000). In addition to this, the evaluation of the talents of the human resources of organizations by revealing their capabilities will be the basis for the development of the organization on the one hand and its ambidexterity on the other (Lavikka et al., 2015; Fourné et al., 2019). In this respect, based on the idea that digital transformation can play an important role on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage in the digital age we are in, leads to the following hypothesis:

**H4:** Digital transformation mediates the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage.

#### **2.4. Strategic Agility**

SMEs attach great importance to efficiency and information sharing in today's conditions, where market dynamics and business processes are changing rapidly and rapid decision-making and the ability to make a decision when necessary is the key to being one step ahead of others. Even businesses with redesigned business processes, large market shares, and profitability ratios above the sector average have faced the loss of their success and financial ratios due to their inability to catch the change or react in time. Developing strategies to reduce costs and focusing only on how to produce more and faster is not enough to provide competitive advantage and profitability, especially for small-scale SMEs. In addition to all these; flexibility in strategy development and change, quick adaptability to changes in the environment, developing effective strategies as a result of accurate analysis of opportunities and threats in the external environment, agility, and easy adaptability are also required.

When the concept of agility is examined in detail in the literature, it is seen that researchers explain the concept from different perspectives. An example of these different perspectives is the definition of agility as a capability that enables businesses to design their processes accordingly against rapid changes in environmental conditions and/or customer demands and needs (Braunscheidel and Suresh, 2009). According to another point of view, agility is not only the ability of businesses or individuals but is also more comprehensively related to the establishment of coherent integrated strategies and systems (Brannen and Doz, 2012). If we need to express agility not on an individual basis but on a business basis, it can be expressed as





the ability to have flexible sustainable integrated strategies that can adapt not only to business models or internal activities but also to the external environment.

Businesses with strategic agility can react instantly to the sudden changes, and rise and fall of the market they are in, while at the same time, they do not hesitate to incorporate practices that can gain competitive advantage. For this reason, strategic agility is the ability of organizations to adapt to change, to see opportunities in the market and evaluate them before their competitors, and to have the ability to update their existing plans according to continuous changes (Battistella et al., 2017, p.71).

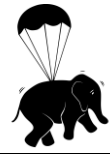
Strategic agility refers to the ability of organizations to quickly adapt to uncertainties. Some researchers have defined strategic agility as the capacity of an organization to redirect its resources within a plan to create value. Ahammad et al. (2020, p.1), on the other hand, defined the concept as the ability to reinvent the strategy affected by external change. In essence, strategic agility requires developing strategic perception and making quick decisions (Brannen and Doz, 2012, p.90). Strategic agility allows organizations to respond to, adapt to, and implement change. As a natural consequence, an increase in financial performance and competitive advantage can be achieved. In the literature, it is seen that strategic agility significantly strengthens the capabilities of the organization by capturing emerging opportunities and has a positive impact on competitive advantage (Chan et al., 2017). In this respect, the following hypothesis is advanced to examine whether strategic agility strengthens or weakens the relationship between organizational duality and competitive advantage or the direction of the relationship:

**H<sub>5</sub>:** Strategic agility moderates the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage.

## 2.5. Environmental Dynamism

Businesses are in constant communication and interaction with their environment by nature. As a natural consequence of this situation, which is expressed as an open system, if businesses cannot adapt to the changes in their environment on time, their ability to continue their activities in the long term is jeopardized. Environmental dynamism is related to how often and how factors such as economic, political, environmental, and physical factors occurring in the external environment of businesses change (Chan et al., 2016, p.386). Changes in the external environment can be expressed in terms of changes in customer needs and demands, technology, or the business models of effective competitors in the market.

When it comes to dynamism, the first thing that comes to mind is change. However, when the meaning of this term is examined in depth, the intensity of this change, in which direction and how it occurs, and how it is managed also emerge as important components of the concept (Jiao et al., 2011). Environmental dynamism can also be defined as the degree of unpredictable change in the external environment (Achrol and Stern, 1988). In situations where change is



rapid and drastic and uncertainty and complexity prevail, businesses may experience difficulties in decision-making, strategy development, and implementation. Dynamic processes lead to uncertainty and ambiguity, which in turn cause difficulties in decision-making processes. Managers who experience problems in decision-making processes as a result of dynamism give more importance to information and technology. They try to make uncertainty more predictable through the possibilities provided by technology and the knowledge created both inside and outside the organization. Decision-making processes supported by information and technology reduce uncertainty and allow the gap between the predicted and actual situation to close or even to be realized in the same way. Environmental dynamism has many elements. Examples include extreme volatility in prices, rapid changes in legislative practices, and social and political environments.

An uncertain environment resulting from environmental dynamism can lead to some negative situations for managers not only in decision-making but also in managing the human element and psychologically. The necessity of making quick and right decisions can stress managers, and it is often not easy to manage this stress along with the resistance to change within the organization. When managers delegate their responsibilities within the business to employees who have proven their competence, the burden of responsibility and stress they take on will decrease and in return, they will be able to get feedback in the form of commitment to the organization, superior performance, and effort, and as a natural consequence of this situation, the rate of success in dynamic environments will increase.

In short, environmental dynamism is the frequency of changes in customer demands, technology, competitive structure, and economic, social, and political policies in the environment in which the firm operates and has a market (Ürü Sanı et al., 2016). Environmental dynamism relates to dimensions of the external environment characterized by “changes in technology, differences in customer preferences, and fluctuations in product demand or material supply” (Chan et al., 2016, p.386).

The rate, speed, extent, and predictability of environmental change should be monitored carefully by organizations. Environmental dynamism refers to the degree of unpredictable change in both the internal and external environment of the organization (Achrol and Stern, 1988, p.37). Research indicates that the competitive advantage of organizations decreases in business environments where environmental dynamism and thus environmental uncertainty are high (Ürü Sanı et al., 2016). In this framework, the following hypothesis is formulated to examine whether environmental dynamism strengthens or weakens the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage or the direction of the relationship:

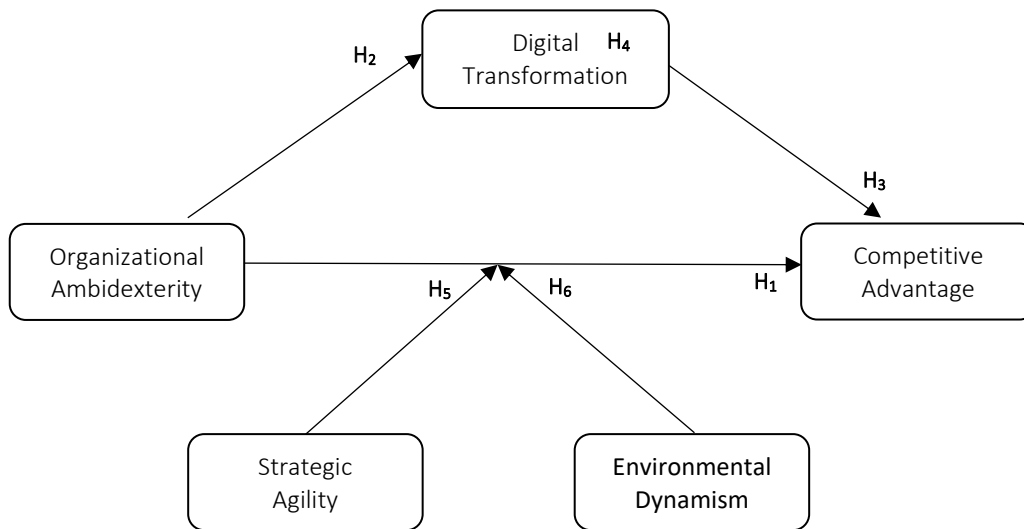
**H<sub>6</sub>:** Environmental dynamism moderates the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage.



### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, which aims to examine the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and digital transformation and competitive advantage under the moderating roles of strategic agility and environmental dynamism, the research model in Figure 1, which includes the hypotheses put forward by explaining the rationales in the theoretical framework, is established.

Figure 1. Research Model



The research population is the managers of 17451 small-scale SMEs in the wholesale and retail trade sector within the provincial borders of Istanbul, which employ less than 50 employees annually and whose annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet does not exceed 25 Million Turkish Liras. This study includes a cross-sectional study and convenience sampling method is preferred for reasons such as time-cost and pandemic conditions. In this framework, online questionnaires were sent to a total of 450 enterprises between August and November 2021 in a way that one questionnaire was sent to each enterprise between August and November 2021, taking into account the sample sizes that should be drawn from the population sizes at 95% confidence interval as recommended by Krejcie and Morgan (1970, p.607-610) and Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan (2004, p.50). Thus, the sample of the research consists of entrepreneurs and managers of 450 small-scale SMEs reached by convenience sampling method. After excluding invalid questionnaires for various reasons, the number of questionnaires included in the analysis is 366.

Five different scales were used in this research. Details of these scales are as follows:

*Organizational Ambidexterity Scale:* To measure organizational ambidexterity, the 12-item Lubatkin Organizational Ambidexterity Scale developed by Lubatkin et al. (2006, p.669) is used. Translated into Turkish and validated by Akdoğan et al. (2019), the Lubatkin Organizational Ambidexterity Scale includes two subscales reflecting dimensions of



‘exploratory strategies’ with six items (e.g., “The success of our business is built on the ability to discover new technologies”), and ‘beneficiary strategies’ with six items (e.g., “Our business focuses on reducing costs while improving quality”). A 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) was used to rate the items. In the analysis, one-factor model is used.

*Digital Transformation Scale:* 26-item The Digital Transformation Scale developed by Westerman et al. (2017) in collaboration with Capgemini Consulting and MIT Sloan Management is used to measure digital transformation. Adapted to Turkish and validated by Ürü and Ünsal (2022), this scale has eight dimensions of ‘digital first mindset’ with two items (e.g., “We take advantage of digital solutions whenever possible”), ‘digitized operations’ with four items (e.g., “Our core operational processes are automated and digitized”), ‘data driven decisions’ with three items (e.g., “We make decisions based on data and analytics”), ‘collaborative learning’ with five items (e.g., “We make decisions based on data and analytics”), ‘technology experience’ with five items (e.g., “Our organization has experience with mobile devices and applications”), ‘digital skills’ with two items (e.g., “Digital skills are widely distributed across our enterprise”), ‘high engagement’ with three items (e.g., “Our workers are self-motivated”), and ‘data & tools capability’ with two items (e.g., “We can access flexible computing power and storage (e.g. through cloud services and external assets)”). A 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) was used to rate the items. In the analysis, one-factor model is used.

*Competitive Advantage Scale:* To measure competitive advantage, 6-item Competitive Advantage Scale developed by Schilke (2014, p.191) is used. Translated into Turkish and validated by Ürü and Ünsal (2022), the Competitive Advantage Scale includes two subscales reflecting dimensions of ‘strategic advantage’ with three items (e.g., “In general, our company is much more successful than the rivals”), and ‘financial advantage’ with three items (e.g., “Our company’s profit is always higher than the mean of the sector.”). A 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) was used to rate the items. In the analysis, one-factor model is used.

*Strategic Agility Scale:* The 9-item Strategic Agility Scale developed by Hock et al. (2016, p.444) is used to measure strategic agility. Adapted to Turkish and validated by Yaşar Uğurlu et al. (2019), this scale has three dimensions of ‘strategic sensitivity’ with three items (e.g., “Requirements for strategic adaptations are communicated fast and comprehensively through the organization”), ‘leadership unity’ with three items (e.g., “Our top management is able to make bold and fast strategic decisions”), and ‘resource fluidity’ with three items (e.g., “Our organizational structure allows for flexible redeployment of our resources”). A 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) was used to rate the items. In the analysis, one-factor model is used.

*Environmental Dynamism Scale:* To measure environmental dynamism, the Environmental Dynamism Scale developed by Ürü et al. (2011) is used. This scale has 5 items (e.g., “The rate



of product obsolescence in our industry is high.”) in one dimension. A 5-point Likert scale (1= not at all; 5= very much) was used to rate the items.

#### 4. FINDINGS

In the study, since some of the scales were adapted to Turkish for the first time, Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA) were first conducted in the SPSS 22 program. Then Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA) were conducted in the Smart PLS 4 program. In the study, firstly, within the scope of the validity and reliability analysis of the organizational ambidexterity scale, factor analysis of this scale was conducted. Since the scale has a two-factor structure, the principal components method and varimax rotation were performed. The first factor of the scale alone explained 44.414% whereas the second factor alone explained 46.665% of the scale. Total variance explained is 64,330%. A variance explained value between 40% and 60% is considered sufficient (Scherer et al., 1988, p.765). Factor loading values were found to vary between 0.789-0.850. Factor 1 and factor 2 in the scale were named “Beneficiary Strategies” and “Exploratory Strategies”, respectively, as in the original scale. The reliability levels of the factors were 0.953 and 0.942, respectively, and these values were found to be high enough. As a result of the analysis of the organizational ambidexterity scale for the Harman’s Single Factor test, it is seen that a single factor explained most of the variance (71.588%) and it is included in the analysis as a single dimension. CFA results also confirmed this one-dimensional structure (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.956, Composite Reliability  $\rho_C$ =0.965, AVE=0.821, HTMT<0.85, Inner VIF<5).

It is seen that the digital transformation scale has a single factor structure with Eigenvalues above 1 and this single factor explained 86.248% of the total variance. CFA results also confirmed this one-dimensional structure (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.987, Composite Reliability  $\rho_C$ =0.989, AVE=0.78, HTMT<0.85, Inner VIF<5). When results examined, it is seen that the confirmatory factor load values of the items are between 0.843 and 0.929. These values are accepted values for the limits of factor loadings. To examine whether the factor loadings were significant, t values were examined and since all t values were determined to be above 2.58, it was determined that the factor loadings were significant. When the model goodness of confirmatory factor analysis is examined; Since the SRMR value of the model was found to be 0.025 and the NFI value was 0.916, it was determined that the model had a good goodness of fit.

According to results related with digital transformation scale, it was seen that the AVE values of the scale factor were above 0.50, and the CR and Cronbach's alpha values were above 0.70. These values show that the validated scale structure meets the construct reliability, convergent validity and internal consistency criteria. Since the scale has a single factor, discriminant validity could not be examined.

In the Smart PLS program analyses of organizational ambidexterity scale, the PLS algorithm is implemented to test the DFA model. For item reliability, factor loadings of observed variables



are required to be above 0.70 (Hair et al., 2011). In model and scale development studies, the factor loading range of 0.50-0.60 can also be accepted (Hulland, 1999, p.198-199). It was evaluated according to 0.60, which is considered as the threshold value for factor load values of all variables in the model. It is seen that the factor loading values of the items are between 0.857 and 0.823. These values are accepted values for the limits of factor loadings. To examine whether the factor loadings were significant, t values were examined and since all t values were determined to be above 2.58, it was determined that the factor loadings were significant. In the Smart PLS program, the Standardized Root Mean Square Errors (SRMR) value (Henseler et al., 2014) and the Normalized Fit Index (NFI) are used to evaluate the goodness of fit. Hu and Bentler (1998) consider models with an SRMSR value below 0.080 and an NFI value above 0.90 as a good fit value. Since the SRMR value of the model was found to be 0.039 and the NFI value was 0.915, it was determined that the model had a good goodness of fit.

It is determined that the competitive advantage scale has a two-factor structure with Eigenvalues above 1 and that factor 1 (Strategic Advantage) alone explained 54.347% of the scale and factor 2 (Financial Advantage) explained 43.546% of the scale. All two factors explained 93.723% of the total variance. To decide to keep an item from the scale, the factor loadings should be above 0.45 and the difference between the factor loadings should be at least 0.10 to avoid overlapping (unstable items) (Büyüköztürk, 2009). Factor loading values were found to vary between 0.550-0.830. As a result of the analysis of the competitive advantage scale for the Harman's Single Factor test, it is seen that a single factor explained most of the variance (67.404%) and it is included in the analysis as a single dimension. CFA results also confirmed this one-dimensional structure (Cronbach's Alpha=0.938, Composite Reliability  $\rho_C$ =0.960, AVE=0.890, HTMT<0.85, Inner VIF<5).

It is determined that the strategic agility scale has a three-factor structure with Eigenvalues above 1 and factor 1 (Strategic Sensitivity) alone explained 38.427% of the scale, factor 2 (Resource Fluidity) explained 37.857% and factor 3 (Leadership Unity) explained 21.553%. All three factors explained 97.816% of the total variance. As a result of the analysis of the strategic agility scale for the Harman's Single Factor test, it is seen that a single factor explained most of the variance (58.678%) and it is included in the analysis as a single dimension. CFA results also confirmed this one-dimensional structure (Cronbach's Alpha=0.939, Composite Reliability  $\rho_C$ =0.961, AVE=0.891, HTMT<0.85, Inner VIF<5).

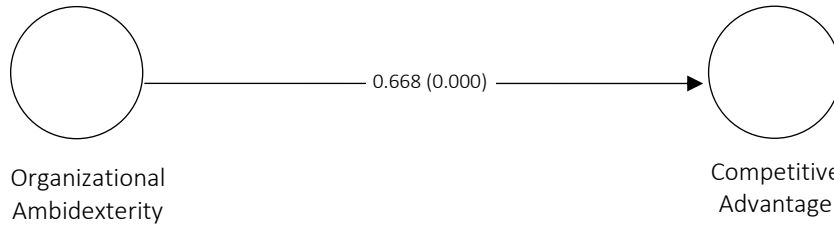
It is determined that the environmental dynamism scale had a single-factor structure with Eigenvalue above 1 and this single factor explained 94.663% of the scale. CFA results also confirmed this one-dimensional structure (Cronbach's Alpha=0,901, Composite Reliability  $\rho_C$ =0,903, AVE=0,838, HTMT<0,85, Inner VIF<5).

To test research hypotheses partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used, and analyses were performed via the SmartPLS 4 statistical program. In this framework, it is determined that organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage are positively related ( $\beta$ =0.668) ( $t$ =18.447;  $p$ <0.01). This result means that a one-unit increase in the



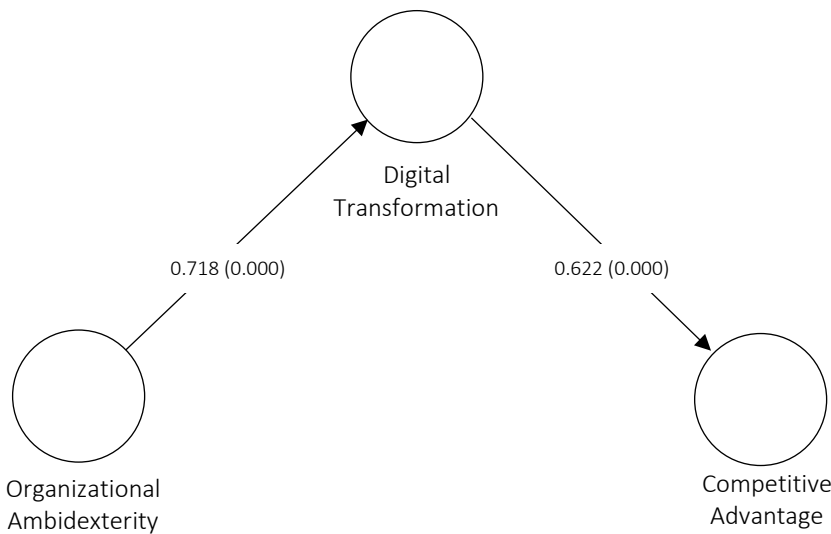
ambidexterity of enterprises will increase competitive advantage with an effect of 0.668 units. Thus, Hypothesis 1 of the research is supported (See Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Path diagram of the first hypothesis of the research



It is determined that organizational ambidexterity and digital transformation are positively related ( $\beta=0.718$ ) ( $t=20.226$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). In addition, it is determined that digital transformation and competitive advantage are positively related ( $\beta=0.622$ ) ( $t=12,446$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). In line with these results, Hypotheses 2 and 3 of the study are supported (See Figure 3).

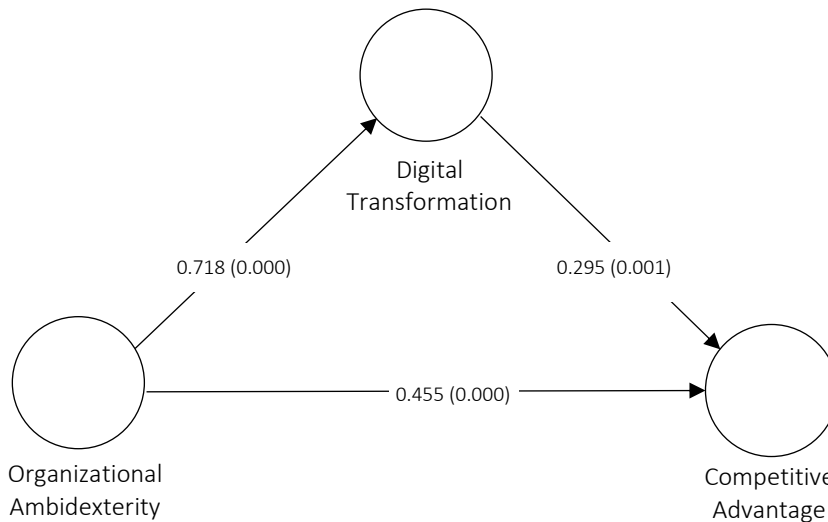
**Figure 3.** Path diagram of the second and third hypothesis of the research



Furthermore, when the model for the mediation test conducted to examine whether digital transformation mediates the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage is examined; it is seen that the path of Organizational Ambidexterity → Digital Transformation → Competitive Advantage is significant, in addition to this, the path of Organizational Ambidexterity → Competitive Advantage is also significant, and when the product of the coefficients in these paths is examined, it is seen that these products are positive ( $0.718*0.295*0.455=96.37$ ). When these products are positive, it means that there is partial mediation. In addition, the VAF (Variance-Accounted-For) value in determining the mediation effect is:  $0.718*0.295/(0.718*0.295)+0.668=0.241$ . Since this value is between 0.20 and 0.80, it is determined that there is a partial mediation effect relative to the VAF value, and thus Hypothesis 4 is supported (See Figure 4).



**Figure 4.** Path diagram of the mediating role of digital transformation on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage

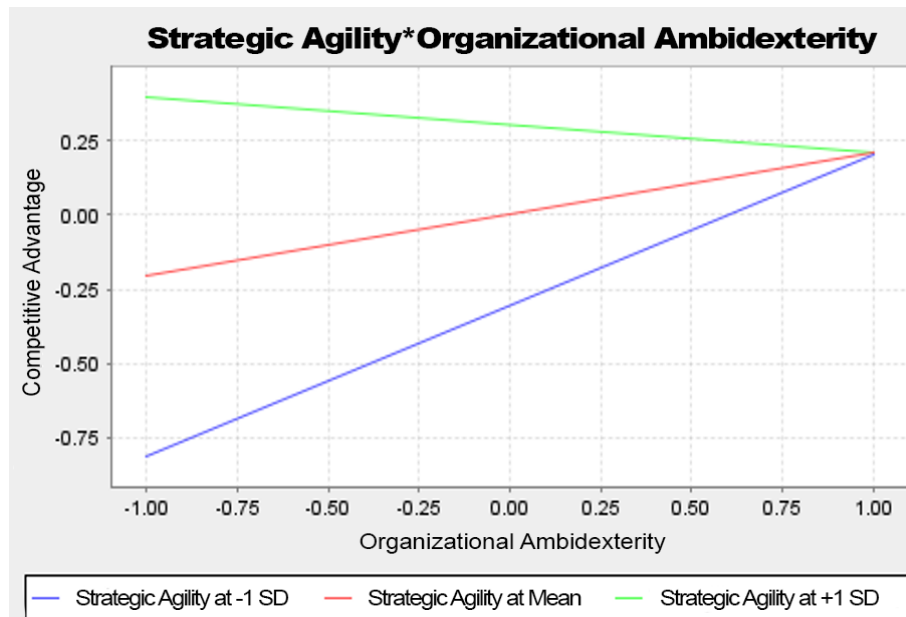


In the calculation of the interaction terms for testing the moderation effects in the research model, the two-stage method is used in Smart PLS 4. As a result of the analysis conducted to determine whether strategic agility moderates the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage, the effect of the interaction term (Strategic Agility X Organizational Dual Orientation) on competitive advantage is found to be significant ( $\beta=-0.301$ ;  $t=2.989$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). While the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage is normally positive ( $\beta=0.207$ ;  $t=2.664$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), the beta coefficient of the interaction term turns negative when strategic agility is included in the model. According to the results of the Simple Slope Analysis conducted for a deeper understanding of the moderation effect of strategic agility, it is seen that small-scale SMEs' low and medium level of strategic agility further strengthens the positive relationship between their ambidexterity and competitive advantage, while small-scale SMEs' high level of strategic agility weakens the positive relationship between their ambidexterity and competitive advantage, and even very high level of strategic agility turns this relationship negative (See Figure 5). All these results revealed that small-scale SMEs' strategic agility moderates the relationship between their ambidexterity and competitive advantage, and thus, Hypothesis 5 of the study is supported. In this model, where the moderation effect of strategic agility is seen when the  $R^2$  value is examined, it is determined that competitive advantage is explained by 65.8%. The relevance of the moderation effect is evaluated by examining the  $f^2$  values of 0.005, 0.010, and 0.025, which indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively, as suggested by Kenny (2018) and Hair et al. (2021), and it is seen that the results of the moderation effect of strategic agility on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage indicated a large effect ( $f^2 = 0.080$ ). In addition, the predictive power of the model is found to be greater than zero ( $Q^2_{\text{predict}}=0.534$ ) and high.





Figure 5. Simple slope analysis of the moderation effect of strategic agility



Furthermore, as a result of the analysis conducted to determine whether environmental dynamism has a moderation effect on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage, it is found that the effect of the interaction term (Environmental Dynamism X Organizational Ambidexterity) on competitive advantage is not significant ( $\beta=-0.108$ ;  $t=1.798$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) and Hypothesis 6 of the study is not supported.

## 5. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Research findings indicate that the relationship between the ambidexterity of small-scale SMEs and competitive advantage is positive. Accordingly, small-scale SMEs that can use different strategies at the same time can differentiate from their competitors and take a step forward. Findings show that the relationships between small-scale SMEs' ambidexterity and their digital transformation and between their digital transformation and competitive advantage are also positive. These findings also show that small-scale SMEs that realize their digital transformation in many different operational and managerial processes gain a significant competitive advantage compared to their competitors. In addition, the findings of the study show that digital transformation partially mediates the positive relationship between small-scale SMEs' ambidexterity and competitive advantage. This result shows that the relationship between small-scale SMEs' ambidexterity and competitive advantage is positive if digital technologies, which are an element of digital transformation, are used throughout the enterprise and the adaptation required by digital transformation is ensured. In other words, the ability to use different skills at the same time, which is required to be ambidextrous, is positively associated with a competitive advantage when supported by digital technologies. It is determined as an important finding that the mediating effect here is "partial", that is, the positive relationship between small-scale SMEs' ambidexterity and competitive advantage cannot be



explained only through digital transformation. The research findings also show that small-scale SMEs' strategic agility moderates the relationship between their ambidexterity and competitive advantage. Moreover, it is found that small-scale SMEs' low and medium levels of strategic agility further strengthened the positive relationship between their ambidexterity and competitive advantage. In contrast, small-scale SMEs' high levels of strategic agility weakened the positive relationship between their ambidexterity and competitive advantage, and even a very high level of strategic agility turned this relationship negative. This result shows that when small-scale SMEs react instantly to rapid changes and ups and downs in the business environment, when they see opportunities and evaluate them immediately before their competitors when they immediately update their existing plans according to continuous changes, and when they can do different jobs at the same time, their competitive advantage is decreased. Furthermore, environmental dynamism is found to have no moderation effect on the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage. This finding can be explained by the fact that small-scale SMEs, which have been operating in a frequently changing, dynamic business (task) environment in our country for decades, have internalized this situation and have become somewhat immune to it and maintain their existence accordingly. It can be assumed that small-scale SMEs, which are struggling for survival under the frequency of change in both economic, political, and social parameters, as revealed by Turkish Statistical Institute ([TURKSTAT, 2022](#)) data between 2000 and 2022, have gained a natural immunity to living in this ecosystem, and thus, there is a positive relationship between their ambidexterity and competitive advantage, independent of this environmental dynamism.

### **5.1. Managerial Impacts**

As a result, the success of small-scale SMEs today depends not only on their financial capabilities but also on what they can do differently and in a value-creating way compared to their competitors. Organizations gain competitive advantage through the capabilities and competencies that create value and are rare and hard to imitate. When these characteristics are combined with the positive contributions of organizational ambidexterity and combined with digital technologies, competitive advantage can be achieved by making fast decisions and adapting to change more easily.

### **5.2. Theoretical Impacts**

The theoretical contribution of this study can be explained as examining and explaining the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage through digital transformation for the first time in a model, proposing new moderating variables on this relationship, and filling the gap in this field. The practical contribution of the study is that the relationship between organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage through digital transformation in small-scale SMEs in the wholesale/retail sector in Turkey has been tested for the first time in a model including moderating variables.



### 5.3. Limitations of the Study and Future Research Suggestions

In addition to these contributions, the study also has some limitations. First, methodological limitations such as sample size and cross-sectional research design should be taken into consideration. Since the convenience sampling method is used in this study instead of the simple random sampling method due to time and financial constraints, the results of the study should be evaluated within the selected sample and should not be generalized. Another limitation is that the study is conducted in only one province, considering the duration and pandemic conditions. Thirdly, the use of a cross-sectional research design that limits causality inferences is another limitation. A longitudinal research design may be preferred in further research to clearly understand the causal relationships between organizational ambidexterity, digital transformation, and competitive advantage, and how this relationship evolves. A limitation of the scope of this study is that it does not cover all variables that potentially predict competitive advantage. Therefore, the results are specific to our model and another model with other predictor variables may reveal different patterns. Further research could examine the moderating role of environmental uncertainty on the relationship between SMEs' ambidexterity, digital transformation, and competitive advantage through various dimensions such as government policy uncertainty and economic uncertainty.

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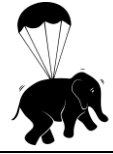
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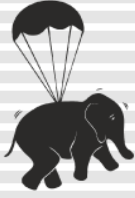
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In this study, the rules stated in the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" were followed.

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## *Enhancing Organizational Sustainability: The Role of Total Quality Management in Fostering Talent Management Practices\**

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### Abstract

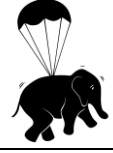
This study aimed to investigate the relationships among employees' perceptions of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Talent Management (TM) practices within their organisations, as well as the impact on Sustainability Performance (SP). The research used survey data from businesses in Istanbul, Yalova, and Kocaeli provinces. A convenience sampling method was employed, and the study utilised data from 339 managers and employees in the manufacturing sector. The data analysis was conducted using least square structural equation analysis. The study's findings revealed that an increase in the level of TQM application is associated with higher levels of TM application and improved SP in enterprises. Furthermore, it was observed that the positive impact of the TQM level increase extends to both TM and SP through a quadratic effect, in addition to its direct influence. The study demonstrated that increasing TM application significantly enhances SP, and an elevated TQM level further amplifies this relationship. Additionally, when the companies were classified based on size, it was found that the positive effect of an increased TQM implementation level on SP is significantly more pronounced in medium-sized companies compared to small and large companies. This trend was also observed in the quadratic effect analysis.

**Keywords:** total quality management, talent management, sustainable performance, human resource management, structural equation modeling

\* The compliance of this research with ethical rules was accepted with the decision of the Human Researchs Ethics Committee of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, dated 07.08.2023 and protocol number 2023/314.

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# ***Örgütsel Sürdürülebilirliği Artırma: Yetenek Yönetimi Uygulamalarını Geliştirmede Toplam Kalite Yönetiminin Rolü***

## **Özet**

Bu çalışmada çalışanların içinde buldukları kurumdaki Toplam Kalite Yönetimi (TQM) ve Yetenek Yönetimi (TM) uygulamalarına ilişkin algıları ile Sürdürülebilirlik Performansı (SP) arasındaki ilişkilerin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Çalışma İstanbul, Yalova ve Kocaeli illerinde yer alan işletmeler dikkate alınarak anket yoluyla toplanan verilerle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu amaçla kolayda örnekleme yoluyla yapılan çalışmada imalat sektöründeki 339 yönetici ve çalışandan elde edilen veriler kullanılmıştır. Veriler kısmi en küçük kareli yapısal eşitlik analizi yardımıyla analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular; TQM uygulama düzeyindeki artışın işletmelerin TM uygulama düzeyini ve SP artırdığını ortaya koymaktadır. Üstelik bu ilişkide TQM düzeyindeki artış doğrudan etkisinin yanı sıra hem TM hem de SP üzerinde çarpan etkisiyle artışa neden olmaktadır. Çalışmada TM uygulama düzeyindeki artışın SP anlamlı şekilde artırdığı ve TQM uygulama düzeyindeki artışın bu etkileşimi daha da güçlendirdiği gözlenmiştir. Bulgular ayrıca firma büyüklüğüne göre yapılan sınıflandırmada küçük ve büyük firmalara göre orta büyüklükteki firmalarda TQM uygulama düzeyindeki artışın SP üzerinde meydana getirdiği pozitif etkinin anlamlı şekilde daha büyük olduğunu ve bu durumun çarpan etkisinde de geçerli olduğunu göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** toplam kalite yönetimi, yetenek yönetimi, sürdürülebilirlik performansı, insan kaynakları yönetimi, yapısal eşitlik modellemesi



## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the past fifty years, Total Quality Management (TQM) and practices such as ISO 14001, ISO 26000, and ISO 28000 have rapidly expanded their scope, becoming significant tools for sustainability. However, this expansion has increased the need for more talented and skilled employees, especially in critical positions, to ensure the sustainability and success of TQM practices. The rapid changes in talent expectations and the necessity to keep up with technological advancements compel businesses to develop policies and practices focused on managing employee talents.

Due to the growing scope of TQM practices, there is an increased demand for more competent business employees and managers. Therefore, examining the relationships between TQM, talent management, and sustainability performance in organizations is important. However, it is observed that there are few studies in the literature that investigate the potential relationships between the level of TQM implementation, talent management, and sustainability. Starting from this point, this study aims to contribute original insights to the literature, mainly focusing on Türkiye, by examining the relationships between Total Quality Management practices, talent management, and sustainability performance. This research intends to show how these factors interact to gain a competitive advantage, especially in the challenging market conditions businesses face.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management philosophy that gained popularity through the implementation of the Toyota Production System by Japan, which was striving to recover from the economic crises following World War I and the significant scarcity experienced after World War II. Emerging in an era marked by the challenges of those times, TQM primarily aimed to improve processes through efficient and effective use of resources, as highlighted in various studies (Prajogo and Sohal, 2006; Yunis et al., 2013; Abdul Rasit et al., 2018; Saffar and Obeidat, 2020; Abbas and Kumari, 2021; Kumari et al., 2021). TQM has become a crucial tool in business because it prevents waste and enhances organisational and employee performance. With its focus on improving resource efficiency through its practices, the TQM approach has evolved into a strategic tool for businesses to gain a competitive advantage and adapt rapidly to changing environmental conditions (AlShehail et al., 2022).

The beginning of the 20th century saw the Second Industrial Revolution and the advent of mass production, which contributed to the prosperity of societies. However, this development also rapidly increased resource consumption and negative environmental impacts. Following the Second World War, there was a global increase in production, and the process of globalisation, which began with the establishment of the first wide-area computer network in the United States in 1965, further intensified pressure on businesses from stakeholders, especially consumers. In the early 21st century, discussions about the impacts of companies on nature and society gained severe attention, particularly with the agenda of global warming and climate crises. As a result, sustainability has become a significant focus in the last two decades. The dimensions of



sustainability, encompassing economic, social, and environmental aspects, have inevitably intertwined with the principles of TQM philosophy, especially in leadership, employee participation, customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, and a systemic approach.

Consequently, the interaction between the sustainability concept and the TQM philosophy has become inevitable. This is evident in the emergence of various applications and standards under the TQM umbrella, such as ISO 9001 Quality Management System, ISO 14001 Environmental Management System, ISO 16949 Automotive Sector Quality Management System, ISO 22000 Food Safety Management System, ISO 22301 Social Security and Business Continuity Management System, ISO 26000 Social Responsibility, ISO 27001 Information Security Management System, ISO 28000 Supply Chain Security Management System, ISO 31000 Risk Management, ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management System, ISO 50001 Energy Management System, among others, adopted by numerous companies as fundamental components of their business strategies (Tasleem et. al., 2018).

As part of the societal change experienced today, addressing individual and societal welfare and ensuring sustainable economic growth require resolving challenges among individuals, society, and technology. The increase in production and consumption resulting from technological advancements aimed at improving the well-being of individuals and institutions also leads to adverse environmental, social, and economic effects such as environmental pollution, rapid depletion of natural resources, and disparities in prosperity where some societies experience excessive wealth while others suffer from excessive poverty. Skilled and competent human factors play a vital role in the interaction between the business and its environment to solve these problems (Yücel, 2022). The TQM philosophy embraces a people-centric approach, summarised by leadership, participation, and customer satisfaction. Over time, this common ground has formed a significant intersection between sustainability and the TQM approach.

In the context of continuous improvement at the core of the TQM philosophy, talent management's function in developing and enhancing the most scarce resource of businesses, human resources, has become vital. The ongoing increase in the rate of change in the business environment due to digitalisation and the rise in the mobilisation of the workforce requires businesses to be more cautious and, at the same time, compel them to improve and support their human resources to adapt to these changes and acquire the necessary new skills. Therefore, talent management has gained increasing importance in TQM and sustainability.

In line with the study's aim, the following headings are addressed sequentially: first, the concepts of Total Quality Management and sustainability and the connection between these concepts are discussed. Then, the concept of talent management and its role in sustainability are examined. In the subsequent sections, the research's methodology and findings examining the relationships between employees' perceptions of Total Quality Management and Talent Management (TM) practices and Sustainable Performance (SP) are presented. The study concludes with discussion and conclusion sections.



## 2. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Although the concept of quality is ancient, its significance in business persisted until the post-World War II era. Notably, the Japanese quality movement, which gained global attention, led by Crosby (1979), defined quality as "conformance to requirements." Deming (1986) emphasised customer satisfaction in defining quality as providing a product and service that meets multidimensional customer expectations. Juran (1988) considered quality to consist of product features that meet customers' needs, thereby ensuring product satisfaction. The common theme in all these definitions is fulfilling requirements related to customer needs.

Hence, the historical focus of quality was initially on product control. The foundation of this approach lies in checking whether the produced product meets the required specifications. Over time, the quality perspective gradually shifted from product control to process control, emphasising prevention over control. This shift aimed to control the process that produces defective products rather than detecting and controlling them after production. Consequently, the perspective on quality as an additional cost is transformed into a reduction in costs and an increase in productivity (Rai, 2018).

In the subsequent period, the prevention approach evolved into the quality assurance perspective with the development of statistical quality control tools. Ultimately, the current state involves the Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy, where quality is not the responsibility of a specific unit or department but is implemented throughout all levels of management. The development of the TQM philosophy, based on Feigenbaum's (1961) views suggesting that the effort for quality should spread across all functional areas, occurred slowly and unnoticed, particularly in the 1970s, coinciding with the global economic crisis, especially in the United States. The 1980s marked the awareness of the issue and reactive developments in the U.S. economy to cope with Japanese competition. The establishment of the U.S. Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 1987 and the initiation of the European EFQM Excellence Award in 1989 marked the beginning of an era where quality was recognised worldwide. As a result, the 1990s witnessed the emergence and rapid dissemination of ISO 9000 standards as internationally accepted quality management system standards.

The TQM philosophy views the concept of "Quality" as a system and adopts the concept of a "Quality Management System (QMS)" that includes managing and monitoring an entity. Therefore, by the 2000s, the QMS concept, considered an open system, has formed a broad range of management systems focusing on quality management theories and sustainability concepts, such as environmental management systems (EMS), organisational sustainability (OS), and occupational health and safety (OHS) management systems. Under the umbrella of TQM, these systems contribute to achieving organisational goals (Kutty et al., 2021)."

In today's quality world, the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) can be described as the art of managing an organization in light of both a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that focus on continuously improving the organisation to achieve excellence. The TQM



philosophy is about continuously improving and utilising all available resources, including human resources, in the best possible way. While there are various opinions on the number and nature of TQM principles, the ISO 9000 standard summarises these principles under the following eight headings: customer focus, leadership, stakeholder participation and communication, process approach, system approach to management, continuous improvement, mutually beneficial supplier relationships, factual approach to decision making (ISO 9000 Family, 2015). With the revision of ISO 9000:2015, the "process approach" and the "system approach to management" were merged under the "process approach" principle, reducing the number of principles from eight to seven.

According to Flynn et al. (1994), TQM is an integrated approach that focuses on implementing, continuously improving, and preventing defects in processes at all levels and functions of the organisation to achieve and sustain high-quality outputs, exceeding customer expectations. TQM can be considered a management strategy that implements customer-focused quality understanding through the participation and collaboration of all stakeholders to enhance customer satisfaction and organisational performance (AlShehail et al., 2022). Özgüner and Özgüner (2015) summarise the benefits of Total Quality Management as preventing waste, increasing efficiency, improving quality, reducing costs, shortening processing times, ensuring continuous improvement and development, and balanced happiness of social stakeholders. According to Tajouri and Lakhali (2024), TQM practices in businesses not only directly increase organisational performance but also cause an indirect increase by positively affecting different concepts such as organisational learning and innovation.

Businesses today face an increasingly challenging management paradigm due to intense competition, resource scarcity, more informed and demanding consumers, innovative technologies, climate change, and increased stakeholder pressure (Silva et al., 2021). This situation has also influenced TQM as a management philosophy, leading to the emergence of numerous quality management systems. Companies must now develop appropriate strategies, considering not only the needs of internal stakeholders but also those of external stakeholders, to survive in the long term and create value for the community in which they operate.

TQM is closely related to sustainability, as defined in the UN World Commission on Environment and Development Report (1987), which states, "meeting our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Despite many reasons that bring together both concepts, the most significant and common element is their focus on considering all stakeholders and creating value for all stakeholders. While the traditional approach to firm value focuses on financial performance and shareholder value, TQM takes an approach that focuses on stakeholder value creation, including both financial and non-financial dimensions, to achieve continuous improvement and excellence. This approach serves the desired long-term economic, environmental, and social performance dimensions regarding sustainability.



The economic dimension focuses on the company's financial performance, considering its financial health and potential benefits. The social dimension focuses on various values related to employees and society, such as health and safety, working standards, equality, well-being, development, and diversity. The ultimate goal of the social dimension is to improve and preserve human and social interaction within and outside organisations. The environmental dimension focuses on various values, such as preventing pollution, using renewable resources, minimising waste, reducing emissions, and preserving biodiversity. This dimension emphasises that companies should improve their business processes in line with sustainability. In doing so, companies should focus on producing products that do not harm the environment and can be reused after completing their life cycles (Mujtaba and Mubarik, 2022).

Zink (2007) suggested combining both concepts under corporate sustainability. Silva et al. (2021) argued that TQM is an essential tool in strategically integrating Sustainable Development principles. According to Davenport et al. (2018), sustainability means that companies should consider the impact of their activities on society and the environment by using natural resources in the best possible way. In the study conducted by Lepistö et al. (2023) with 271 CEOs in Finland, it was determined that TQM positively affected environmental and social sustainability.

Companies affect the natural environment and society with product design, production processes, purchasing decisions, and business models. Therefore, they must actively contribute and participate in environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Businesses should manage all these conflicting aspects of sustainability, focusing on environmental or social performance and integrating them to manage business sustainability. TQM is concerned with eliminating negative impacts on corporate structure and the environment, working as a primary catalyst for developing corporate social responsibility in an organisation. Therefore, while TQM is seen as an approach to conducting business in an environmentally and socially friendly manner, it is also accepted as an approach to increasing the wealth of business stakeholders, which is the primary goal of economic activity. Consequently, TQM demonstrates that it is possible to balance moral principles and rational economic rules, strive for profit, and respect the interests of broader stakeholder groups. Therefore, TQM plays a crucial role in facilitating the inclusion of broad social and environmental dimensions into corporate strategy and supporting the realisation of the sustainability approach in an organisation (Jasiulewicz-Kaczmarek, 2015)."

Sustainability is the foundation of a long-term business orientation that aims to meet the needs of stakeholders both now and in the future. A sustainable company adopts the rule of living from its capital and income derived from financial, natural, human, and social capital. Accordingly, a sustainable company overcomes the conflict of objectives between economic, environmental, and social issues by integrating long-term economic success with environmental protection and socially responsible actions. Therefore, a company's overall performance is



determined by financial results and environmental and social performance (Steimle and Zink, 2006).

A study conducted by Tasleem et al. (2018) with 92 organisations in Pakistan concluded that TQM and ISO 14001 significantly influence Sustainability Performance (SP), including economic, social, and environmental sustainability, as essential strategies. The study found that implementing the ISO 14001 standard does not significantly affect economic and social sustainability but has a significant impact on environmental sustainability and overall SP. Additionally, TQM was found to perform better in each dimension of sustainability.

Nguyen et al. (2018) conducted a study examining the relationship between quality management practices and sustainability performance with data collected from 144 businesses in Vietnam. The findings suggest that quality management practices have mixed effects on economic and environmental performance while positively impacting social performance.

Alsawafia et al. (2019) examined the relationship between the quality of management and employee relationships within the company and SP in service and manufacturing businesses in the UK. The study, consisting of 430 observations, shows that an increase in the level of relationship with quality at both management and employee levels increases SP. The findings also indicate that employee involvement has a positive moderating effect. According to the authors, increasing employee and management relationships makes companies more accountable, fair, and sustainable.

Alintah-Abel et al. (2019) argue in their study conducted in the Nigerian construction sector that implementing TQM principles can achieve sustainable development. The study suggests that implementing TQM will enhance efficiency by improving customer satisfaction, organizational culture, and values, leading to increased profitability and ultimately supporting sustainability. Magd and Karyamsetty (2020) state that TQM practices are effective in manufacturing and service businesses, influencing corporate performance, excellence, and sustainability.

AlShehail et al. (2022), in their study with 430 participants in the UAE's service sector, mention that an increase in TQM practices enhances SP. Wassan et al. (2022) and Zhao et al. (2023), in their studies with manufacturing businesses in Pakistan, report that an increase in TQM practices leads to increased SP according to findings obtained from managers at different management levels. Wassan et al. (2022) also reported a positive interaction between TQM practices and organisational performance.

Saha et al. (2022) conducted a study with 240 participants working in Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) industries, examining the effects of TQM and Industry 4.0 technologies on SP. The study shows that TQM and Industry 4.0 significantly impact SP in the Bangladeshi ready-made garment sector. Additionally, it is observed that TQM mediates the relationship between



Industry 4.0 and SP. The findings indicate that TQM assists in explaining the relationship between Industry 4.0 and SP (Tajouri and Lakhali, 2024).

Therefore, within the scope of the study, the first hypothesis is formulated as

**H<sub>1</sub>:** As the level of TQM implementation increases, SP increases.

### 3. TALENT MANAGEMENT

The dynamic nature of the contemporary business environment compels organisations to adapt to rapid changes, even anticipating them with a proactive approach to develop and implement policies and strategies accordingly. In this context, the most crucial element for organisations to adapt to environmental changes and implement policies and strategies tailored to these changes is qualified human resources. However, the changes occurring in the environment rapidly alter the competencies and capabilities required by the workforce. The global developments experienced in the last quarter-century, particularly radical changes in working conditions after COVID-19, increased mobility, and the growing need for digital skills, have heightened the demand for a more skilled workforce. Therefore, Talent Management (TM) has become a fundamental strategic area for the success and survival of businesses, emerging as a significant subject in business management. According to Tatli et al. (2013), considering the existing human resource capacity in organisations, talent shortages make TM a crucial strategic area for the success and survival of businesses.

TM is the proficiency of a firm in hiring (sourcing, attracting, selecting), engaging, developing, retaining, and benefiting from individuals to achieve goals and implement business strategies. TM is a dynamic capability determined by the working culture, working conditions, and talent development (Benitez-Amado et al., 2015). In highly competitive and changing environmental contexts, employees are expected to assume more prominent roles, essential for organisational gains. Therefore, identifying critical positions and selecting talents to fill these positions can lead to increased commitment among employees and improved firm performance. Implementing a TM system in an organisation aims to enhance the core skills and competencies of individuals in critical positions, recognise and reward value contributors, and create a competitive advantage. Therefore, the TM process includes sub-processes focusing on identifying essential positions (ICP), competency training (CT), development (D), and reward management (RM) (Jayaraman et al., 2018).

In this regard, there is a close relationship between TM and TQM, especially regarding customer focus, leadership, continuous improvement, and stakeholder engagement. Adapting human resources to environmental changes for customer satisfaction and resource usage efficiency is crucial to continuous improvement. Additionally, TM practices become a significant improvement tool for a business that has adopted the TQM philosophy, particularly in leadership and process management. This situation can increase the need for and awareness of TM practices in businesses implementing TQM.





Bou and Beltran (2005) emphasised the critical role of the human factor in the relationship between TQM and performance. Their study, conducted with data collected through a survey from quality managers or general managers of 222 service companies in Spain, including sales dealers, hotels, and transportation companies, shows that the effect of Total Quality Management on company performance increases when TQM-oriented HRM strategies are implemented. Other studies have also supported the idea that employee selection, recruitment, training, or rewarding with characteristics consistent with the TQM philosophy are crucial in the TQM-performance relationship. For instance, high leadership competencies have been linked to product quality, continuous improvement, customer focus, employee participation, and supplier quality management (Ahmad and Schroeder, 2002; Allen and Kilmann, 2001).

The relationship between TQM and performance increases the need for more qualified employees in firms, thus increasing the need to develop employee skills within a program. This need prompts firms with rising levels of TQM implementation to focus on Talent Management (TM) practices. As a natural consequence, an increase in the level of TM implementation is expected in such firms.

Therefore, within the scope of the study, the second hypothesis is formulated as

**H<sub>2</sub>:** The TM implementation level increases as the TQM implementation level increases.

#### **4. TALENT MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Talent Management (TM) is perceived as a strategic tool that creates a competitive advantage for the organisation. The theoretical background of this perception is widely based on the Resource-Based View (RBV) approach. According to RBV, human beings are a talent resource that forms the foundation of a company's competitive power. Being valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate, human resources significantly impact organisational performance and business success. Therefore, they are considered a strategic tool (Barney, 1991). Suppose talents are valuable (unique skills of an individual), rare (especially at a high level of expertise), and cannot be imitated or perfectly replicated. In that case, they can provide a resource-based sustainability.

Schiemann (2014) describes TM as a "complete cycle" focusing on managing employees with specific and unique competencies and skills, significantly contributing to a company's performance. Thus, the TM process combines multiple strategies that allow firms to develop an effective TM system. These strategies primarily involve acquiring, developing, and retaining a company's best employees (Mujtaba et al., 2022).

TM supports operational sustainability through working conditions. A fair wage and reward system and the implementation of work-life balance programs can motivate company members to exert additional effort to embrace innovative behaviours and achieve sustainability goals outlined in the operational strategy. Skill development programs based on education contribute to the sustainable success of employees. Sustainability-related goals are prioritised in



performance evaluations and career planning, encouraging employees' environmental behaviours (Benitez-Amado et al., 2015).

In this context, while Human Resource Management (HRM) practices focus on all employees in a company, TM practices are specifically designed to attract, select, develop, and retain the best employees for strategic roles. TM identifies critical positions and creates a talent pool of potential employees, ensuring the right talent is readily available to fill essential positions when needed. Subsequently, employee competencies are developed to fulfil designated roles, fostering complete dedication to organisations (Mujtaba et al., 2022).

Ambrosius (2018) conducted a case study in the hospitality industry in Scotland, suggesting that talent development within the scope of TM supports environmental sustainability. Sparrow and Makram (2015) emphasise that talents can contribute to the organisation's ability to achieve sustainable performance. According to Kafetzopoulos and Gotzamani (2022), organisations, through Talent Management (TM), develop valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources that are socially complex and causally uncertain. This maximises their internal resources, providing a competitive advantage that competitors cannot easily imitate or obtain quickly. Pantouvakis and Vlachos (2020) reported, based on findings from 308 transport companies in Greece, that TM has a more significant impact on sustainability performance than leadership.

Mujtaba and Mubarak (2022) presented data from a study conducted in the manufacturing sector in Pakistan involving 196 companies selected through cluster sampling. The results indicate a significant direct impact of TM on Sustainability Performance (SP). The findings also reveal that all three dimensions of TM (acquisition, development, and retention) substantially affect SP. The results suggest that TM strategies are an indispensable source of sustainability when attracting, developing, and retaining talented employees during talent shortages. The findings emphasise that a company should consider TM as the top strategy to enhance performance.

Kafetzopoulos and Gotzamani (2022) used hierarchical regression in an empirical study with 480 company participants in Greece to show that talent development positively impacts sustainability. Entrepreneurial leadership was identified as the most effective style for economic sustainability, while transformational and interactive leadership were considered the most effective for social and environmental sustainability. According to Lepistö et al. (2023), it was determined that TQM had a positive effect on environmental and social sustainability, while HRM practices along with TQM also had a positive impact on environmental sustainability.

Elzek et al. (2023) conducted a study with 327 subjects consisting of travel agency employees in the tourism sector in Egypt, providing empirical evidence of the impact of TM practices on SP. TM's influence on SP is mediated by Green Intellectual Capital (GIC). The results highlight the significant effects of TM practices on GIC and, consequently, their substantial impact on



SP. These findings underscore the importance of a comprehensive approach to employee development, leading to intellectual capital and enhanced corporate sustainability.

Therefore, within the scope of the study, the third hypothesis is formulated as

**H<sub>3</sub>:** As the TM implementation level increases, the SP level increases.

## **5. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study focuses on the impacts of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Talent Management (TM) practices on sustainability performance (SP). It examines how the level of TQM implementation affects TM and SP in businesses and addresses how TM affects SP. Additionally, the study analyses the quadratic effects of TQM practices on SP and TM.

### **5.1. Method, Population, and Sample**

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to test the research hypotheses. The method developed by Wold (1982) is a statistical approach used for modelling multivariate complex relationships between observed and latent variables. It is preferred in models with small sample sizes and many variables as it provides reliable results (Fornell and Bookstein, 1982; Lohmöller, 1982).

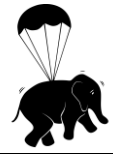
The analyses were conducted based on data collected through surveys from businesses with at least 20 or more employees in Istanbul, Yalova, and Kocaeli provinces. These provinces were considered within the scope of the main population, and the study used data obtained through surveys from 339 managers and employees in the manufacturing sector.

While there are various methods to consider the sample size in the literature, Child (2006) emphasises that, especially in factor analysis, the sample size should be at least five times the number of variables. Kline (2005) suggests that this coefficient can go up to 10 times, but it should be at least twice the number of variables. Siddiqui (2013) states that there should be at least 100 observations in an analysis with ten or more variables, and the ideal sample size should be between 200 and 400. Considering these criteria, the aim was to reach 400 participants in the study. Still, after the data collection process, 339 usable surveys were obtained, which is considered sufficient as the sample size is more than 200 and well above five times the number of variables.

The data obtained from the study sample were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Analysis in the SmartPLS environment.

### **5.2. Research Limitations**

Due to budget, time, and physical accessibility constraints, the study was limited to the manufacturing industry. Therefore, the obtained sample does not represent all sectors from an industrial perspective. Additionally, considering the sample size ratio to the number of variables



is 5:1, the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Analysis method was deemed more appropriate for the study. Given that a sufficient sample size was reached for testing the research model using the chosen method, the study results are valid and reliable in representing the population.

### 5.3. Variables, Data, and Research Model

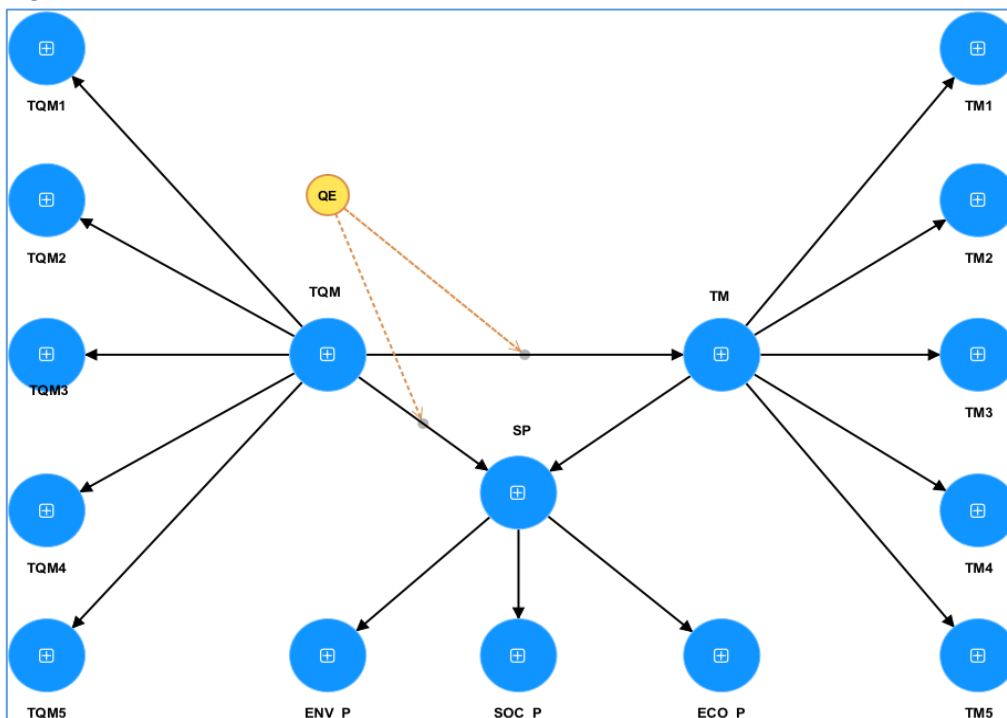
The scale used by AlShehail et al. (2022) was employed to measure TQM and SP in the study. The TQM practices scale consists of 25 statements in 5 sub-dimensions: Leadership, People, Processes, Strategy and Policy, Partnership and Resources. The SP scale encompasses 15 statements in three sub-dimensions: Environmental, Social, and Economic.

The scale used by Mujtaba et al. (2022) was utilised to measure TM. This scale comprises 26 statements organised into 5 sub-dimensions: identification of critical positions, talent acquisition, talent development, talent engagement, and talent retention. The scale measures participants' perceptions of talent management in their respective organisations.

All variables were measured on a Likert scale as follows: 1=“Strongly Disagree”; 2=“Disagree”; 3=“Somewhat Disagree”; 4=“Somewhat Agree”; 5=“Agree”; 6=“Strongly Agree”.

The relationships between the variables measured using the scales explained above and the research hypotheses were examined within the scope of the research model presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Research model and hypotheses





## 4. FINDINGS

### 6.1. Demographic Findings

Among the 339 participants in the survey, 29.7% were female, and 70.3% were male. 96.5% of the participants had work experience ranging from 1 to 30 years. Regarding educational background, 43.1% had associate degrees or lower, 51.1% had bachelor's degrees, and 5.8% had postgraduate education. The ages of the participants varied between 20 and 75 years, with 25% in the age group of 27 and below, 50% in the age group of 37 and below, and 75% in the age group of 45 and below.

### 6.2. Factor and Reliability Analyses

Factor and reliability analyses were conducted to examine the validity and reliability of the scales and variables. In the factor analysis, a first-order confirmatory factor analysis was applied to shed light on the validity and reliability of the variables and scales. In the studies conducted, the 26th statement in the talent management scale was excluded from the analysis due to a statistically insignificant and low factor loading. As a result, based on the factor loadings and validity results presented in Table 1, it can be observed that the factor loadings and validities are above acceptable limits (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

**Table 1:** Factor loadings and reliability analysis results

	TQM1	TQM2	TQM3	TQM4	TQM5	TM1	TM2	TM3	TM4	TM5	ENV_P	SOC_P	ECO_P	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
B1S1	0.754													0.783	0.787	0.852	0.536
B1S2	0.773																
B1S3	0.769																
B1S4	0.658																
B1S5	0.700																
B2S1		0.765												0.792	0.802	0.858	0.548
B2S2		0.804															
B2S3		0.762															
B2S4		0.627															
B2S5		0.732															
B3S1			0.690											0.747	0.748	0.832	0.499
B3S2			0.786														
B3S3			0.680														
B3S4			0.708														
B3S5			0.660														
B4S1				0.741										0.714	0.734	0.814	0.472
B4S2				0.740													
B4S3				0.690													
B4S4				0.737													
B4S5				0.493													
B5S1					0.670									0.729	0.730	0.822	0.480
B5S2					0.683												
B5S3					0.737												
B5S4					0.708												
B5S5					0.664												
B6S1						0.762								0.825	0.828	0.878	0.590
B6S2						0.797											
B6S3						0.739											
B6S4						0.727											
B6S5						0.811											



B7S1							0.671								0.766	0.775	0.842	0.517	
B7S2							0.733												
B7S3							0.778												
B7S4							0.754												
B7S5							0.652												
B8S1								0.651							0.727	0.737	0.821	0.481	
B8S2								0.736											
B8S3								0.730											
B8S4								0.585											
B8S5								0.750											
B9S1									0.651						0.719	0.742	0.815	0.474	
B9S2									0.723										
B9S3									0.518										
B9S4									0.774										
B9S5									0.745										
B10S1										0.695					0.807	0.811	0.866	0.566	
B10S2										0.790									
B10S3										0.776									
B10S4										0.691									
B10S5										0.801									
B11S1											0.693				0.795	0.797	0.859	0.551	
B11S2											0.784								
B11S3											0.707								
B11S4											0.755								
B11S5											0.767								
B12S1												0.739			0.757	0.759	0.838	0.510	
B12S2												0.773							
B12S3												0.750							
B12S4												0.631							
B12S5												0.668							
B13S1															0.766	0.752	0.754	0.835	0.504
B13S2															0.753				
B13S3															0.703				
B13S4															0.659				
B13S5															0.663				
<b>TQM:</b> Total Quality Management <b>TQM1:</b> Leadership <b>TQM2:</b> People <b>TQM3:</b> Process <b>TQM4:</b> Strategy and Policy <b>TQM5:</b> Partnership and Resources																			
<b>TM:</b> Talent Management <b>TM1:</b> Identification of Critical Positions <b>TM2:</b> Talent Acquisition <b>TM3:</b> Talent Development <b>TM4:</b> Talent Engagement <b>TM5:</b> Talent Retention																			
<b>SP:</b> Sustainability Performance <b>ENV_P:</b> Environmental Sustainability Performance <b>SOC_P:</b> Social Sustainability Performance <b>ECO_P:</b> Economic Sustainability Performance																			
All values in the table are significant at the 1% level.																			

Table 1 shows that the standardized loading coefficients for the variables are at least 50% or above. Additionally, all variables have reliability values above 70%, and the explained average variance value is close to or above the expected value of 50%. These findings indicate that Cronbach's Alpha values are above 0.70, demonstrating acceptable and high internal consistency reliability of the variables in the measurement tool. Similarly, the values of rho\_A and rho\_C being above 0.70 also suggest that structural reliability of the variables is achieved (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). In the assessment of the validity of the variables in the measurement tool, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value and the Fornell and Larcker criterion were utilized. Chiang and Hsieh (2012) state that the AVE value should be 0.50 or higher. Hair et al. (2010) suggest that these values would still be valid, slightly below this threshold, depending on the number of questions and the sample size. Considering the sample size for the variables, AVE values close to or above 50% indicate that discriminant validity is achieved.

Furthermore, when examining the Fornell and Larcker criterion values presented in Table 2, it is observed that the correlation between the variables and other variables is less than the square root of the relevant variable's AVE value. Thus, discriminant validity is established.



**Table 2:** Fornell and larcker criterion values

	TM1	TM2	TM3	TM4	TM5	TQM1	TQM2	TQM3	TQM4	TQM5	ENV_P	SOC_P	ECO_P
TM1	0.768												
TM2	0.687	0.719											
TM3	0.672	0.561	0.693										
TM4	0.590	0.596	0.612	0.688									
TM5	0.566	0.656	0.598	0.725	0.752								
TQM1	0.654	0.523	0.598	0.589	0.516	0.732							
TQM2	0.680	0.640	0.623	0.601	0.576	0.596	0.740						
TQM3	0.684	0.646	0.595	0.590	0.563	0.701	0.678	0.706					
TQM4	0.689	0.628	0.591	0.529	0.542	0.595	0.603	0.599	0.687				
TQM5	0.794	0.712	0.627	0.577	0.621	0.606	0.659	0.677	0.709	0.693			
ENV_P	0.625	0.588	0.548	0.608	0.641	0.551	0.581	0.543	0.571	0.619	0.742		
SOC_P	0.642	0.632	0.599	0.651	0.684	0.587	0.604	0.582	0.592	0.664	0.682	0.714	
ECO_P	0.678	0.661	0.622	0.721	0.675	0.592	0.662	0.594	0.633	0.678	0.670	0.744	0.710

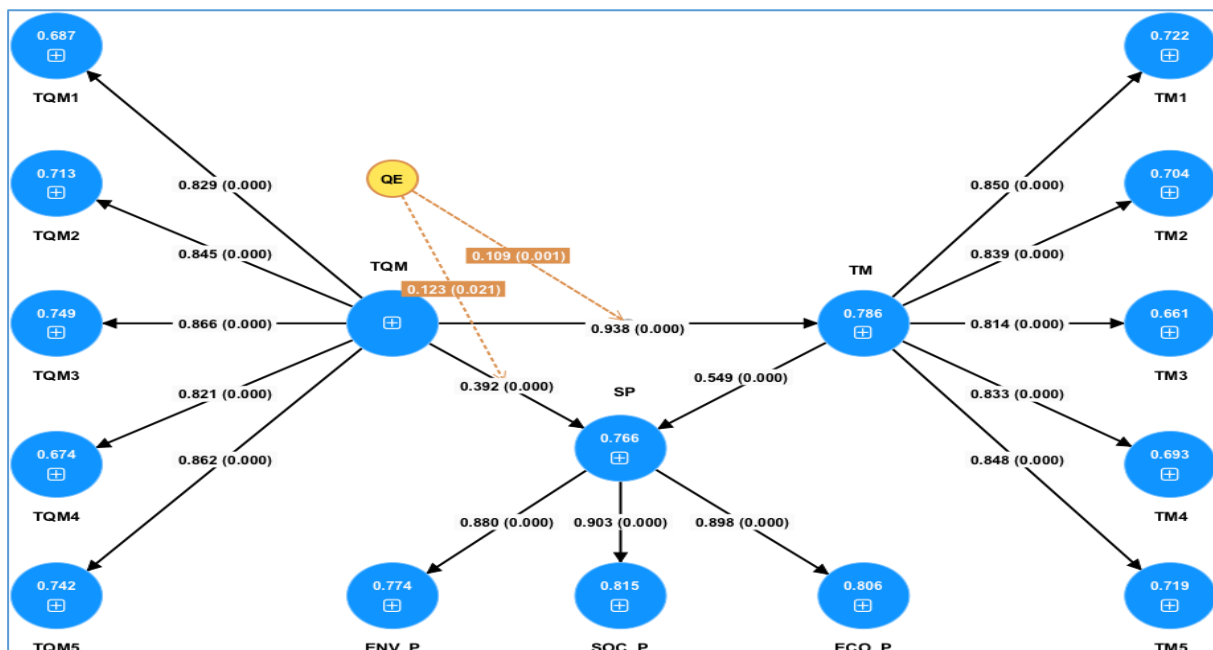
The values in Table 2 indicate that the correlation between variables and other variables is less than the square root of the AVE value for the respective variable. This demonstrates that discriminant validity is achieved.

### 6.3. Analysis of Interrelationships between Variables

In the scope of the research, the partial least squares structural equation modelling method was used to examine the relationships between variables. The results of the analysis, which are statistically significant at least at the 1% level, are observed in Figure 2. When the results are examined, it is seen that employees' perceptions of TQM have a significant positive impact on TM and SP. Similarly, increasing TM has a significant and positive effect on SP.

These analysis results indicate that employees' perceptions of quality management have a positive impact on talent management and sustainability performance. Likewise, the increase in talent management has a positive effect on sustainability performance.

**Figure 2:** Results of the path analysis between variables





The statistical test results indicate that an increase in TQM has a significant ( $<0.01$ ) and positive effect on TM (0.938) and SP (0.392). This implies that the hypotheses  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  of the research are accepted. Considering the explained variances of the variables, there is a significant corrected  $R^2$  value of 78.6% in the relationship between TQM and TM, indicating that TQM practices are a strong predictor of TM. Similarly, a significant ( $<0.01$ ) and positive relationship is observed between TM and SP, with a standardized effect level of 0.549. This finding implies the acceptance of hypothesis  $H_3$ . The presence of a significant corrected  $R^2$  value of 76.6% between TQM, TM, and SP draws attention, indicating that TQM practices are significant predictors for both TM and SP. Therefore, in addition to its direct effects, TQM has an indirect positive significant effect on SP (0.515) through its positive impact on TM.

These results support the research hypotheses put forward within the study's scope. Table 3 shows the research hypotheses and the hypothesis results according to the findings.

**Table 3:** Research hypotheses and test results

Hypotheses	P Value	Result
$H_1$ : As the level of TQM implementation increases, SP increases.	0.000	Accept
$H_2$ : As the level of TQM implementation increases, the level of TM implementation increases.	0.000	Accept
$H_3$ : As the level of TM implementation increases, the level of SP increases.	0.000	Accept

The findings also reveal that TQM practices not only have direct effects on TM and SP but also have quadratic effects. This means that as the level of TQM implementation increases, there is a significant increase proportional to the square of this increase in both TM and SP. In this regard, TQM has a significant direct quadratic effect of 0.109 on TM and 0.123 on SP, both at a standardized effect level of ( $<0.01$ ). Furthermore, the direct quadratic effect of TQM on TM also results in a significant indirect quadratic effect of 0.06 on SP at a standardized effect level of ( $<0.01$ ).

The high interaction and the existence of both direct and indirect effects among the variables not only underscore the importance of TQM and TM as significant predictors for SP but also indicate a much more complex and profound relational structure among the variables. The total standardized interaction values between variables can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Total standardized interaction level between variables

Path	Total effects	Path	Total effects
SP -> ECO_P	0.898	TQM -> TM3	0.764
SP -> ENV_P	0.880	TQM -> TM4	0.782
SP -> SOC_P	0.903	TQM -> TM5	0.796
TM -> ECO_P	0.493	TQM -> TQM1	0.829
TM -> ENV_P	0.483	TQM -> TQM2	0.845
TM -> SOC_P	0.496	TQM -> TQM3	0.866
TM -> SP	0.549	TQM -> TQM4	0.821
TM -> TM1	0.850	TQM -> TQM5	0.862
TM -> TM2	0.839	QE (TQM) -> ECO_P	0.164
TM -> TM3	0.814	QE (TQM) -> ENV_P	0.161





TM -> TM4	0.833	QE (TQM) -> SOC_P	0.165
TM -> TM5	0.848	QE (TQM) -> SP	0.183
TQM -> ECO_P	0.815	QE (TQM) -> TM	0.109
TQM -> ENV_P	0.799	QE (TQM) -> TM1	0.092
TQM -> SOC_P	0.820	QE (TQM) -> TM2	0.091
TQM -> SP	0.908	QE (TQM) -> TM3	0.088
TQM -> TM	0.938	QE (TQM) -> TM4	0.091
TQM -> TM1	0.798	QE (TQM) -> TM5	0.092
TQM -> TM2	0.788		

When the analysis of SP is conducted considering its sub-dimensions in the research model, similar results are obtained. In this regard, it has been observed that TQM and TM positively and significantly affect sustainability in the economic, environmental, and social sustainability sub-dimensions, both directly and with quadratic effects.

Multiple group analyses conducted on the research model indicate that there is no significant difference in the relationships between variables based on gender and educational level. However, when the classification is made based on the firm's size, some differences are observed among small firms with fewer than 50 employees, medium-sized firms with 50-250 employees, and large firms with more than 250 employees. Accordingly, the positive effect of an increase in TQM implementation on SP is statistically significant (0.05) more in medium-sized firms than in small and large firms. This situation is also valid for the quadratic effect of TQM on SP in medium-sized firms, where the increase is statistically significant (0.01) compared to large firms. Regarding the effects of TM, no differences are observed between the groups.

Table 5: Differences in effect levels based on firm size

	Difference (FSIZE-M - FSIZE-L)	Difference (FSIZE-M - FSIZE-S)	2-tailed p value (FSIZE-M vs FSIZE-L)	2-tailed p value (FSIZE-M vs FSIZE-S)
TM -> SP	-0.382	-0.442	0.151	0.082
TQM -> SP	0.573	0.539	0.042	0.040
TQM -> TM	0.102	0.117	0.070	0.090
QE (TQM) -> SP	0.336	0.128	0.006	0.351
QE (TQM) -> TM	0.090	0.048	0.261	0.654

## 7. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

### 7.1. Discussion

The results obtained in the study reveal that an increase in TQM practices enhances the level of TM implementation and SP in businesses. Moreover, in this relationship, the increase in TQM level not only has a direct effect but also leads to an increase in both TM and SP through a quadratic effect. This outcome suggests that TQM practices, considered in five sub-dimensions as leadership, people, process, strategy and policy, partnership, and resources, guide businesses from a short-term perspective towards a long-term strategic perspective, supporting an approach that serves the vision of economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The



increase in TQM implementation requires an approach encompassing all stakeholders' participation in processes to improve all processes, as it is associated with a process-oriented perspective and prioritizes customer satisfaction. As TQM implementation increases, stakeholder participation increases, allowing businesses to better understand and respond to stakeholder expectations and needs, thus developing solutions that address them more effectively. Companies paying more attention to stakeholder demands and expectations and responding to these demands and needs more quickly enhance the sustainability performance of businesses.

The finding of a positive and significant relationship between TQM and SP across economic, environmental, and social sustainability sub-dimensions aligns with the results obtained by Tasleem et al. (2018) in Pakistan, Nguyen et al. (2018) in Vietnam, Alsawafia et al. (2019) in the UK, Alintah-Abel et al. (2019) in Nigeria, AlShehail et al. (2022) in the UAE, and Saha et al. (2022) in Bangladesh, Lepistö et al. (2023) in Finland, Tajouri and Lakhali (2024) in Tunisia, supporting the results they obtained for the Turkish sample.

All the processes described above fall under the management of businesses' human resources, which play a crucial role in achieving the desired outcomes. This interaction, fueled by increasing expectations from human resources, requires more competent employees and managers who can understand and manage multifaceted stakeholder expectations. Therefore, in companies where the level of Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation increases, there is a higher need for Talent Management (TM), especially to train and ensure the readiness of employees in key positions and awareness focused on process improvement.

TQM practices require understanding processes and continuous improvement approaches through input-process-output analyses. This necessitates identifying human resources as a critical element and defining roles, responsibilities and needs analyses for all tasks. This supports an increase in the TQM level by defining critical positions, acquiring talent, developing talent, talent participation, and talent retention, all of which constitute an increase in the TM implementation level.

The study found that an increase in TM implementation significantly increases SP, and an increase in TQM level further strengthens this interaction. An increase in TM implementation positively influences SP, as it helps meet the critical human resource needs for positions supporting businesses in meeting stakeholder expectations. The findings support the results of Bratton (2018) in Scotland, Pantouvakis and Vlachos (2020) in Greece, Mujtaba and Mubarak (2022) in Pakistan, Kafetzopoulos and Gotzamani (2022) in Greece, and Elzek et al. (2023) in Egypt for the Turkish sample.

The results also indicate that, in the classification made according to firm size, the positive effect of an increase in TQM implementation on SP is significantly greater in medium-sized firms compared to both small and large firms. This situation is also valid for the quadratic effect



of TQM on SP in medium-sized firms, where the increase is statistically significant compared to large firms.

Considering the findings, implementing effective talent management practices in business management will contribute to the long-term sustainability and performance of the business. Therefore, firms with widespread Total Quality Management (TQM) practices play a crucial role in creating a conducive environment for effective talent management. Consequently, companies that implement talent management practices alongside TQM practices will experience a mutually reinforcing positive impact on sustainability performance and the success of talent management practices.

## 7.2. Conclusion

This study examines the relationships between employees' perceptions of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Talent Management (TM) practices with Sustainable Performance (SP). For this purpose, data obtained from 339 managers and employees in the manufacturing sector in Istanbul, Yalova, and Kocaeli provinces were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modelling. The findings indicate that an increase in the level of TQM implementation enhances both the level of TM practices and SP in organizations. Moreover, besides its direct effect, this increase in TQM level leads to an increase in both TM and SP through a quadratic effect. An increase in the level of TQM supports an increase in the level of TM practices. The study also observes that an increase in the level of TM practices significantly enhances SP, and the increase in TQM level further strengthens this interaction. Furthermore, the findings suggest that in terms of classification based on company size, the positive effect of an increase in TQM implementation on SP is significantly greater in medium-sized companies compared to small and large firms, and this holds for the quadratic effect as well.

## 7.3. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The study was limited to certain provinces and manufacturing industries due to budget, time, and physical accessibility constraints. Therefore, the sample obtained does not represent all regions and sectors from an industrial perspective. For this reason, in terms of the Turkish sample, examining the relationships between the variables subject to study, especially in areas such as service, tourism, and financial institutions, due to their basic structure or involving different working conditions in different regions, will make significant contributions to the literature. Another important issue for similar studies is to examine how different environmental conditions and competition levels affect the relationships between variables.

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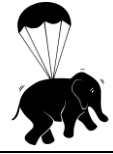


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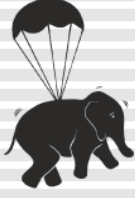
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In this study, the rules stated in the “**Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive**” were followed.

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## *Girişimcilerin Nedenini ve Nasılını Anlamak: "StoryBox" Üzerinden Bir Çözümleme*

Osman Akarsu<sup>1</sup>

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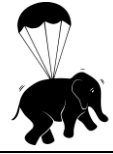
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### Özet

Çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'deki girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamları bütünsel olarak (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal boyutta) ele almak ve bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları çözümlemektir. Girişimsel başarı literatürü, Türkiye gibi gelişmekte olan ülkelerdeki girişimcilerin başarıya nasıl değer verdiğinin araştırılmasını bu ülkelerdeki araştırmaların sınırlı olmasından dolayı önermektedir. Farklı öznel girişimcilik algılarıyla yaratılan anlamlar, o ülkeye özgü piyasa mekanizmasının anlaşılması için gerekli unsurlardır. Girişimci özelliklerinin evrensel olmadığı gibi belirli bir kuralında olmadığı, ilgili başarı kriterlerinin de literatürde ayrı ayrı ele alındığı görülmektedir. Geliştirilen araştırma sorularının cevaplandırılabilmesi için "Youtube" içerisinde yer alan girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerinin ele alındığı "StoryBox" kanalındaki 120 video nitel araştırma yöntemleri ile analiz edilmiş, video içerikler çözümlenerek tematik analize tabi tutulmuştur. Girişimcilerin videolarda vurguladıkları başarı kriterlerinin benzerliği ve tekrarı açısından verinin doyum noktasına ulaştığı hissedildiğinde araştırma tamamlanmıştır. Bulgularda Türkiye'deki girişimcilerin, girişimsel başarıyı niteliksel olarak üç farklı tematik bakış açısıyla (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal) ve altı alt kategoride tanımladıkları, kendi anlayışlarına bağlı olarak farklı şekilde yorumladıkları görülmektedir. Bulgular, literatürün genel eğilimine uygun olmakla birlikte Türkiye'ye özgü bireysel boyutta mayalanmak ve şükretmek, örgütsel boyutta kıskançlık ve lüks tüketime yönelme, toplumsal boyuttaysa ileriye düşme gibi farklı başarı kriterleri dikkat çekmektedir. Çalışma girişimci profilinin değer yaratma süreçlerinin anlaşılması açısından önemlidir. Türkiye'de ekonomik ve sosyal kalkınmanın ana unsurlarından olan girişimcilik pratiği ve kültürünün daha iyi anlaşılmasına katkı sağlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** girişimci, başarı faktörleri, nitel araştırma, video temelli araştırma

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## *Understanding the Why and How of Entrepreneurs: An Analysis via “StoryBox”*

### **Abstract**

The aim of the study is to comprehensively examine the meanings attributed by entrepreneurs in Türkiye to success criteria, both at individual, organizational, and societal levels, and to analyze the interpretations of these criteria. The literature on entrepreneurial success suggests the need for investigating how entrepreneurs in developing countries like Türkiye perceive and prioritize success, given the limited research conducted in these regions. The meanings created through different subjective perceptions of entrepreneurship are essential elements for understanding the unique market mechanisms specific to that country. Entrepreneurial characteristics are not universal nor do they have a specific rule, and the relevant success criteria are discussed separately in the literature. Qualitative research approach was employed to analyze 120 videos from the "StoryBox" channel on YouTube, where the success criteria of entrepreneurs were discussed. The video contents were examined and subjected to thematic analysis. Data collection ends when entrepreneurs consistently emphasize similar and recurring success criteria in the analyzed videos, indicating a saturation point. The findings indicate that Turkish entrepreneurs define and interpret entrepreneurial success qualitatively through three thematic perspectives (individual, organizational, and societal) and six sub-categories, reflecting their unique interpretations. The findings align with the general trend in the literature, but they highlight distinct success criteria unique to Türkiye, such as individual-level resilience and gratitude, organizational-level competitiveness (jealousy) and inclination towards luxury consumption, and societal-level forward-thinking. This study holds significance for understanding the entrepreneurial profile and its role in value creation processes.

**Keywords:** entrepreneur, success factors, qualitative research, video-based research



## EXTENDED ABSTRACT

**Background & Purpose:** The aim of this study is to holistically (individually, organizationally and socially) address the meanings attributed to success criteria by entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial success literature theoretically values knowledge in developing countries such as Türkiye, where it has not been investigated how entrepreneurs value success. The literature indicates that there is a limited body of research focused on exploring how entrepreneurs define the meaning of success. It is recognized that entrepreneurial characteristics lack universality and do not adhere to specific rules. The entrepreneurial success literature often treats pertinent success criteria as separate entities. Definitions of entrepreneurial success stand out with their emphasis on seeing opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000), establishing businesses and their maintenance (Duane Ireland and Webb, 2007, p.917), combining advantage and opportunity seeking processes (Ireland et al., 2003), and also growth-oriented definitions (Carland et al., 1984, p.357). However, the principal objective of this study is to offer a comprehensive depiction of entrepreneurial success within the context of developing country, Türkiye, considering the unique conditions and circumstances.

**Research Method:** In this study 120 videos on the "StoryBox" ("Youtube" channel) were analysed by qualitative research methods, and the video contents were analysed by thematic analysis. The research was completed when it was felt that the data had reached the saturation point in terms of the similarity and repetition of the success criteria emphasized by the entrepreneurs in the videos. All videos in the year range 2020 - 2023 were watched and the success criteria of Turkish entrepreneurs were investigated. A video offers superior capabilities to researchers for many different reasons, such as the ability to see facial expressions and body language and helping researchers understand the interviewees better and repeatability (de Villiers et al., 2022, p.1769). It has been observed that video-based entrepreneurship research is handled with three dominant video research methods in the literature. Ormiston and Thompson (2021, p.976) expressed these three methods as "videography of entrepreneurship in the wild, video content analysis using videos created by the entrepreneur, and revealing video in produced contexts." Thematic analysis was conducted on a dataset consisting of 120 videos.

**Conclusion:** The success criteria of entrepreneurs in Türkiye were determined as "individual, organizational and social success factors" under 3 separate themes. Under these three themes, each theme was evaluated in two categories. Subcategories that form the basis of these categories were determined and stated in Table 5. These determined themes and categories are in line with the general trend of the literature (Allen et al., 2021; Shakeel et al., 2020; Stam and Van de Ven, 2021; Sułkowski et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2021). The concepts of courage (Bockorny, 2015), diligence (Presenza et al., 2020), not being influenced by the environment (Guerrero et al., 2021, p.1744), apprenticeship history (Ebereonwu, 2021, p.23), creating value (Allen et al., 2021, p.359), doing right and proper work (Bauman and Lucy, 2021; Saputra, 2021, p.60), timing (Wood et al., 2021, p.147), which are among the individual success factors has been discussed in the literature.

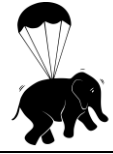


Other factors included in the individual success factors are; The concepts of having a reputation (Chang and Chen, 2020, s.752), being patient (Doepke and Zilibotti, 2014, p.15), serial entrepreneur (Bauman and Lucy, 2021), loving (McLaughlin, 2012), successor, continuity (Santoro et al., 2020, p.145-147), transparency, and being passionate (Newman et al., 2021) have also been discussed in the literature.

The research has founded distinctive findings that are specific to Türkiye. Among the criteria for entrepreneurial success, qualities such as "resilience and gratitude" stand out as individual success factors unique to the country. Entrepreneurs in Türkiye express that their strongest source of motivation is their commitment to contributing to their country. This phenomenon has recently emerged as a concept known as "patriotic entrepreneurship" in the international literature (Sułkowski et al., 2022, p.297).

There is no issue that can be described as unique to us in the development processes mentioned among the organizational success factors, and results are obtained in line with the general literature trend (Florek-Paszowska et al., 2021; Hossinger et al., 2020; Skawińska and Zalewski, 2020). However, there are obstacles experienced by entrepreneurs, which are unique to us. Among these, "the issue of envy" has been expressed by almost every entrepreneur, solutions have been offered for this and the phenomenon has been examined. It is thought that studies should be carried out, especially in the field of organizational sociology, which will shed light on future studies on this issue. Another point that can be specifically mentioned among organizational factors is that many entrepreneurs immediately "turn to luxury consumption" instead of investing the first money they earn in their businesses in the first years of their enterprises. It has been stated that this issue has financial and organizational consequences and can lead businesses to bankruptcy.

This study includes recommendations for potential young entrepreneurs of Türkiye, which is expressed under the title of social success factors. Among these, the issue of "falling forward" is explained in detail, emphasis is placed on the fact that it is not "easy to make money", and some advice is given to abandon "hopeless shortcuts". Another social factor that is expressed by entrepreneurs is the concepts of "charity and zakat". Charity and zakat already distinguish our country from non-Muslim geographies. These concepts exist in our own culture and expressed in researches under the title of social responsibility. Critical situations that entrepreneurs experienced during the process were also expressed. Demographic information such as average age, sector information, marital status and graduation information of the entrepreneurs in the sample were obtained. Incorporation of specific details such as the technical proficiency of entrepreneurs, their training background, the export status of their companies, and the average age of their enterprises serves to provide an introductory context for our dataset.



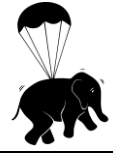
## 1. GİRİŞ

Girişimcilerin başarılarının nedenlerinin ve nasıllarının irdelendiği bu çalışmada sosyal gerçekliğin doğasını nitel araştırma yoluyla ortaya koymak istenilmektedir. İşletme literatürünün odağında bulunan araştırma konuları içerisinde yer alan girişimcilerin başarı faktörleri her zaman nicel yöntemlerle elde edilemeyecek gizil bilgiler içermekte ve nitel yöntemlerle de araştırılması gerekmektedir (Wach vd., 2016, s.1113; Yılmaz vd., 2013, s.155). Girişimsel başarıya ilişkin içsel ve dışsal faktörlerin birleştirilmesine ve derin anlamların anlaşılmasına yol açabilmesi açısından olgu bütünsel manada ele alınmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamları bütünsel olarak (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal boyutta) ele almak ve bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları çözümlenektir. Fisher vd. (2014, s.478) başarının girişimciler için ne anlama geldiğine ilişkin araştırmaların yetersiz olduğu ifade etmişlerdir. Girişimsel başarı her boyutunda anlamlandırılıp, araştırmacıların empoze ettiği kriterlerden ziyade girişimciler tarafından kullanılan kriterleri yansıtabilecek biçimde ele alınmalıdır. Wach vd. (2016, s.1098) çalışmalarında ifade ettiği şekliyle “özel girişimcilik başarısını” kavramsallaştırıp teori ve uygulama açısından faydalarını ortaya koymak gerekmektedir. Çalışma kapsamında teorik lens olarak kullanacağımız girişimsel başarı literatürü olguyu analiz düzeyleri bazında ayrı ayrı ele almıştır. Araştırmanın mevcut tasarımına benzer bütüncül manada özgün çalışmaların sınırlı olduğu fark edilmiştir.

Baron ve Henry (2011, s.261) girişimsel başarı literatürdeki bütünsel yaklaşımlardaki eksikliğin, “girişimcilik akademisyenleri için bir sorun olduğunu ve ayrıntılı araştırmaya değer olduğunu” ileri sürmektedirler. Angel vd. (2018, s.612) çalışmasında girişimsel başarıyı “kritere dayalı yaklaşımları yorumlayıcı, anlamaya dayalı yaklaşımlarla tamamlama ihtiyacını” ortaya koymaktadır. Yazarlar anlamaya dayalı yaklaşımların anlam farklılıklarına karşı daha duyarlı olduğunu ve başarı kriterlerinin anlaşılmasına yönelik alternatif yolların yakalanmasına olanak tanıdığını ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca anlamaya dayalı yaklaşım, girişimcilerin başarıya nasıl ulaşmaya çalıştıklarına ilişkin anlam farklılıklarının sonuçlarına dair içgörüler sunabilecektir. Benimsediğimiz teorik konum, mevcut çalışmanın araştırma sorunsalını ayrıntılı olarak keşfetmemize olanak sağlayabilecek nitelikte olduğu düşünülmektedir. "StoryBox" kanalındaki 120 video nitel yöntemlerle çözümlenmiş ve deşifre edilen video içerik tematik analize tabi tutulmuştur.

Türkiye’deki girişimcilerin girişimsel başarıya ilişkin bakış açılarını nitel yöntemlerle ele alması ve ilgili literatürü bütünsel manada zenginleştirilmesi çalışmanın özgünlüğünü ortaya koymaktadır. Araştırmanın amacı girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamları bütünsel olarak (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal boyutta) ele almak ve bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları çözümlenektir. Bu çalışma kapsamında girişimcilerin, girişimsel başarıya verdikleri anlam ve örüntülerden başarı kriterleri, motivasyon kaynakları, karşılaştıkları engel ve zorluklar ve gençlere tavsiyeleri gibi sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır.



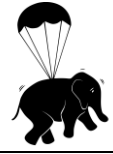
Chatterjee ve Das (2015, s.102) çalışmasında girişimcilik başarısı üzerinde etkisi olan psikolojik faktörler üzerine, Chattopadhyay ve Ghosh (2002, s.21) benzer şekilde girişimsel başarının sosyo-psikolojik kökenleri üzerine çalışmışlardır. Wong vd. (2005, s.286-287) çalışmalarında yenilikçilik, dışsal kontrol odağı, başarı ihtiyacı, risk alma gibi bireysel girişimcilik faktörlerinin girişimsel başarı için önemli olduğunu vurgulamışlardır. Literatürde gözlenen girişimcilik başarısı ile ilişkili başlıca psikolojik boyutlar; başarı ihtiyacı, kontrol odağı, risk eğilimi, öz yeterlilik, belirsizliğe tolerans, yenilikçilik, bağımsızlık ve özerklik ve iyimserlik olarak vurgulanmıştır (Rauch ve Frese, 2000). Bireysel unsurlar içerisinde eğitim, deneyim, bilgi ve beceriler dâhil olmak üzere beşerî sermaye ile girişimsel başarı arasındaki ilişki etrafında ele alındığı görülmektedir.

Ancak, bireysel faktörler tek başına girişimsel başarıyı açıklamak noktasında yetersiz kalacağı, üst yöneticilerin bir yansıması olan örgütün (Hambrick ve Mason, 1984, s.193) dışarıda tutulacağı ve bireylerin büyüüp yetiştikleri ülkelerin koşul şartları da farklılaşacağı düşünüldüğünden olguyu bütünsel manada ele almanın gerekliliği vurgulanmalıdır. Girişimsel başarı alanında yapılan çalışmalar çoğunlukla tek bir analiz düzeyinde ve girişimcinin sahip olduğu özelliklere odaklanarak yapıldığı görülmektedir.

Bu bireysel boyutların yanında girişimciler kendilerini faaliyet gösterdikleri örgüt açısından da başarılı addedebilmektedirler. Başarı, performansın belirli bileşenlerinin bir ölçüsüdür. Örgütsel başarı kriterleri olarak dikkat çeken unsurlar içerisinde kar elde etme, rekabet etme, ekonomik gelişme ve büyüme odaklılık gibi mali göstergeler başarı kriterleri arasında sayılmaktadır (Altaf vd., 2019; Bauman ve Lucy, 2021; Khan vd., 2021; Tuan, 2023). Firma düzeyinde, araştırmacılar satış, kar veya çalışanlardaki büyüme gibi kriterleri kullanarak girişimcilik başarısını ağırlıklı olarak firmanın büyümesi olarak kavramlaştırmışlardır (Achtenhagen vd., 2010, s.290). Kar elde etme, büyüme, tesisleşme, istihdam yaratma, değişime ayak uydurma gibi unsurların örgütsel manada girişimsel başarı faktörleri olarak ifade edildiği görülmüştür.

Ancak örgütsel faktörlerde girişimciliği tek başına açıklama noktasında sığ kalabilmektedir. Angel vd. (2018, s.611) girişimcilik araştırmalarının ağırlıklı olarak firma düzeyindeki başarı anlayışlarına ve bunları tahmin etmeye yardımcı olan kişisel faktörlere odaklandığını ancak bunun girişimciler için ne anlama geldiğini araştırmaktan uzak olduğunu vurgulamışlardır.

Girişimsel başarıyı toplumsal düzeyde tanımlayan yaklaşımlarda bulunmaktadır. Raine ve Pandya (2019, s.189) çalışmasında dünyanın en başarılı girişimcileri toplumu iyileştirme konusunda meraklı, yenilikçi fikirler geliştirmede yaratıcı, görevlerine ve topluma karşı duyarlı insanlar olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. İşletmelerin sosyal tarafına vurguyla ele alınan toplumsal faydanın ve sosyal değer yaratmanın bir başarı kriteri olarak sosyal sorumluluk içinde hareket etmenin önemine vurgu yapıldığı gözlenmiştir (Ahmad ve Seet, 2009; Kroeger ve Weber, 2014; Stevens vd., 2015). Benzer şekilde Fauchart ve Gruber (2011) girişimcinin sosyal kimliğine bağlı olarak kişisel tatmin ve başarının farklı anlamlar kazandığını ve farklı yollarla elde edildiğini bulmuşlardır. Bu başarının, bir topluluğa ait olarak ve onu destekleyerek veya bir



sosyal misyonu gerçekleştirerek elde edildiği belirtilmiştir. Ülkemizde de girişimcinin perspektifinden kendi girişimsel başarısını değerlendiren ve bağlamın öneminin göz ardı edildiğine vurgu yapan çalışmalara rastlanılmaktadır (Çitçi vd., 2018, s.153).

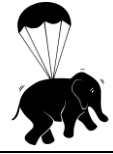
Toplumsal başarı faktörleri de yine ülkeler açısından ve girişimcilerin sosyal kimlikleri açısından doğası gereği farklılaşacaktır. Bir toplum için ayakta kalmak, geçimini sürdürmek gibi temel düzeyde unsurlar girişimsel başarı olarak değerlendirilirken, bir diğer toplum açısından sosyal faydaya ve topluma dönük çıktılara sahip olup olmama (Walske vd., 2007) hususu girişimsel başarının tanımı olabilecektir. Görüldüğü üzere olguyu tek bir analiz düzeyinde ele alan yaklaşımlarda bir taraf eksik kalmakta bütüncül manada derin anlamlar çıkarmak güçleşmektedir.

Türkiye'deki girişimciler girişimsel başarı kriterlerine nasıl anlamlar yüklemektedirler? temel araştırma sorusu üzerine ülkemizde faaliyet gösteren işletmelerin kurucularıyla ilgili yapılan videolar irdelenmiş, girişimsel başarılarının arkasında yatan nedenler ve nasıllar bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal faktörler ile açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır. Nitel araştırma yöntemleriyle video veriler çözümlenmiş ve deşifre edilen içerik “tematik analizi yöntemi” ile analize tabi tutulmuştur. Tematik analizde daha önceden belirlenmiş olan bir konuda gerçekleştirilen çalışmalar ele alınmakta, çeşitli temalar altında incelenmekte ve genel değerlendirmelere ulaşılmaktadır (Castleberry ve Nolen, 2018, s.807). Araştırmanın amacı, girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamları bütünsel olarak (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal boyutta) ele almak ve bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları çözümlenektir. Çalışma kapsamında analiz edilen başarı hikayelerinden elde edilen bulgular şu şekildedir.

Bulgular, Türkiye'deki girişimcilerin başarıyı bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal başarı kriterleri altında ele aldıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Elde edilen bulgular genel literatür eğilimine uygun olmakla beraber her bir kriter açısından Türkiye'ye özgü sonuçları yansıtması bakımından önemlidir. Bu nitel bulgular, girişimcilerin yalnızca farklı başarı kriterlerine verdikleri önem açısından değil, aynı zamanda bu farklı başarı kriterlerini nasıl anladıkları açısından da farklılık oluşturduğunu göstererek girişimsel başarıya ilişkin literatürü genişletmektedir. Bireysel faktörler içerisinde; başarı kriterleri ve motivasyon kaynakları, örgütsel faktörler içerisinde; gelişim süreçleri ile engel ve bariyerler, toplumsal faktörler içerisinde; gençlere verdikleri tavsiyeler ve sosyal sorumluluk açısından olguyu değerlendirdikleri bulgulanmıştır.

Bu makale 5 bölümden oluşmaktadır. İkinci bölümde girişimsel başarı faktörleri kavramsallaştırılmış, yeni sayılabilecek video temelli araştırmalar ve video temelli girişimcilik araştırmaları tanıtılmıştır. Üçüncü bölümde araştırma yöntemi tanıtılmış veri toplama süreçleri ile ilgili bilgilendirme yapılmıştır. Dördüncü bölümde araştırmanın bulguları değerlendirilmiş, son bölümde ise araştırmanın sonuçları, teoriye ve uygulayıcılara katkıları ifade edilip sonraki çalışmalar için öneriler sıralanmıştır.



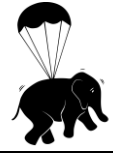


## 2. KAVRAMSAL ARKA PLAN

Başarıyı belirleyen faktörler, devlet ve özel sektörde politika ve strateji yapımcıların, araştırmacıların ve uygulayıcıların giderek daha fazla dikkatini çekmekte ve teorik olarak daha fazla ilgi görmektedir (Khan vd., 2021, s.2; Omri vd., 2015, s.1074; Shakeel vd., 2020, s.13; Wach vd., 2020, s.1126). Girişimcilerin aldıkları kararların da başarı ya da başarısızlık anlamında kendi işletmelerinin tamamını kapsadığı (Malone vd., 2003) düşünüldüğünde, önce insanı, sonra içinde bulunduğu örgütü ve toplumu anlamamız gerekliliği öne çıkmaktadır. Literatürde girişimsel başarı, bireysel faktörlerle, örgütsel faktörlerle ve toplumsal koşul şartlarını dikkate alan bir yaklaşımla ayrı ayrı ele alındığı görülmektedir.

Girişimciler açısından bireysel başarının ne anlama geldiğine ilişkin pek çok akademik çalışma yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmalarda: McMullen ve Shepherd (2006), girişimcilerin kişisel tatmininin neler olduğunu vurgulamış; Fisher vd. (2014, s.480), başarıyı parasal boyutuyla zenginlik olarak ele almış; Barreira (2004); Overall ve Wise (2016), girişimsel başarının öncüllerini belirlemeye çalışmışlardır. Terim anlamında başarılı girişimci, girişimcinin başarısı, girişimin başarısı gibi farklı göstergelerle kavramsallaştırılabilecek diğer yapıları da içerdiği literatürde vurgulanmaktadır (Crane ve Crane, 2007). Aslında bu durum literatürdeki analiz boyutlarındaki farklılığı dikkate almadan kavramsallaştırılmaya gidildiğinin bir tür ifadesidir. Literatürde erkekler ve kadınlar açısından başarı kriterlerindeki farklılıkların (Cliff, 1998), endüstrideki önceki deneyimlerin (Azoulay vd., 2020, s.65) genç yaşın (Zhao vd., 2021) ve cinsiyet gibi faktörlerin (Peter ve Munyithya, 2015) girişimsel başarıya etkilerine dair çalışmalara rastlanılmıştır. Bunların dışında bireysel faktörler içerisinde değerlendirilebilecek girişimcilerin motivasyon düzeylerinin onların girişimsel başarısına etkileri (Kuratko vd., 1997; Robichaud vd., 2001), farklı ülkelerdeki girişimciler açısından motivasyon kaynaklarının girişimsel başarıya etkileri (Gupta ve Fernandez, 2009) bağlamında yapılan çalışmalar da bulunmaktadır. Bireysel başarı faktörlerindeki bu çeşitlilikte kendi içinde bir kargaşa yaratmaktadır. Pek çok farklı değişken ve kavram ile olgunun çalışıldığı gözlenmektedir. Birey düzeyinde çeşitli özellik, tutum ve davranışlar ile girişimsel başarının tanımlandığı (Baron, 2004; Brandstätter, 2011; Marvel vd., 2016; Nicolaou ve Shane, 2009) lakin bütünlendirici ve kapsayıcı manada bir yaklaşımla olgunun ele alınmadığı, girişimsel başarının ölçümü ile ilgili değerlendirmelere çok gidilmediği literatürde gözlenmektedir. Çalışma kapsamında motivasyon ve bireysel başarı kriterleri birbirinden ayrı alt kriterler olarak ele alınmıştır.

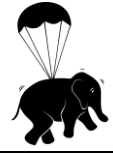
Girişimsel başarıyı örgütsel ve toplumsal değişkenlerle ele alan bir literatürün varlığı da gözlenmektedir. Kessler (2007) çalışmasında çevresel etkilere odaklanmış ve gelişmekte olan piyasa ekonomilerinde iş ortamı farklılık gösterdiğinden, startup başarı faktörlerinin de bu bağlamda farklılık gösterdiğini bulgulamıştır. Parasal veya parasal olmayan kriterlerle girişimsel başarıyı değerlendirme (Jenkins ve McKelvie, 2016), ülkelerin koşul şartlarına ve farklı ekonomik koşullara göre başarı farklılıkları (Stefanovic vd., 2010) başarı faktörleri ve başarısızlığa giden yollar (Devece vd., 2016) gibi pek çok farklı açıdan değerlendirmeye gidildiği gözlenmektedir. Girişimsel başarı literatüründe yıllar içerisinde görülen net ilerlemeye



rağmen kabul görmüş ve uzlaşa sağlanmış derli toplu bir kavramsallaştırmaya rastlanılmamıştır. Literatürdeki bu çeşitliliğin yanında çalışmamıza benzer şekilde; kişisel, çevresel faktörler ile hükümetlerin desteklerinin girişimsel başarıya etkileri (Gupta ve Mirchandani, 2018, s.220) gibi konularla ele alınan çalışmalarda bulunmaktadır. Girişimsel başarının kültürel konulardan etkilendiği ve bireysel bakış açısına da bağlı olduğu ifade edilmiştir (Gupta ve Fernandez, 2009, s.312-313; Rauch ve Frese, 2000). Girişimsel başarının anahtarı olarak “ülkelerin koşul şartlarını daha çok ön planda tutan değişkenlere ihtiyaç duyulduğu” vurgulanmıştır (Akarsu ve Döven, 2022, s.159). Girişimsel başarıyı örgütsel manada etkileyen unsurların belirlenmesine ilişkin çalışmalara da ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Literatür çoğunlukla girişimin başarısını ele almakta, lakin örgütsel aktörlerin ifadelerinde bu başarının aranmamakta olduğu getirilecek bir eleştiri olabilir. Hazır şablon ve tasarımlarla girişimsel başarı olgusu ele alınabileceği kabul edilmelidir lakin işletmelerin kendi iç dinamiklerinde ve faaliyet gösterdikleri ülkelerin koşul şartları içerisinde biricik ve kendine özgü olduğu unutulmamalıdır. Girişimsel başarıya ilişkin örgütsel ve toplumsal başarı kriterlerinin bireylerin işletmelerine ve topluma ilişkin algıları süreç içinde bulunulan zamana ve duruma göre gelişip değişmesi bu olgulara nitel araştırma yöntemleriyle yönelmenin önemli bir nedenidir. Süreç içerisindeki değişiklikleri yorumlayıcı bir yapı ile ele almak gerekmektedir.

Çalışmanın özellikle ülkemiz girişimcisinin başarı kriterlerini nasıl tanımladığını keşfetmesine ve ekonomik ve sosyal kalkınmanın ana aktörlerinden olan girişimci profilinin değer yaratma süreçlerinin anlaşılmasına katkı sunması beklenmektedir. Araştırmanın girişimcilerin neyi başarı olarak gördüklerini anlamak noktasında alana teorik katkı potansiyeli bulunmaktadır. Bu araştırma geleneksel manada yapılan nicel yöntemlerde kullanılan araştırma yöntemlerinden farklı bir tasarımla okuyucunun karşısındadır. Literatürde girişimsel başarının anketler ve genel olarak nicel yöntemin enstrümanları ile ele alındığı görülmektedir.

Girişimciler kendi girişimcilik serüvenini aktarırken etkileşimsel, duygusal, somutlaşmış ve maddi yönlerinin farkına varmadan ya da bilmeden girişimciliğinden ve başarılarından bahsederler. Bazı akademisyenler anketler, röportajlar, deneyler ve ikincil veriler gibi baskın yöntemlerin girişimci eylemin gerçekleştiği anda yalnızca sınırlı bir fikir verdiğini ifade etmişlerdir (Dana ve Dana, 2008; Zahra ve Wright, 2011). Anketlerin sınırlılığı araştırmacının paradigmasıyla sınırlı iken video temelli araştırmalarda açık uçlu sorular geniş bilgiler verebilmektedir. Araştırmacı açısından araştırma sorularını aşamalı olarak iyileştirmesine fırsatlar sunan bir yanı bulunduğu da vurgu yapılmıştır (Engle vd., 2014). Video tabanlı yöntemler, girişimcilerin yaptıklarını belirttikleri veya araştırmacıların kendilerinin görebildiği şeyleri doğrulayabilen, tamamlayabilen veya bunlarla çelişebilen girişimcilik faaliyetlerine ilişkin güçlü alternatif bakış açıları sağlamaktadır (Gylfe vd., 2016). Video temelli araştırmalar önemli ölçüde araştırma maliyeti azalışı da sağlamaktadır (Chalmers ve Shaw, 2017; Christianson, 2018; Zundel vd., 2018). Ayrıca girişimciyi kendini bulduğu ortam olan iş yerinde video kayıta almanın bazı üstünlükleri bulunmaktadır. Bunlar girişimcinin kendini rahat hissetmesi, yanlılıktan uzak samimi bir ortam sunması ve “örtülü mekânsal bilgiye” (Kelley, 2011, s.186) ulaşılmasına imkân sağlamasıdır. Video temelli girişimcilik araştırmaları

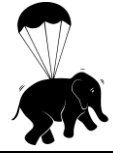


akademiye derinlemesine öngörü ve çıkarımlarda bulunma noktasında yardımcı olabilir. Alanda pek çok akademisyen bu olgunun çalışılmasını öğütlemiştir (Heracleous ve Jacobs, 2011; Shapiro, 2014).

Girişimsel başarı literatürü incelendiğinde olgunun çoğunlukla bireysel, örgütsel ya da toplumsal başarı kriterlerinin her birisini tek tek ele aldığı, çoğunlukla nicel yöntemi kullandığı görülmüştür. Ancak bu araştırmanın, alandaki farklılıkları toparlayıcı nitelikte bütünsel manada anlam arayışı içinde ve literatürdeki bu boşluğu doldurmak amacıyla olduğu söylenebilir. Girişimcilik araştırmalarında videonun kullanımı, çalışılması öğütlenen bir yöntem olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Video araştırmaları, analiz, sunum ve yayın biçimlerine olanak tanıyan yeni araştırma yöntemlerinden birisidir ve bu yeni araştırma yöntemi son derece farklı yollar önermektedir. Sosyal bilim araştırmalarında metodolojik çoğulculuğun önerildiği bir yaklaşımla videoların özellikle girişimcilik araştırmalarında kullanılabilmesi ifade edilmiştir (Christianson, 2018; Van Burg vd., 2022). Çoğulculuk yalnızca farklı analitik şablonların birleştirilmesi için değil aynı zamanda verilerdeki bulguların ve modellerin sunulabileceği yollar için de geçerli bir yaklaşımdır. Videonun, son yıllarda sosyal bilim araştırmaları için tekrarlanan somutlaşmış hareketlerden ifadeler kadar araştırılan olgu ile ilgili çok farklı konfigürasyonu görebilmemize olanak tanıyan benzersiz fırsatlar sunduğu ifade edilmiştir (Gylfe vd., 2016, s.135). Son yıllarda yapılan çalışmalarda video tabanlı çalışmaların, genellikle geleneksel niteliksel yöntemleri güçlendirerek, incelenen kuruluşa ilişkin zenginleştirilmiş bir anlayış sağladığı ifade edilmiştir (Gylfe vd., 2016, s.135; Vaara ve Whittington, 2012).

Bunların yanında video kayıtlarının ayrıntılı incelemeye tabi tutulabilme, tekrar tekrar analiz edilebilme ve daha geleneksel yöntemlerde bulunmayan davranış ve etkileşimin ince ayrıntılarına erişim sağlama gibi avantajları da bulunmaktadır (Christianson, 2018, s.262). Özellikle girişimsel başarı gibi bir kavramı ele alırken bu kayıtlar, yalnızca diğer araştırmacılarla değil, konuya daha pratik veya uygulamalı ilgisi olan kişilere de gösterilebilir ve paylaşılabilir. Yüz ifadelerini ve beden dilini görebilme yeteneği, araştırmacıların görüşülen kişileri daha iyi anlamalarına yardımcı olur ve video araştırmalarının doğasında olan bu özellikler araştırmacıya üstün yetenekler sunmaktadır (de Villiers vd., 2022, s.1769). Video temelli araştırmalar, analitik bakışı yeniden çerçevelemek, yeniden odaklamak ve yeniden değerlendirmek için zaman aşımı ve unutmaya gibi riskleri ortadan kaldırır (Christianson, 2018). Video araştırmalar, verileri birden fazla kez ele almak için farklı durumlarda farklı konuları araştırmak veya aynı konuyu birden fazla bakış açısıyla ele almak gibi özellikle de “nitel çalışmalarda genellenebilirlikle ilgili” yeni açılımlar sunma potansiyeline sahip bir araştırma türüdür. Literatürde nitel araştırmacıların derinlemesine zengin veriler toplamak için videoları kullandıkları görülmüştür (Ash, 2016; Baym, 2015; Gillham, 2005; Heath vd., 2010; Kinsley, 2014; Shuy, 2003). Bu çalışmada, Türkiye’deki girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamsal örüntüler videolarda aranılmış, bahsedilen temel vurgular ve kodlar vasıtasıyla başarı



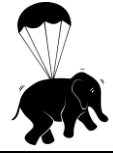
temalarını anlaşılma ve ülkemizdeki girişimcimizin başarı kriterleri değerlendirilmeye çalışılmıştır.

Ülkemiz alan yazınında da nadir de olsa benzer çalışmalara rastlanmaktadır. Yılmaz vd. (2013) günümüzün yeni teknolojilerinden olan akıllı video analiz yazılımlarının, perakende sektörüne yönelik kullanımları değerlendirilmiş ve bu tür sistemlerin gereksinimlerine değinmişlerdir. Video analizlerle mağaza yoğunluk tespiti, insan sayma sistemi, yaş ve cinsiyet tanıma sistemlerinden elde edilen verileri entegre edip, iş zekası yazılımları ile zenginleştirilmesi önerilmiştir (Yılmaz vd., 2013, s.155). Gelişmekte olan bir yöntem olarak video ve benzer teknolojilerin bilimsel araştırmalarda kullanılması (Schumpeter, 1942)'in ifadesi ile yaratıcı yıkım oluşturma potansiyeline sahip bir inovasyon olacaktır. Çünkü insanların beyanlarından çıkarılacak pek çok “anlam” bulunmaktadır. Girişimsel başarıya ülkemiz girişimcisinin yüklediği anlamların bütünsel olarak belirlenmeye çalışıldığı bu nitel araştırma, veri kaynağı olarak videoları kullanmıştır. Alan yazında video temelli girişimcilik araştırmalarının üç baskın video araştırma yöntemiyle ele alındığı gözlemlenmiştir. Ormiston ve Thompson (2021, s.976) bu üç yöntemi “vahşi ortamda girişimciliğin videografisi, girişimci tarafından oluşturulan videoları kullanan video içerik analizi, üretilmiş bağlamlarda videonun ortaya çıkarılması” şeklinde ifade etmişlerdir.

Video, televizyondan YouTube'a ve kişisel canlı yayın kanallarına kadar modern yaşamda hızla yaygın bir varlık haline gelmiş, bu alandaki teknolojik gelişmeler, araştırmalarda kullanılabilirliğini artırmıştır (Miller Scarnato, 2019, s.382). Elbette bu teknolojik gelişmelerin artıları ve eksileri, savunucuları ve eleştirenleri bulunmaktadır. Dünyada 2023 yılı sonu itibarıyla her gün 3,7 milyon yeni video “Youtube” içerisine yüklenmektedir. İnternet ve dijital yayın sektörünün hızlı gelişimi ile yeni, farklı öğrenme ve bilme yolları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu bilme ve öğrenme yollarından birisi de şüphesiz tüm toplumların sıklıkla kullandığı Youtube LLC.'dir. Ülkemizde yapılan bir çalışmada Ferik ve Devrim (2022, s.52) bir “Youtube” kanalını monografik yöntem ile incelemişlerdir. Farklı alanlarda yapılan bilimsel araştırmalarda video yayınların kullanımı ile ilgili gelişmekte olan bir literatür göze çarpmaktadır (Echeverri, 2005; Gray vd., 2020).

### 3. ARAŞTIRMA YÖNTEMİ

Bu çalışmada Türkiye'deki girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamları bütünsel olarak (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal boyutta) ele almak ve bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları çözümlenmek amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışma bağlamsal, anlamsal verileri kullanarak, girişimcilik araştırmalarında video görüşmelerinin kullanımından faydalanarak ülkemizdeki önemli sayılabilecek işletme ve start-up'ların kurucu ya da sahiplerinin girişimsel başarı faktörlerini değerlendirmektedir. Davis ve Marquis (2005, s.336) nitel araştırmaları “eyleme yaklaşması ve dolayısıyla, nicel araştırmayla karşılaştırıldığında, genellikle gözlemlenen sonucu ürettiği görülen eylemdeki 'dişlileri ve çarkları' daha iyi ortaya çıkarabilmesi” şeklinde ifade etmektedirler. Bu çalışmada nitel yöntemlerle video veriler deşifre edilip tematik analiz



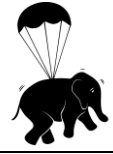
yöntemi ile ele alınmıştır. Bu veri setiyle Türkiye’deki girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamların bütünsel olarak ele alınabilmesi amacıyla katılımcıların girişimsel başarıya ilişkin beyanları incelenmiştir. Deşifre edilecek videolar “Youtube” üzerinden yayın yapan Türkiye’yi anlatan insan hikayeleri üreten yeni bir medya mecrası olan “StoryBox’dan” alınmıştır. “StoryBox” ülkemizdeki girişimcilerin başarı hikayelerini yayınlayan bir “Youtube” kanalıdır. İzlenme ve abone sayısı ile ülkemizde sevilen bir yayın olduğu düşünülmektedir. Veri seti, videolardan elde edilen veri kaynağı olduğu için örneklem seçiminde müdahalede bulunulmamıştır. Olasılıklı olmayan örneklem türlerinden amaçlı örneklem tercih edildiği söylenebilir. Bu örneklem türünde amaca uygun inceleme birimi, birimleri tercih edilmektedir (Ferik ve Devrim, 2022, s.52).

Neden bu kanalın tercih edildiğini ifade etmeden önce kanal hakkında kısa bir bilgi vermek yerinde olacaktır. “StoryBox” ülkemizdeki girişimcilerin başarı hikayelerini yayınlayan bir “Youtube” kanalıdır. Çalışmanın amacına uygunluğu açısından tercih edilmiş ve veri doyum noktasına ulaştığı düşünüldüğünde araştırma sonlandırılmıştır. İzlenme ve abone sayısı ile ülkemizde sevilen bir yayın olduğu düşünülmektedir. Kanalın kurucusu Ceyhun Kuburlu isimli dijital içerik üreticisidir. Ceyhun Kuburlu Radyo Televizyon bölümü mezunu olup kanalını kurmadan önce de yine 20 yıla yakın Türkiye’de faaliyet gösteren Hürriyet gazetesinin ekonomi bölümünde başarı hikayeleri konusunda yazıları bulunan deneyimli bir gazetecidir. “StoryBox” kanalının 769 bin abonesi bulunmaktadır. 15.12.2023 tarihinde kanalda 373 adet video bulunduğu görülmüştür. Toplam görüntülenme sayısı 140.971.667 olarak kayıtlıdır. “StoryBox” bu araştırmanın veri kaynağıdır. Kanalın linki aşağıda belirtilmiştir: [www.youtube.com/@StoryBoxvideos](http://www.youtube.com/@StoryBoxvideos) .

Oynatma listeleri içerisinde yer alan “Nasıl Başardılar?” bölümünde sadece girişimcilere ve girişimcilerin başarılarına odaklanan videolar paylaşılmıştır. Dolayısıyla tüm videolar benzer mantıkta olduğu ve mülakat içerikleri homojen yapıda olduğu düşünüldüğü için bu bölüm tercih edilmiştir. Videolarda araştırma sorusuna verilen cevapların tekrara düştüğü ve doyuma ulaştığı düşünüldüğünde araştırma tamamlanmıştır.

Bu çalışmada kullanılan tematik analiz, başarı gibi yaşanmış olgu ve deneyimlerin ne anlama geldiğini keşfetmemize olanak tanıyan bir yöntemdir. Tematik analizde amaç, cevabını aradığımız araştırma sorularına ilişkin zengin ve derinlemesine bilgilere ulaşmaktır. Araştırılan konuyu katılımcıların perspektifinden ele almak, katılımcıların bu perspektifi neden ve nasıl oluşturduklarını anlamak (Gürbüz ve Şahin, 2014, s.422) nitel çalışmalar açısından önemlidir. Tematik çözümlene, videolardan elde edilen kodlarla birlikte araştırmacının zihninde araştırma öncesinde var olan önsel kodlar kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Bu çalışmada kullanılan veri seti videolar olduğu için yapılan video görüşmelerde araştırmacının katılımcı rolü bulunmamaktadır. İkincil veriye açık kaynak olarak “Youtube” üzerinden ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmacının katılımcı rolünün bulunmaması nesnellik sorununu da ortadan kaldıracak niteliktedir. Nitel araştırmaların doğası gereği bütüncül bir yaklaşımla girişimsel başarıya ilişkin tümevarımcı bir tutum sergilenmiştir. Araştırmanın katılımcılarının

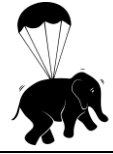


videolar üzerinden verdikleri beyanlar araştırmacıyı harekete geçirmiş ve çalışmanın soruları yazar tarafından oluşturulmuştur. Girişimcilerin videoları 6 tematik alan üzerinden değerlendirilmiştir. Nitel araştırma kapsamında videolar içerisinde cevapları verilmiş sorularla ilgili tüm konuşmaların transkripte döküm işlemi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler bu çalışmada kullanılmak üzere gizli tutularak kayıt altına alınmıştır. 120 adet girişimci ile ilgili video transkripti tamamlandıktan sonra videolar ikinci kez tekrar izlenilmiş ve betimleyici kodlar tablosu oluşturulmuştur. Betimleyici kodlar tablosu, videolar ikinci kez izlenirken durdurulup ilgili Excel dosyası içerisinde eş zamanlı belirli işaretçiler kullanarak üst düzey çıkarımlara imkân sağlayan örüntü kodları (gelişen kodlar) oluşturulmaya çalışılmıştır. Nitel verilerin çözümlenerek kategorilerin ve kodlama şemasının oluşturulması için tematik analiz tercih edilmiştir. Nitel araştırmalarda “kodların verilere ilişkin yönlendirici etiketler, veri analizini başlatan ve analiz süresince devam eden verilerden daha soyut erişilerin elde edilmesini sağlayan başkalaştırma veya biçimlendirme faaliyetleri” olduğu ifade edilmiştir (Baltacı, 2017, s.5). Tematik analizde temalar, kategoriler ve kodlar girişimsel başarı literatürü çerçevesinde tümdengelimsel yaklaşımla ele alınmıştır. Tablo 1’de yapılan tematik analize ilişkin aşamalar verilmiştir.

**Tablo 1.** Tematik analiz aşamaları

Aşamalar	Uygulama Süreci
<b>Araştırmacının veriyle tanışıklığı:</b> Verinin deşifre edilmesi	Veriler yayında olan videolar üzerinden bizzat araştırmacı tarafından toplanılmıştır. Veriler video verisi olduğu için önce izlenilmiş sonra katılımcıların ifadelerinin bire bir transkriptasyonu yapılmıştır. Ortalama 14 dakika süren 120 videonun tamamı ayrı ayrı Word dosyası içerisine yazılmıştır. Veriler yeterince ayrıntıyı içerecek şekilde deşifre edilmiştir.
<b>Ön kodlamanın yapılması:</b> Tüm veri seti boyunca verinin dikkat çeken özelliklerinin sistematik bir şekilde kodlanması, her bir kodla alakalı olan verilerin bir araya toplanması	Veri setinden elde edilen bilgiler ışığında işletme literatürü içerisinde geçen girişimsel başarı literatürü incelenmiştir. Girişimsel başarı literatüründen bu çalışmada kullanılan kodların oluşturulması için yapılan araştırmalardaki araştırma soruları incelenmiştir. Verilerin kodlamaları yapılırken yazarında dahil olduğu alanında uzman 3 akademisyenden yardım alınmış ve kodlamalar üzerinde uzlaşmaya varılmıştır. Her bir unsura eşit uzaklıkta olarak, kodlama süreci ayrıntılı, kapsamlı ve çok yönlü gerçekleştirilmiştir.
<b>Temaların aranması:</b> Kodların potansiyel temalar altında toplanması	Veri seti içerisinde geçen kodlardan ziyade daha geniş anlamda tema düzeyinde analize odaklanılan bu aşamada, farklı kodların potansiyel temalar altında toplanması işlemi gerçekleştirilmiştir.
<b>Temaların gözden geçirilmesi:</b> Analize ilişkin tematik haritanın oluşturulması, temaların kodlanmış veri içeriğiyle uyumunun kontrolü	Oluşturulan kategori ve kodların temalar altında uyumlu ve tutarlı bir örüntü oluşturup oluşturmadığının anlaşılması amacıyla tema haritası oluşturulmuştur.
<b>Temaların tanımlanması ve isimlendirilmesi:</b> Her temaya ait özelliklerin sadeleştirilmesi ve her bir temanın açık bir şekilde tanımlanması ve isimlendirilmesi	Temaların ve kategorilerin kodlanan içeriği temsili noktasında doyuma ulaştığına kanaat getirildikten sonra girişimsel başarı literatürü içerisinde geçen analiz düzeylerinde (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal) benzer şekilde işlendiği lakin ayrı ayrı ele alındığı görülmüştür.
<b>Raporun hazırlanması:</b> Somut, çarpıcı ve inandırıcı doğrudan alıntı örneklerinin seçilmesi, kodlanan veri içeriklerinin son kez analiz edilmesi, analiz sonuçlarının araştırma sorusu ve alan yazınla tekrar ilişkilendirilmesi, analiz akademik bir dille raporlaştırılması	Bu aşamada nitel araştırmanın doğası gereği temaların ve kodların geçerliliğini ortaya koymak amacıyla doğrudan alıntılara yer verilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular ve girişimsel başarı literatüründeki bu bulguları destekleyici bulgular yardımıyla araştırmanın tartışma ve sonuç kısmı eleştirel bir şekilde ele alınarak raporlaştırılmıştır.

**Kaynak:** Altıntaş (2023, s.235-236); Braun ve Clarke (2019, s.883) çalışmalarından bu çalışmaya uyarlanmıştır.



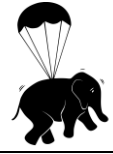
Bilimsel yöntemin amacı evrendeki olayları, olguları ve eylemleri keşfetmek, anlamak, tanımlamak ve açıklamaktır (Gürbüz ve Şahin, 2014, s.29). Bu çalışma kapsamında elde edilen veriler, ayrıntılı bir şekilde deşifre edilip tarafsız bir şekilde sırf çarpıcı örneklerden hareketle oluşturulmamıştır. Süreç ayrıntılı, kapsayıcı ve çok yönlü olarak ele alınmıştır. Kodlar oluşturulurken orijinal veri setiyle karşılaştırmalı ilerlenilmiş, temaların ve kategorilerin birbirlerinden net ayrıştığı görülmüştür. Acele edilmeden üstün körü geçirilmeden veri ile zaman geçirilmiş, konu ile ilgili ikna edici ve iyi organize edilmiş bir hikâyeye ulaşılmıştır. İzlenen tematik analiz yaklaşımıyla raporlanan analizin tutarlı olduğu görülmüştür. Analitik anlatım ve literatürden faydalanılarak, doğrudan alıntılara yer vererek süreç tamamlanmıştır. Bu nitel araştırmaya ilişkin inandırıcılık, tasdiklenebilirlik, aktarılabilirlik ve güvenilirlik gibi unsurlar Tablo 2’de verilmiştir.

**Tablo 2.** Araştırmada geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik

Ölçütler	Gerçekleştirilen Süreçler
<b>Inandırıcılık:</b>	İnandırıcılık, araştırma sonuçları yoluyla gerçeğin temsil yeteneğini ifade eder. Çalışma kapsamında kullanılan temaların ve kategorilerin oluşturulmasında Girişimsel başarı literatüründen faydalanılmıştır. Temalar altında şekillenen kategoriler Türkiye’deki girişimcilerin başarı hikayelerinin anlatıldığı videolardan ve ilgili literatürden beslenilerek oluşturulmuştur. Kategorilerin anlamını yansıtacak örüntüler ve kodlar ise girişimcilerin ifadeleri doğrultusunda ilgili kategorilerin altına yerleştirilmiştir. Video veriden elde edilen transkriptasyonlardan kategorilerin anlamını en iyi şekilde yansıtacak cümle ya da paragraflardan kodlar hazırlanmış ve doğrudan alıntı şeklinde sunulmuştur. Aynı anlama gelebilecek kodları yansıtan ifadeler içerisinden en seçkin ve çarpıcı olanları tercih edilmiştir. Ayrıca veri seti iki kez elden geçirilmiş, atlanılan ve gözden kaçan unsurlar belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Veriler kendi içinde anlamlı ve tutarlıdır.
<b>Tasdiklenebilirlik:</b>	Tasdiklenebilirlik hususu araştırmacının kendisini araştırılan veriden sıyrıp alması olarak ifade edilebilir. Kendi öznel yanlılığını bir kenara bırakıp araştırmayı nesnel bir açıdan ele almasıdır. Araştırma süreci boyunca videolar çekilirken araştırmacının kendisi bulunmadığı için süreci manipüle etme ihtimali bulunmamakla birlikte verilerin işlenmesi noktasında öznellik oluşturabilecek yorum ve bakış açılarından sıyrılmaya özen göstermiştir.
<b>Aktarılabilirlik:</b>	Aktarılabilirlik ayrıntılı betimleme içerisinde sonuçların yeterli düzeyde betimlenmesini ifade etmektedir. Çalışma kapsamında doğrudan alıntılara yer verilmesi bu amaçladır. Yapılan bu çalışma sonuçları hem kullandığı yöntem hem de video tabanlı bir araştırma olmasından dolayı işletme biliminin diğer alanlarına da aktarılabilir, doğruluğu ya da yanlılığı test edilebilir.
<b>Güvenilirlik:</b>	Araştırmanın güvenilirliği noktasında dışsal faktörlerin kontrol altında tutulduğu ve süreç üzerinde olumsuz etkisinin bulunmadığının güvence altına alınması demektir. Güvenilirlik araştırmacının yürüttüğü çalışmada tutarlı davranması anlamına da gelmektedir. Kodlanan veriler alanında uzman akademisyenlerce incelenmiş ve kodlamanın bağlama uygunluk noktasında optimize edilmesine gayret gösterilmiştir. Ayrıca Küresel Girişimcilik Monitörü (GEM) raporları, Sanayi Bakanlığı Girişimci Bilgi Sistemi (GBS) gibi veritabanları incelenmiştir. Veri seti haricinde girişimcilerle ilgili literatür dikkate alınmıştır.

**Kaynak:** Altıntaş (2023, s.236-237); Braun ve Clarke (2019, s.883) çalışmalarından bu çalışmaya uyarlanmıştır.

Literatür incelendiğinde ülkemizde yapılmış çalışmaların sınırlı olduğu görülmüştür. Sadece birkaç çalışmada (Çitçi vd., 2018; Derindağ, 2018) Türkiye’deki girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerinin incelendiği gözlemlenmiş olması, bu alanda bir akademik bilgi boşluğunun olduğunu göstermektedir. İzlenen video verilerine ilişkin temel istatistiklere bakıldığında nitel araştırma örnekleminin çok ötesinde bir veri seti olduğu için ülkemiz girişimcisinin durumunu detaylı bir şekilde ele almamıza olanak sağlayacak hacimdedir. Etkileşimsel tarafta görüntülenme sayısı, yorum ve beğeni sayısı ile veri seti ülkemiz girişimcisinin durumunu



anlatmaya namzet bir durumdadır. Nitel araştırma kapsamında izlenen videolara ilişkin detaylar Tablo 3’te sunulmuştur.

**Tablo 3.** İzlenen videolara ilişkin bilgiler

Oynatma Listesindeki Video Sayısı	$\mu$ Video Süresi	$\mu$ Video Kod Sayısı	Videoların oluşturulduğu zaman aralığı	Videoların görüntüleme ortalaması	$\mu$ Yorum Sayısı	$\mu$ Beğeni Sayısı
120	14:06	3	2020-2023	500 Bin	480	55K

### 3.1. Araştırmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmada amaç girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamları bütünsel olarak (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal boyutta) ele almak ve bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları çözümlenektir. Bu çalışmanın bir önemi ülkemizdeki girişimcilere yönelik yapılan güncel bir araştırma olması ve nitel yönden derinlemesine bir betimleme imkânı sunmaya çalışmasıdır. Bir diğer önemi ise sonuçları itibariyle ülkemiz girişimcisinin başarı kriterlerini ortaya koyması ve yeni sayılabilecek bir yöntemi kullanmasıdır. Çalışma ayrıca, bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları bütünsel olarak ele alarak teorik katkı potansiyelini artırmaktadır.

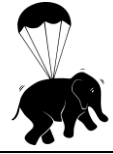
Baltacı (2019, s.374) çalışmasında, nitel araştırmalarda genellikle gözlem, yapılandırılmış veya yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme, odak grup görüşmesi, söylev ve metin analizi gibi veri toplama yöntemlerinin kullanıldığını ifade etmiştir. Bununla birlikte medya yayınlarının (radyo veya televizyon programları) ve sosyal medya kaynaklarının da veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılabileceği belirtilmiştir (Sullivan ve Forrester, 2018). Merriam (1998) araştırma konusuyla ilgili video ve ses kayıtlarının, görsel materyaller gibi belgelerin de metin analizi yolu ile kullanışlı verilere dönüştürülebildiğini ifade etmiştir. “StoryBox” kanalındaki oynatma listeleri içerisinde “Nasıl Başardılar?” isimli bölümde geçen tüm girişimci videoları notlar alınarak izlenilmiştir. Notlar içerisinde tekrar eden vurguların varlığı dikkat çekmiş ve verilerin doygunluğu ile ilgili acele etmeden tüm videolar eleştirel bir gözle izlenilmiştir. Veri seti oluşturmak için tüm videoların transkriptasyonu yapılmış ve sonraki analizler için hazırlanmıştır.

### 3.2. Araştırma Sorusu ve Evreni

Araştırmaya ve analize konu olan temel sorular şunlardır:

- Türkiye’de girişimciler kendileri, örgütleri ve içinde buldukları toplum ile ilgili başarı kriterlerini nasıl tanımlamaktadırlar?
- Türkiye’de girişimciler işletmelerini nasıl geliştirip büyütmüşlerdir?
- Girişimciler gençlere tavsiyelerini nasıl ifade etmişlerdir?
- Girişimciler bir başarı kriteri olarak yaptıkları sosyal sorumluluk projelerini nasıl ifade etmişlerdir?
- Girişimciler kendilerini girişimci olmaya iten motivasyon kaynaklarını nasıl ifade etmişlerdir?
- Girişimciler Türkiye’de girişimciliği engelleyen unsurları nasıl ifade etmişlerdir?





Hazır video veri seti üzerinden araştırma gerçekleştirildiği için örneklem seçimi hakkında müdahalede bulunulmamıştır. Çalışma alanı olarak ülkemizin her bölgesinde faaliyet gösteren toplumun çoğunun tanıdığı ya da ürünlerini kullandıkları köklü işletmelerin sunduğu çeşitlilikle bunların sahiplerinin seçildiği görülmektedir. Video verilerde seçilen girişimcilerle ilgili amaçlı örneklem yaklaşımı benimsendiği gözlenmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında izlenen girişimcilerle ilgili kimlik bilgileri gizlenmiştir.

### 3.3. Katılımcılara İlişkin Demografik Bilgiler

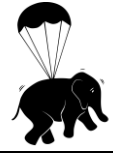
Bu çalışmada, nitel yöntemlerle çözümlenen videolar ve içerikleri deşifre edilip tematik analiz kullanılarak girişimcilerin başarı kriterleri değerlendirilmiş ve girişimcilere ilişkin bulgular elde edilmiştir. Tematik analizde ön kodlar (önceden belirlenmiş araştırma soruları), gelişen kodlar (girişimcilerin vermiş oldukları yanıtlar) bir sistematik içinde ele alınmış, verilerden kodlar ve kategoriler elde edilmeye çalışılmıştır. 2020 yılının başından 2023 yılının son ayına kadar her hafta yayınlanan, “Nasıl Başardılar?” oynatma listesi içerisinde yer alan tüm videolar derinlemesine analiz edilmiştir.

Katılımcı sayısı itibarıyla nitel araştırmada kullanılan örneklem sayısından çok daha fazla sayıda örnekleme ulaşılmış olması, çalışmanın güvenilirliği ve geçerliliği noktasına katkı sunmaktadır.

Bütün videolar tamamen izlendikten sonra verilere ilişkin demografik bilgiler tablolaştırılmış ve Tablo 4 içerisinde sunulmuştur. Etik kurallar çerçevesinde araştırma bulgularında katılımcıların isim ve soy isim ve şirket bilgileri gibi kişisel verilerine yer verilmemiş, katılımcılara kodlar (K1, K2,..K120) verilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan girişimcilerin demografik, eğitim ve sektör bilgileriyle ilgili ayrıntılı bilgi sunmak açısından Tablo 4 hazırlanmıştır. Katılımcılarla ilgili bilgileri içeren tablonun çok usandırıcı olmaması için 30 tanesine (1/4) yer verilmiştir.

**Tablo 4.** Girişimcilerin demografik ve diğer betimsel özellikleri

Katılımcı	Cinsiyet	Yaş	Eğitim	Medeni Durum	Faaliyet Alanı	Kuruluş Tarihi	Çekirdekten Yetiştirme	Kurumsal Geçmiş	Ortaklık Yapısı	Teknik Beceri Seti Varlığı	Göç Geçmiş
K1	E	60	İlkokul	Evli	Tanker Üretimi	1990	Var	Yok	Ortaklı	Var	Var
K2	K	57	Lisans	Evli	Teknik Tekstil	1992	Yok	Var	Sahibi	Var	Var
K3	E	61	Lisans	Evli	Sağlık Hizmetleri	1993	Var	Yok	Ortaklı	Var	Yok
K4	E	58	Lisans	Evli	Turizm Operatörü	2001	Var	Var	Sahibi	Var	Var
K5	E	55	Yüksek Lisans	Evli	E ticaret	2008	Yok	Var	Sahibi	Var	Var
K6	E	56	Lisans	Evli	Bilgisayar, Yatırım	1995	Var	Yok	Sahibi	Var	Var
K7	E	37	Lisans	Evli	Arsa ve Arazi Yatırımları	2017	Var	Var	Sahibi	Var	Yok
K8	E	60	İlkokul	Evli	Kozmetik	2006	Yok	Yok	Sahibi	Yok	Var

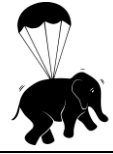


K9	E	48	Lisans	Evli	Enerji	2016	Var	Yok	Kurucu	Var	Yok
K10	E	46	Yüksek Lisans	Evli	Mühendislik Firması	2013	Var	Var	Sahibi	Var	Var
K11	E	68	Doktora	Evli	Gurme Uluslararası Yemek	2015	Var	Var	Sahibi	Var	Yok
K12	K	35	Doktora	Evli	Enerji	2018	Yok	Yok	Sahibi	Var	Yok
K13	E	59	Lisans	Evli	Soğutma, Soğuk Oda	1996	Yok	Yok	Sahibi	Var	Var
K14	E	39	Lisans	Bekar	Petrol ve Otelcilik	2014	Var	Yok	Aile Şirketi	Yok	Var
K15	E	30	Lisans	Bekar	Boya Üretimi	2008	Var	Yok	Sahibi	Var	Yok
K16	K	42	Lisans	Bekar	Yeme İçme	2005	Yok	Yok	Ortaklı	Var	Yok
K17	E	64	Doktora	Evli	Havacılık	1973	Yok	Var	Ortaklı	Var	Var
K18	E	49	Lisans	Evli	Süt Endüstri	2009	Yok	Yok	Sahibi	Yok	Yok
K19	E	56	İlkokul	Evli	Sigorta	2020	Yok	Yok	Sahibi	Yok	Var
K20	K	31	Lisans	Bekar	Pelet Üretimi	2017	Yok	Yok	Sahibi	Yok	Yok
K21	E	54	Lisans	Evli	Petrol ve doğalgaz boru hattı üretimi	1982	Var	Yok	Aile Şirketi	Var	Yok
K22	E	32	Yüksek Lisans	Bekar	Ebeveyn Yazılımı	2021	Var	Yok	Kurucu Ortak	Var	Yok
K23	E	33	Lisans	Bekar	Mini mobilite	2014	Yok	Yok	Kurucu	Var	Yok
K24	K	43	Lisans	Bekar	Dijital içerik	2010	Var	Yok	Sahibi	Var	Var
K25	E	43	Lisans	Evli	Zincir Çelik	1940	Var	Yok	Aile	Var	Yok
K26	K	45	Lisans	Bekar	Eğitim	2018	Var	Yok	Sahibi	Var	Var
K27	E	61	Lisans	Evli	Bilgisayar, Bilişim	1989	Yok	Var	Kurucu	Var	Yok
K28	E	49	Doktora	Evli	Bilgisayar, Robotik	1995	Var	Yok	Sahibi	Var	Yok
K29	E	62	Lisans	Evli	Ayakkabı Üretim	1972	Var	Yok	Aile	Var	Yok
K30	E	66	Lise	Evli	Plastik	1985	Var	Var	Aile	Var	Var

Tablo 4’te girişimcilerin cinsiyet, yaş, eğitim durumu, medeni durum ve kurumsal hayat geçmişi, teknik beceri seti varlığı, göç geçmişi gibi bireysel özelliklerine, işletmelerinin faaliyet alanı, kuruluş tarihleri, ortaklık yapısı gibi örgütsel özelliklerine ait bilgilere veri setimizi tanıtmak için yer verilmiş, analizde bu verilerden yararlanılmamıştır.

#### 4. BULGULAR

Girişimcilere ilişkin demografik bilgilerden dikkat çeken unsurlar bulunmaktadır. Örneklem içerisindeki 120 girişimcinin yaş ortalaması 49.1’dir. Bu durumun bu şekilde olmasının nedeni video içeriklerin ülkemizde bilindik köklü işletme sahipleriyle çekilmesinden kaynaklı olduğu düşünülmektedir. Girişimciler teknik tekstil üretiminden e-ticarete, kozmetikten elektrikli mini mobilite araçlarına, havacılıktan petrol ve doğalgaz üretimine, robotikten yazılıma kadar geniş bir yelpazede hizmet vermekte ya da ürün üretmektedirler. Araştırmalarda sektörel bazda grup içerisindeki çeşitliliğin bu şekilde olması teşvik edilen bir unsur olduğu düşünülmektedir. Girişimcilerin %70’i kendilerinin çekirdekten yetişme alaylı olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. %90’ı ihracat yaptıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Girişimcilerin %56’sının hikayesinde bir şekilde göç olgusu bulunmaktadır. İşletmelerin kuruluş yılı ortalaması 2001 yılıdır. Girişimcilerin %32’sinin girişimci olmadan önce kurumsal hayat geçmişi bulunmaktadır. Girişimcilerin neredeyse tamamı tesisleşmeye önem vermiş kişilerdir.



Ülkemiz girişimcisinin başarı faktörlerinin ele alındığı çalışmada, alt kategorilerden kategoriler, kategorilerden de temalara ulaşılmıştır. 120 adet video görüşmede vurgulanan hususlar ayrı ayrı kodlandırılıp Tablo 5’te elde edilen sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmanın nitel bulgularının sunulduğu bu bölümde Türkiye’deki girişimcilerin başarı faktörleri Tablo 5’te sunulmuş ve her bir başarı kriteri sonraki bölümlerde tek tek ele alınmıştır.

**Tablo 5.** Türkiye’de girişimcilerin başarı faktörleri

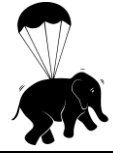
Temalar	Kategoriler	Sub (alt) kategoriler
Bireysel	Başarı Kriterleri	Cesaret, çalışkanlık, çevresinden etkilenmeme, çiraklık geçmişi, değer oluşturma, doğru ve düzgün iş yapma, zamanlama, ekip lideri olma, eyleme geçme, fedakârlık, fırsat odaklı olma, hatalardan öğrenme, hayal etme, işin başında durma, itibar sahibi olma, konforsuzluk, mayalanma, plancı, sabırlı olma, seri girişimci, sevme, successor, süreklilik, şeffaflık, şükreden olma, tutkulu olma
	Motivasyon kaynakları	Alışkanlık, diğer hayallerini gerçekleştirme, insanlara hizmet etmek, kurumsal karşıtı, mecbur olma, mücadele etme, özgürlük, sosyal kabul görme, vazgeçmeme, yapılan işten zevk alma, ülkesi için üretmek
Örgütsel	Gelişim süreçleri	Benchmark, büyüme odaklı, çağa ayak uydurma, değişim öncüsü, dönüşüm gelişime açıklık, güçlendirme, ihracata yönelme, ilk olma, proaktiflik, kalite vurgusu, krizi fırsata çeviren, kurumsallaşma, metropolde olma, network, optimum büyüme, öğrenen organizasyon, roller coaster, seri girişimci, standartlaşma, sürekli eğitim, teknik bilgi, tesisleşme, zihinsel dönüşüm
	Engel ve Bariyerler	Bireysel engeller, çekememezlik, çevresel engeller, dönemsel farklılıklar, güvensizlik ve inançsızlık, kuşak farklılıkları, küresel krizler, lükse düşme, örgütsel engeller, sürdürülemezlik, yetersiz gelir
Toplumsal	Gençlere verilen tavsiyeler	Bedelini ödeme, beklenti uyumsuzluğu, cesur olma, çalışmaya azmettirme, doğru av, doğru mentör, düzgün ortaklık, fırsat gören olmak, hayal kurma, ileriye düşme, doğru iletişim, istişare etme, işini tam bilme, itibar sahibi olma, kendinin farkına varmak, kolay para kazanılmaz, küçüklükten bilme, lükse dalmama, meslek sahibi olun, orijinal olma, öğrenmeyi öğrenme, özgüven, sevdiğin işi yap, sistemli olma, sorumluluk sahibi olun, süreklilik ve devam etme, şansını kendiniz yaratırsınız, takım oyuncusu olmak, teknik ve lisan bilgisi, umutsuz kısayol, yatırım almak, yeniliklere açık olmak, yılmamak, yol öğretir, zorluklarla mücadele etme
	Sosyal Sorumluluk	Sosyal Değer, Sosyal Değişim, Sosyal Ekonomi, Sosyal Misyön, Sosyal Tatmin

#### 4.1. Bireysel Başarı Faktörleri

Ülkemizde faaliyet gösteren girişimcilerin bireysel başarı faktörleri içerisinde iki kategoride toplandığı bulgulanmıştır. Bunlar girişimcilerin birey olarak kendilerine ilişkin başarı kriterleri ve motivasyon kaynaklarıdır.

##### 4.1.1. Girişimcilerin Bireysel Başarı Kriterleri

Girişimcilerin konuşmalarında bahsettikleri ya da vurguladıkları başarı kriterleri ile ilgili detaylar sunulmuştur. Bu kriterler Tablo 5 içerisinde özetlenmiştir. Pek çok iş için olduğu gibi girişimci açısından da başarı kriterleri içerisinde fırsat gördüğünde cesaret göstermek en temelde ifade edilmiştir. Uluslararası girişimsel başarı literatüründe cesaret olgusuna vurgu yapan çalışmalara rastlanılmaktadır. Zbierowski ve Gojny-Zbierowska (2022, s.175)



çalışmalarının bulgularında girişimsel başarıya katkıları açısından farklı karakter özellikleri içerisinde cesaret göstermenin önemine vurgu yapmışlardır. Katılımcılar bu durumu şöyle ifade etmektedirler:

*“K61: Başarının yarısı cesaret. Evinizin tenceresini riske etmeyin onun dışında ne yapıyorsanız yapın.” Fırsat olgusu ile ilgili girişimciye mutlaka bir el uzanacağı” ifade edilmiştir. “Önemli olan o eli görebilmektir.”* denilmiştir.

*“K19: Yoksulluğun getirdiği sefalet hikayelerinin aslında başarı hikayelerinin başına çok yakıştığını”* ifade etmiştir.

Fırsatlara karşı uyanık olma ve cesaret göstermenin yanında çalışkanlık olgusu girişimciler açısından önemli görülen başarı kriterlerinden birisidir. Literatürde çalışkanlık olgusu genellikle batılı toplumların bağlamları içerisinde önemli bir başarı kriteri olarak ele alındığı dikkat çekmektedir (Gok vd., 2021, s.179). Bizim ülkemizdeki katılımcılar da bu konuyu şu şekilde dile getirmişlerdir:

*“K47: Benim için başarı... varılacak bir yer değil. Başarı uzun süre yürünecek bir yoldur. Girişimci, bazı kişilerin görmediğini görür abi.”*

Bir diğer girişimci çalışmak hususu ile ilgili olarak çalışmanın bir yaşam tarzına dönüştüğünü, ibadet olarak gördüklerini söylemiş ve şu şekilde ifade etmiştir:

*“K79: Çalışmayı bir görev ve yaşam tarzı olarak görüyorum. Çalışmak bizim için ibadettir. Yılmadan çalıştık.”*

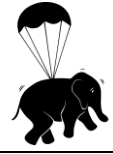
Girişimciler çevrelerinden gelen olumsuz söylemlerden etkilenmedikleri, kendilerini aşağıya çeken bu yaklaşımlara kulak asmadıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Bu hususla alakalı pek çok girişimci:

*“K3: Başarılı insanları “el alem ne der düşüncesini bir kenara bırakmış korkusuz insanlar”* olarak tanımlamıştır.

Girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerinden bir diğeri ise işin çiraklığından gelme, alaylı olma ve adanma gibi unsurlar sayılmıştır. Onwuegbuzie (2017, s.280) çalışmasında günümüz yüksek başarısızlık oranlarıyla karşılaştırıldığında başarılı girişimciler yetiştiren değerli geleneksel çiraklık uygulamalarının önemine vurgu yapmıştır. Bunlara örnek mahiyetinde girişimcilerden birisi:

*“K94: Girişimci, bir işin çiraklığını yapmadığınız sürece patronluğunu yapamayacağımızı”* ifade etmiştir.

Literatürde istihdam sağlama hususu piyasa ekonomisinde bireylerin en temel motivasyonlarından birisi olduğu vurgulanmaktadır (Parker, 2004, s.1). Bu çalışmada kendilerini başarılı görmeleri için girişimcilerin bir değer oluşturduklarını hissetmelerine ve



insanlara “ekmek kapısı olmanın” (istihdam sağlama) verdiği hazla başarıyı hissettiklerine vurgu yapılmıştır:

“K8: Önemli olan başarı kriterinin para değil misyon ve vizyon olduğunu, istihdam yaratıp katma değer oluşturmak, global markalar ile rekabet edebilen bir firma olmak yani çalışmak olduğu” ifade edilmiştir.

Doğru zamanda doğru insanlarla birlikte iş yapabilmek liderliğin başka şekilde ifade edilmiş biçimlerinden birisidir. Girişimciler kendileri ile yapılan mülakatlarda ekip lideri olmanın önemine pek çok yerde baskın bir şekilde vurgu yapmışlardır. Bunlara örnek mahiyetinde:

“K80: Girişimci, etrafınızda bilen ve daha akıllı insanları toplama beceriniz varsa dünyanın en akıllı en becerikli insanı siz olabilirsiniz” demiştir.

Bergman ve McMullen (2022, s.689) çalışmalarında kuluçka merkezleri, teknoparklar, hızlandırıcılar gibi girişimci destek kuruluşlarının girişimcilere destek ve danışmanlık için kurulmuş organizasyonlar olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Girişimciler içerisinde bir grubun başarı kriterleri arasında ise fikir paylaşımı istişare etme görüş alışverişi yanında asıl eyleme geçme, hareketli olma gibi aksiyoner davranışlara vurgu yapılmıştır. Bunlar arasında:

“K6: Girişimciliğin fikir üretmek değil fikri hayata geçirmek için taşın altına elini koymak olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Emek, çaba, kan ve gözyaşı olmadan başarılı bir girişim görmediğini” ifade etmiştir.

Bu hususun yanında fedakârlık gösterildiğinde başarılı olunabileceğine vurgu yapılmıştır.

“K65: Her başarının altında bir hikâye vardır. Fedakârlık gösterilmeyen hiçbir başarı yoktur.”

Girişimcinin hatalarından ders çıkararak, hatalarından öğrenen bir yanının başarı için bir kriter olduğu pek çok girişimci tarafından ifade edilmiştir. Bunlardan:

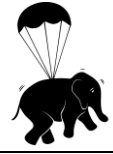
“K46: Başarılı olmanız için hata yapmanız gerekir.” şeklinde ifade etmiştir.

Pek çok girişimci “hayal etmeyi girişimin ve şahsının başarısı açısından kritik bir unsur olarak ifade etmiştir. Katılımcılar bu konuyu şu şekilde dile getirmiştir:

“K57: Başarı senin mutfak masanda oluşturduğun fikrin etrafında 200 insanın gece gündüz çalışıp ülke ekonomisine kazandırdığın değerdir.”

“K6: Girişimci, hayalini eyleme dönüştüren, fantezi olmayan fikirlerini risk alarak hayata geçiren kişiyi” girişimci olarak tanımlamıştır.

Girişimciler açısından iş hayatının içinde başarılı olmak için itibarın olmazsa olmaz bir kavram olduğu göze çarpmaktadır. Bu hususla alakalı pek çok girişimci:



“K36: *İtibar en büyük servet. Tek telefonla işi halledebiliyorsan işin olmuştur.*” Piyasa kredibilitésinin önemine yapılan bu vurgu hayati derecede önemli görülmektedir.

“K84: *Bu işin sırrı bankalarla dost olmaktan ziyade piyasa ile dost olmak. Piyasa kredibiliten çok önemli. Ticari kredi bu adam düzgün bu adam mal verdiği vakit namuslu öder derlerse yürürsün.*”

Örneklemedeki girişimcilerin birçoğunun hayatları ile ilgili konforsuzluk içinde oldukları izlenimi fark edilmektedir. Girişimciler bu durumu şöyle ifade etmektedirler:

“K101: *Girişimciliğe girmek için rahat bir dönemi beklememek gerekiyor. Konfor alanından çıkıp risk almak gerekiyor. Yaşayarak öğreniliyor.*”

K102: *İnsan rahatsız olduğunda iş kurma fikrine yöneliyor. Özgür olmak istiyorsa rahatsız olacak. Girişimcilik rahatın batmasıdır.*”

Girişimciler konfor alanlarından çıkıp girişimciliğe adım attıklarında ise parayı yönetmekle ilgili de başarılı olmaları gerekmektedir. Bu hususa vurgu yapan bir girişimci şöyle demiştir:

“K7: *Küçük miktarlarla yapılan birikimlerin maya yapılmasına*” vurgu yapmıştır. Paranın yavrulama etkisi üzerine konuşan girişimci yatırımların mayalanabileceğini ifade etmiştir.

Girişimcilerin hayatlarında olduğu gibi işlerinde de plan program üzerinde devam etmeleri onları başarılı kılacaktır. Bu hususa vurgu yapan girişimciler şunları söylemişlerdir.

“K60: *Bir iş adamı bir sene sonra ne yapacağını bilmiyorsa yarını yoktur*”

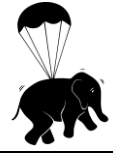
Girişimcilerin bazılarının seri girişimci olduğu, pek çok başarılı “exit” (çıkış) gerçekleştirdikleri görülmektedir. Literatürde giriş ve tekrar giriş olarak ifade edilen bu hususla alakalı olarak (Tipu, 2020, s.198) çalışmasında özellikle girişimsel başarısızlıktan sonra yeniden işe girişme dinamikleri hakkında bilgilendirici bulgulara yer vermiştir. Çalışma kapsamında katılımcılardan birisi şunları söylemiştir:

“K123: *Hayır demezsen O teklif yükselmiyor biz 100 milyon dolar teklife evet deseydik zaten satmıştık.*”

Girişimcilerin yaptıkları işi çok sevdikleri, iş yerleri veya girişimleriyle ebeveyn çocuğa benzer bir ilişki kurdukları, start up’larını bebeğe benzettikleri, iş yerinde fabrikalardaki gürültü ortama âşık olduklarını, keyifle çalışmanın önemini ifade etmişlerdir.

“K77: *Sizin gittiğiniz yolun doğru yol olduğunu bir gün herkes gördüğünde başarılı oldum diyebilirsiniz.*”

Girişimcilerin pek çoğunun tatminsiz ve bu da yetmez fikrinde insanlar olduğu görülmektedir. Süreklilik olarak adlandırdığımız bu hususa ilişkin vurguları girişimciler şöyle ifade etmektedirler:



“K13: Eğer siz çalışırsanız aynı yere aynı güçle vurursanız o taş bir gün kırılır onun adına birileri şans der değil abi sen aynı taşa 2000 kere vuruyorsun aynı noktaya o taş kırılır.”

“K56: Bu da yetmez fikrini hep aklımızda tutmalıyız.” Mermeri delen su analojisini sık sık kullandıkları görülmüştür.

Bazı girişimcilerin ise iç huzurunu ve şükredebilmeyi başarı olarak gördükleri dikkat çekmektedir:

“K89: Ben her hâlükârda şükreden bir insanım. Akşam yattığımızda vicdanın rahatsa mutlusun başarılısın.”

Genel literatür eğilimlerine uygun olarak ülkemiz girişimcisi açısından da tutkunun başarı için bir ön koşul, bir şart olduğu ifade edilmiştir. Katılımcı bu durumu şu şekilde izah etmiştir:

“K120: Bir işin tutkuyla yapılması ona ciddi anlamda emek verilmesi tüm eforu sarf etmeniz böyle yıllar boyu devam edebilecek sizden sonra nesiller boyu devam edebilecek bir kimlik oluşturuyor aslında bir marka oluşturuyor.” Ancak bu tutkuyu devam ettirdiğimiz takdirde global markalar oluşturabileceğimizi belirtmişlerdir.

#### 4.1.2. Girişimcilerin Bireysel Motivasyon Kaynakları

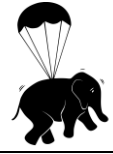
Örnekleminiz içerisinde geçen girişimcilerin konuşmalarında bahsettikleri ya da vurguladıkları motivasyon kaynakları ile ilgili detaylar sunulmuştur. Ülkemiz girişimcisinin motivasyon kaynakları içerisinde sıklıkla tekrarlanan nokta mücadele azmidir. Girişimcilerin zoru başarmak, sıkıntılardan kurtulmak, devam etmek, şansı ve fırsatları yakalama istekleri ve vazgeçmeme mücadele azmi başlığı altında değerlendirilmiştir. Girişimciler bu durumu şöyle ifade etmektedirler:

“K17: Zor işin olmadığını önemli olan işi bitirebilecek kadar takatin olup olmasının önemli” olduğu ifade edilmiştir.

“K70: Hayatım boyunca hiçbirinin yanında çalışmayı seçenek olarak bile görmedim. Birileri iz bırakmayı sever, birileri de izi takip eder. İmkansızlıkların içinden başarabiliyorsen motive oluyorsun.”

Literatürde girişimsel sebat olarak ifade edilen vazgeçmeme hususuna örnek mahiyetinde (Caliendo vd., 2020, s.617) çalışmalarında girişimsel motivasyonun sürekli olarak olumlu bir şekilde sürdürülmesine ve soruluklara rağmen devam etmeye vurgu yapmışlardır. Vazgeçmeme ve azimle mücadeleye vurgu yapılan hususlarda girişimciler şunları söylemişlerdir:

“K47: Çay harda pişer, yiğit darda pişer.” Yani zorlukların insanı besleyen bir tarafı olduğu ifade edilmektedir.



Girişimcilerin mücadelelerin arka planında hep bir hayal olduğu görülmektedir. Girişimcilerin bireysel motivasyon kaynakları arasında hayal unsuru ön plana çıkmaktadır. Girişimci paranın kendisi için bir motivasyon kaynağı olmadığını şu şekilde ifade etmiştir:

*“K19: Para bizim için bir motivasyon kaynağı değildir, anlamlı bir başarıyı satın alamaz. Hayallerimi hayata geçirmek benim için müthiş bir motivasyon.”*

Ülkemiz girişimcilerinin belki de diğer ülkelerdeki girişimcilerden ayırma potansiyeline sahip bir motivasyon kaynağı ise insanlara hizmet etmek ve ülkesi için üretmektir. Bu husus pek çok girişimci ile yapılan görüşmede mutlaka vurgulanmıştır. Katılımcılar bu konuyu şu şekilde dile getirmişlerdir:

*“K5: Ülkemin bana verdiklerinden dolayı kendimi bu topraklara borçlu hissediyorum.”*

*“K58: Ben üretmeyi seviyorum. Ülkemi çok seviyorum. Eğer ülkeme faydalı işler yapıyorsam beni inanılmaz mutlu ediyor. Yani yurt dışından ithal edilen ürünlerin ne kadar önüne geçerse, bu ülkede üretirsek ben bundan mutluluk duyarım.”*

*“K81: Memleketimize katkı sunmak bizi mutlu ediyor. Ülkeme böyle bir marka bıraktığım için mutluyum.”*

Diğer bir girişimci ülkelerinin yurtdışında temsil edilmesinden sorumluluk duyduklarını ve bunun onları motive ettiğini ifade etmiştir:

*“K103: Dünya da birçok coğrafyada var olabilmek çok kritik bir öncelik. Ülkemizden bir dünya markası çıkarmak en öncelikli hedefi. Bunu bir sorumluluk gibi görmekteyiz.”*

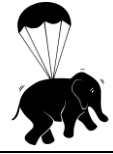
Girişimciler içerisinde bir grup kendilerini deyim yerinde ise kurumsal karşıtı olarak sessizce ifade etmektedirler. Birisinin yanında, altında ya da üstünde çalışmayı, hesap vermeyi istemediklerini anladıkları anda girişimciliğe yöneldikleri görülmektedir. Bu girişimciler açısından takıntılı derecede “özgürlük” önemli bir motivasyondur. Genellikle tecrübe edilen kurumsal hayatta edindikleri teknik bilgileri de kullanarak “spin off” ya da bağımsız girişimci oldukları gözlenmiştir. Girişimcilerden birisi şunları söylemiştir:

*“K5: Kendimi kurumsal hayatta başkalarına bağlı bir hayat sürmek istemediğimi anladığımda bir arayış içine girdim ve bu motivasyon beni girişimci yaptı. İyi ki de öyle yaptım çünkü mutsuz olurdum.”*

Gümüşay (2015, s.203) çalışmasında “rızk” kavramının risk ile yakından ilişkili olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Katılımcılardan birisi rızık kavramının ticarete daha çok olduklarına inanmışlar ticaret yapmanın dini öğretilerinin bir emiri olduğunu şu şekilde ifade etmiştir:

*“K31: Ticaret yapın çünkü rızık onda dokuzu ticarettir hadisi şerifi bize yol göstermiştir. Peygamberimiz bile bunu hadisinde belirtmiştir.”*





Bazı girişimcilerin ise sosyal kabul görme ihtiyaçları onların motivasyon kaynakları olmuştur. Girişimciler bu durumu şöyle ifade etmektedirler:

*“K70: Ben kendimle alakalı hep bir savaş içerisindeyim. Ben doğru yaptığımda kendimi alkışlıyorum. Beni parayla kimse kandıramaz. Benim tek motivasyonum, alkışlanmak.”*

*“K43: İtibarda aynı şekilde parayla satın alınamayacak bir şeydir. İnsanlar zengin oluyorlar itibar göremedikleri için spor kulüplerine yönetici oluyorlar, başkanım dedirtmek için.”*

## 4.2. Örgütsel Başarı Faktörleri

Ülkemizde faaliyet gösteren girişimcilerin örgütsel başarı faktörleri içerisinde iki kategoride toplandığı bulgulanmıştır. Bunlar girişimcilerin örgüt olarak gelişim süreçleri ve girişimcilerin süreç içerisinde tecrübe ettikleri engel ve bariyerlerdir.

### 4.2.1. Girişimcilerin Örgütsel Gelişim Süreçleri

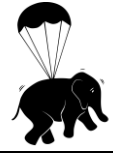
Örnekleminiz içerisinde geçen girişimcilerin konuşmalarında bahsettikleri ya da vurguladıkları gelişim veya büyüme süreçleri ile ilgili detaylar sunulmuştur. Girişimciler açısından örgütlerinin büyüüp gelişmesi kuruluşu kadar önemli ve hayatidir. Ülkemizde ve dünyanın pek çok ülkesinde girişimlerin ömürleri çok kısa denilebilecek zaman dilimlerini kapsamaktadır. Bu bağlamda örgütsel gelişim süreçleri içerisinde vurgulanan hususlar ülkemiz girişimcilerinin örgütlerini nasıl büyütüp geliştirdiklerine dair bir öngörü sunacaktır.

Girişimcilerin bir kısmı büyüme hususunda yabancı ülkelere ya da ülkemizden gördükleri iyi uygulamaları “benchmark” (kıyaslama) ettikleri konuşmalarından anlaşılmaktadır. Literatürde kıyaslama hususuna ilişkin fazlaca çalışmaya rastlanılmaktadır. McKay ve Chung (2005, s.207) girişimciliğin hayatta kalmasını teşvik etmede sadece ölçümlerin değil, kıyaslama süreçlerinin de yararlılığına dikkat çekmişlerdir. Girişimcilerin büyüme odaklı olmaları, teknolojiye ve değişime direnmeden ayak uydurmaları ve geçmişi geleceğe taşımaları gerekliliği çeşitli şekillerde ifade edilmiştir. Bunlara örnek mahiyetinde bir girişimci kendi örgütsel gelişim süreçlerini şu şekilde dile getirmiştir:

*“K47: Önce müşteriye artırdık, sonra müşterinin kendisinde büyüdük, büyüme bir zaman geldi durdu, markayı artırdık, marka bir zaman geldi durdu, çeşitliliği artırdık, çeşitlilik bir zaman geldi durdu, yurtdışına açıldık. Ülkede başarılı olursun kıtanla yarışsın, kıtanda başarılı olursun diğer kıtalarla yarışsın, sonra dünyayla yarışsın. Başka yolu yok bunun.”*

Girişimcilerin söylemlerinde büyüme hususu ile ilgili çıraklıktan gelmeyi alaylı olmayı önceleyen bir yaklaşım fark edilmiştir. Ezenwakwelu vd. (2019, s.1) çalışmalarında gelişmekte olan ülkelerde çıraklık eğitiminin girişimciliğin gelişmesi noktasında katkıları olacağını ifade etmektedirler. Örnekleminiz içerisinde bir girişimci şunları söylemiştir:

*“K29: Ustalık yazıyla çiziyse olmaz ustanın yanında yaşarsan olursun. Oğlan babadan öğrenir sofrayı açmayı, kız babadan öğrenir komşu gezmeyi. Para ya işten ya dıştan artar.”* İş çalışmak,



diş tasarruf olarak analogik hale getirilmiştir. Bu noktada çıraklıktan gelmek işin mutfağını bilmek, tanımak gibi kavramlarla karakterizedir. Usta çırak ilişkisinin kazandırdığı yeteneğe vurgu vardır.

Girişimin örgütsel olarak büyüyüp gelişmesi hususunda, çağa ayak uydurma, değişim öncüsü olma, gelişime açıklık, güçlendirme, ihracata açılma, zihinsel dönüşüm ve proaktif olma gibi unsurlara vurgu yapılmıştır. Bunlara örnek mahiyetinde girişimcilerden birisi şunları ifade etmektedir:

*“K95: Sektörde çok fazla Mercedes, BMW diyebileceğimiz aktörler var ama biz bu sektörün Teslasıyız.”*

Girişimciler örgütsel büyümeyi yakalarken aynı zamanda kaliteden de ödün vermeden bunu yapmaları gerektiği ifade edilmiştir:

*“K18: Büyük olmak değildir esas olan verimli ve kaliteli olmaktır.”*

Tesisleşme ile ilgili yapılan vurgulara örnek olarak şu girişimcinin söyledikleri önemlidir:

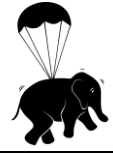
*“K1: Kayserili bir müşterimize bir iş yaptık tır yaptık adam bir gün bizi görmeye geldi abi dedi yanlış anlamayın da dedi isminiz büyümüş kendiniz ufak kalmışsınız yani yeriniz ufak demeye getirdi.”*

İşletmelerin örgütsel büyümesinde insan kaynaklarının yeterli ve çağın şartlarına uygun rekabet edebilecek düzeyde teknik bilgiyle donatılması hayati önem arz etmektedir. Dijitalizasyona ve otonom teknolojilere önem vererek büyümeyi yakaladıkları ifade edilmiştir. Literatürde benzer bulgulara rastlanılmaktadır. Chatterjee vd. (2022, s.1-3) çalışmalarında bilgi yoğun sektörlerdeki başarılı girişimcilerin, işletmelerini büyütme yönelik iş faaliyetlerinde farklı dijital platformlar kullandıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. KOBİ'lerin, dijital teknoloji platformlarını benimseyerek tedarikçiler ve alıcılar arasında doğrudan bağlantılar kurabileceğini ifade etmişlerdir. Katılımcı teknik ve dijital altyapı ile ilgili bu konuyu şu şekilde ifade etmiştir:

*“K10: Bir de üretime geçmeden önce yapılması gereken çok kritik bir aşama var dünyaya baktığımız zaman Türkiye'nin en gelişme açık noktası test altyapısı üzerine çalışıyoruz. Airbus gibi büyük şirketlerin uçaklarında kullanacakları sistemlerin testini Türkiye'de biz gerçekleştireceğiz. Bunun için dünyanın dört bir yanından mühendislerimizi kurumumuza kazandırmanın gayreti içerisindeyiz.”*

#### **4.2.2. Girişimcilere Göre Girişimciliğin Önündeki Engel ve Bariyerler**

Örnekleminiz içerisinde geçen girişimcilerin konuşmalarında bahsettikleri ya da vurguladıkları girişimciliğin önündeki engel ve bariyerler ile ilgili detaylar sunulmuştur. Ülkemiz girişimcisinin tecrübe ettiği, sürecin başından sonuna her aşamada karşılaştıkları engellemeler ve zorlukları girişimciler değişik şekillerde ifade etmişlerdir. Bunlar içerisinde belki de en göze çarpanı çekememezlikten kaynaklı olumsuz tavır ve söylemlerdir. Örneklem içerisindeki



neredeyse tüm girişimciler bu durumu tecrübe ettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Katılımcılar bu konuyu şu şekilde dile getirmişlerdir:

*“K49: Türkiye’de girişimcilik hakikaten zor bir meziyet. Etrafınızda size inanmayan, sizin gibi düşünmeyen, sizi aşağı çekmek isteyen çok insan oluyor. Çoğu kez; "Bu işi bırakalım mı?", "Aslında yaptığımız işlere... geri mi dönelim?", "Çalışma hayatımıza geri mi dönelim?" diye, bu soruyu kendimize sorduk.”*

*K88: Türkiye’de girişimcilerin en büyük sıkıntısı sen yapma, yapamazsın gibi şeyler söyleniyor sürekli. Bu ortamdan nasıl dünya markası çıksın.”*

Girişimcilerden bir tanesi Türkiye’de girişimciliğin önündeki engel ve bariyerlerle ilgili şunları ifade etmiştir:

*“K7: Türkiye’deki girişimcilerin en önemli eksikliği “El alem ne der”, “itibar düşkünlüğü” ve “gösteriş merakıdır”*

Bazı girişimciler kendileri ve aileleri ile ilgili yaşadıkları sıkıntılar onların girişimciliğinin önündeki en önemli etken olabilmektedir. Katılımcılardan bir tanesi kendi yaşadığı ailevi sıkıntıları girişimciliğinin önündeki bireysel engeller olarak şöyle ifade etmiştir:

*“K24: Ya geliyorsun biz de çalışıyorsun ya da evladımız değilsin dediler 30 yaşına kadar onlar mutlu olsun diye çalıştım.”*

Bir diğer girişimcimiz bireysel manada olgunlaşmadan girişimciliğe girişildiğinde olumsuz sonuçlarla karşılaşıldığını şöyle ifade etmiştir:

*“K60: Olgunlaşma ile olmak ayrı şeyler. Ben oldum diyen armut ağaçlarının dibi çürük armutlarla doludur.”*

Ülkemiz girişimcileri açısından bireysel engeller içerisinde en dikkat çeken husus iş aile dengesinin kurulamamış olmasıdır. İş aile dengesi uluslararası literatürde de vurgulanan bir husustur. Bu kapsamda Zincir ve Tunç (2020) girişimci kariyer modeli unsurlarını belirlediği çalışmalarında iş-aile dengesini kariyer gelişimi başlığı altında aileye ilişkin sorunlar içerisinde vurgulamışlardır. Bir girişimci bu hususu şu şekilde ifade etmiştir:

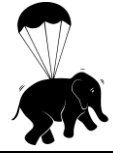
*“K68: Türkiye’de sanayici olmak demek aileden çalmak demektir.”*

Girişimciliğin önündeki çevresel engeller ve krizlerle ilgili olarak ise şunlar ifade edilmiştir:

*“K19: Hep söylerim, bu coğrafyada bir gün zengin yatıp sabah fakir kalkabilirsiniz.”*

*“K64: Türkiye çalkantılı bir çevre ve sürekli darbe ve ekonomik kriz görmüş bir ülke.”*

Türk girişimcisinin gelişiminin önündeki engellerden bir tanesi de tam büyüme aşamasına girecekken lükse düşme olduğu şu şekilde ifade edilmiştir: Bu husus uluslararası literatürde de



çok fazla ele alınmayan bize özgü sonuçlar içerisinde değerlendirilmiştir. Yeterli büyümeyi sağlamadan lüks tüketime yönelen girişimciler kendileri ve örgütlerini sıkıntıya düşürebilme potansiyeline sahiptir. Bu husus işletmenin kuruluş maliyetlerinden, yüksek miktarda borçlanmaya ve iflasa giden bir süreci de beraberinde getirecektir.

*“K36: İhtiyaçlardan sonra ihtirasların başladığı bir dünya başlıyor onlar için, bu çok yanlış ev alıp araba alıp ne yapacaksın işini büyütsene.”*

Ülkemiz girişimcisinin tecrübe ettiği örgütsel engeller ve bariyerler içerisinde yetersiz gelir, yatırım alamama, sürdürülemezlik, verimlilik sıkıntısı, disiplin eksikliği, departmanlaşmama, eksik kurum ve iş kültürü sayılmıştır. Örnek mahiyetinde şunlar söylenmiştir:

*“K34: Bizim ülkede girişimci olarak en sıkıntılı yanımız yeterince yatırım alamamak bence.”*

Bir girişimci işlerin kötüye gittiğinde önce disiplin sahibi çalışanların kaybedildiğini şöyle ifade etmiştir:

*“K53: Batan iş yerlerini önce disiplinliler terk eder. Disiplinsizler kalır.”*

### **4.3. Toplumsal Başarı Faktörleri**

Ülkemizde faaliyet gösteren girişimcilerin toplumsal başarı faktörleri içerisinde iki kategoride toplandığı bulgulanmıştır. Bunlar girişimcilerin yaşadıkları toplumdaki gençlere verdikleri öğütler ve tavsiyeler ile bir başarı kriteri olarak sosyal sorumluluktur.

#### **4.3.1. Gençlere Verilen Tavsiye ve Öğütler**

Örnekleminiz içerisinde geçen girişimcilerin konuşmalarında bahsettikleri ya da vurguladıkları gençlere verilen tavsiye ve öğütler, mevcut durum tespitleri ile ilgili detaylar sunulmuştur. Bunlar içerisinde girişimcilerden bir tanesi bedel ödemenin önemine şu şekilde vurgu yapmıştır:

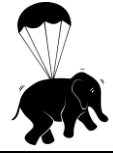
*“K64: Sabırla bedelini ödeyerek tecrübe edineceksin. Bu parayla alınacak bir şey olsa bütün sanayiciler parayı basar çocuklarına tecrübeyi alır verir onlara.”*

Gençlerin tecrübesizliklerle başa çıkmak için mutlaka doğru mentörler edinmelerinin önemine vurgu ile şunlar söylenmiştir:

*“K27: Ben gençlerimizin her daim çevrelerinde en az 3 mentörleri olsun tavsiyesinde bulunuyorum.”*

Bir diğer girişimci kurulacak ortaklık yapısının düzgün ve şartların ve katkıların eşit olması gerektiğine vurgu ile şunları ifade etmiştir:

*“K5: Tek girişimcili yapılardan ziyade ortak bulunması gerekir.”*



Girişimcilerin toplumumuz gençlerine yönelik tavsiyelerinden bir diğeri ileriye düşme hususudur. Gençler hatalar yapmadan öğrenemeyeceklerine vurgu yapılmıştır. Lakin yapılan hatalardan ders almanın (ileriye düşmenin) önemine vurgu vardır. Girişimciler ileriye düşme ifadesi ile bir analogik benzetme yaptıkları, kelimenin tam anlamıyla kontrollü tecrübeleri yaşamalarını gençlere tavsiye etmektedirler. Katılımcı bu konuyu şu şekilde dile getirmiştir:

*“K19: İflas yaşamamış iş insanı benim için iflas yaşayacak iş insanıdır. Çünkü bu öğretiyi akademik teorilerle... veya üniversitelerde öğretilemez, öğrenilemez.”* Yapararak, yaşayarak, gerekirse batarak ama hep ileriye kontrollü düşerek kazanılabilecek bir beceridir. İleriye kontrollü düşme hususu gençlere verilecek önemli tavsiyeler arasında değerlendirilebilir.

Düzgün iletişim ve yönetim hususu gençlere verilen bir diğeri tavsiyedir. Sokağın dili ifadesi hem alaylı olmayı hem de müşteriyi anlayıp ihtiyacını, ifade etmek istediği unsurları anlama noktasında önemli görülmektedir. Katılımcı bu konuyu şu şekilde dile getirmiştir:

*“K29: Sokağın dili vardır. Satmak için müşterinin dilini konuşman gerekir. İnsanlarla konuşacaksınız. Yanındaki arkadaşıyla konuşmuyor gençler bu büyük sıkıntıdır.”*

Düzgün iletişimin yanında mutlaka istişare kültürünün geliştirilmesi öğütlenmiştir. İstişare bir konu hakkında çok bilgisi olsa dahi çevresindeki insanlara fikir sormak, konunun altını üstünü tartıp biçmek gibi ifadelerle aktarılmıştır. Uluslararası literatürün bu hususu danışmanlık ve koçluk almak (Kotte vd., 2021, s.518), bir kümelenmenin içinde yer almak (Temouri vd., 2021, s.171) gibi makro boyutta ele aldığı görülmektedir. Girişimcilerden birisi bu hususu şu şekilde aktarmıştır:

*“K93: Patronluk istişareye dönüştü. Daha fazla istişare ederek daha güzel sonuçlar aldım. Ben her şeyi biliyorum dersin yanılırsın. Gençlere tavsiyem istişareden vazgeçmesinler.”*

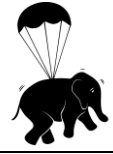
Girişimcilerimiz yaptıkları işe duygularını ve ruhlarını katmaları, işlerini tam her şeyiyle bilmeleri gerektiği şu şekilde vurgulanmıştır:

*“K70: Eğer işini iğne deliği boşluğu bırakmadan biliyor olursan kazanırsın.”*

Girişimcilerimizin gençlere tavsiyeleri arasında en çok tekrar eden husus kolay para kazanılmadığıdır. Örnek mahiyetinde birkaç girişimcinin söylemleri şu şekildedir:

*“K19: Paranın sizde kalma süresi size geliş süresiyle doğrudan orantılıdır. Kısa zamanda ve kolay kazanılan para, kısa zamanda ve kolay gidecek paradır.”* Bir girişimci bu hususu “easy money” ifadesini kullanarak izah etmiştir.

*“K3: Gençlerin birazcık zımpara kağıdını ellerine almalarını ve ellerini bir süre o kâğıda sürmelerini çok istiyorum.”*



Gençlere verilen tavsiyeler içerisinde belki de ülkemiz girişimciliği açısından en önemli hususlardan birisi ise girişimcilikten biraz kazanınca hemen lüks tüketime dalmamalarıdır. Katılımcılar bu hususu şu şekilde ifade etmişlerdir:

*“K53: Yorulmamayı kendinize şiar edineceksiniz. Önce planlayıp, çalışacaksın, kaynakları iyi planlayacaksınız, lükse dalmayacaksınız önce sermayenin gelişmesini sağlayacaksınız, sermaye azken araba ev sevdasına düşmemek gerekir.”*

*“K100: Gençler hemen ilk kazandıkları parayla gereksiz harcamalar yapmasınlar.”*

Gençlere verilen tavsiyeler arasında kendilerinin farkına varmaları (Dej, 2010, s.93), meslek sahibi olmaları, sistemli bir şekilde süreklilik ve devam etmeleri ve en önemlisi takım oyuncusu olmalarıdır. Takım oyuncusu olma hususu literatürde (Xing vd., 2020, s.2) tarafından “ekip kompozisyonu ve yapısal esneklikle ilgili bir dinamizm” olarak tanımlanmıştır. Bu hususlarla alakalı girişimciler şunları ifade etmişlerdir:

*“K42: Gençliğe önerim işin matematiğini, araştırmasını, iç görüşünü ve sonrasında kurguyu ihmal etmesinler, ekiplerle iç içe takımlarla birlikte çalışmalarını gerekir.”*

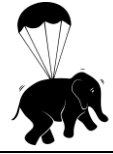
*“K24: Gençlerin “self realization” (kendinin farkına varma) yaşaması gerekir.”*

Gençlerin umutsuz kısa yollar peşinde koşmamalarını, lisan öğrenmeleri, yeniliklere açık olmaları gerektiğini, şansı kendilerinin oluşturmalarını, sorumluluk ve vizyon sahibi olmalarını öğütlemişlerdir. Zorluklarla mücadele etmeden kolay para kazanma peşinde olmamalarını tavsiye etmişlerdir. En önemlisi zorluklardan yılmadan, süreklilik içinde devam edilmesi gerektiği, yola koyulmaları tavsiye edilmiş, kervanın yolda düzüleceği gibi hususlar vurgulanmıştır. Bu hususlardan bazıları ile ilgili olarak girişimciler şunları ifade etmişlerdir:

*“K70: Eğer sen hayallerinden vazgeçersen eğer sen umudunu yitirirsen inan bana çevren zaten senin o yok oluşunu izlemek için ölüyor bitiyor. Dost dediklerine sakın kanma. Sana dostmuş gibi gözükenlere, haline ah vah diyenlere sakın inanma. O gün yalnızsın ve düştüğünde kalkmayı bilmek zorundasın. Seni oradan kaldıran olmayacak.”*

Literatürde doğrudan yabancı yatırım, melek yatırımcılar, kitlesel fonlama gibi olgularla yatırım alma hususu ele alınmaktadır. Munemo (2018, s.372) Afrika’daki girişimsel başarı olgusunu araştırdığı makalesinde doğrudan yabancı yatırım ve kalkınmanın etkisi üzerine çalışmıştır. Doğrudan yabancı yatırımın girişimsel başarı üzerine olumlu etkisini bulgulamıştır (Munemo, 2018, s.383). Bu çalışma bulguları içerisinde girişimciler açısından gençlere verilen tavsiyeler içerisinde belki de en önemlisi işletmelerini farklı bir noktaya taşıyacak yatırım almaları hususudur. Bir girişimci yatırım almak isteyen girişimcilere şunları tavsiye etmektedir:

*“K6: Gençlere yatırımla ilgili tavsiyem şudur: yatırım kriterlerinin teknoloji üretecek ya da mevcut teknolojiyi dönüştürecek, elinde kaynak olmasa bile kazıya kazıya ürünü ya da fikri bir yere getirmiş olacak, fikrin bir pazarı olacak, son olarak ta fikir ölçeklenebilir olacak yani*



*büyüdükçe daha fazla kadrolar isteyen ve gider olarak batağa saplanan bir iş olmayacak, aynı zamanda yurtdışı potansiyeli olacak.”*

#### **4.3.2. Bir Başarı Kriteri Olarak Yapmış Oldukları Sosyal Sorumluluk Projeleri**

Sosyal sorumluluk ve sosyal girişimcilik literatüründeki ana akım eğilimlere uygun olarak ülkemizde de bu durum, sosyal değer üretme, sosyal değişim amaçlama, sosyal ekonomi yaratma, sosyal misyona sahip olma ve sosyal tatmin gibi unsurlarla karakterize oldukları görülmektedir.

Sosyal sorumluluk projelerini sosyal değer olarak yapan girişimciler şunları ifade etmişlerdir:

*“K6: Sosyal sorumluluk olarak tarihi binaları tadilat ve restorasyon yapmaktayız, binaların tarihini anlatan kitaplar yayınlıyoruz.”*

Sosyal sorumluluğu uluslararası literatürde girişimsel başarı kesişiminde ele aldığımızda ilginç sonuçlar ortaya çıkmaktadır. Khan vd. (2021, s.14) kadın girişimcilerin başarı faktörlerini belirlemeye çalıştıkları çalışmalarında yerel vatandaşları işe almayı çalışmamıza benzer şekilde bir sosyal sorumluluk ve değer olarak ifade etmişlerdir.

Literatürde tabandan gelen değişim ve yenilik olarak ifade edilen olgu ile sosyal değişimin ele alındığı (Singh vd., 2021), sosyal girişimcilik yönelimi (Halberstadt vd., 2021) ile işletme başarısının değerlendirildiği ve kısmen olumlu aracılık etkisinin bulunduğu (Gali vd., 2020, s.7) çalışmalar görülmektedir. Sosyal sorumluluk projelerinde sosyal değişim amaçlayan girişimcilerden birisi şunları ifade etmektedir:

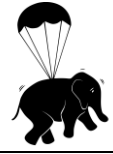
*“K118: Temsa Art projesi ile başladı fabrikamızdaki yaklaşık bir buçuk ton atıktan kullanmadığımız malzemedan üretim sırasında çıkan endüstriyel atıklarımızdan sanat eserleri yapmaktayız. Sanatın içinde olmak bizi mutlu ediyor.”*

Sosyal sorumluluk projelerinde sosyal ekonomi yaratmayı amaçlayan girişimcilerden birisi şunları ifade etmiştir:

*“K59: Dijital tarım istasyonu diye bir ürünümüz var. En son İş Bankası ile yaptığımız bir proje oldu. Bu projede de çok sayıda çiftçiye ulaştık. Onların verimliliklerini de önemli ölçüde arttırdığımızı gözlemledik. Buradaki amacımız, gerçek bilgileri aynı anda aktararak aslında tarımdaki verimliliği arttırmak. Ülkemiz açısından ekonomi yaratmak.”*

Bir diğer girişimci şu hususlara vurgu yapmıştır:

*“K63: Sadece istihdam değil tarım projelerinin içindeyiz. Üretimdeki maliyetlerin artması, küresel gıda kaynaklarının çok kırılgan olması bizi sosyal anlamda bu hususa eğilmeye yöneltti. Suyun tasarruf edilmesi ile ilgili çalışmalarımız var. Aşevi kurduk, yemekler yapılıyor. 1200 kişinin yemeği hazırlanıyor. Bu da bir başarıdır en nihayetinde”*



Pek çok girişimcinin kendi faaliyet alanı ile ilgili sosyal fayda yaratmayı amaçladığı gözlenmiştir. Bu genel bir eğilim olarak değerlendirilmelidir. Faaliyet alanı yazılım olan bir girişimci şunları ifade etmiştir:

*“K69: Yazılıma erişimin demokratikleştirme amacı var. Gelecek açısından varmak istediğimiz hedeflerinden birisi bu. Türkiye üretimimin geleceği projesini yürütmekteyiz.”*

Sosyal sorumluluk projelerinde sosyal misyona sahip olmaya vurgu yapan girişimciler toplum açısından fayda sağlayacak işleri yapmayı kendilerine görev addetmiş kişiler oldukları gözlenmiştir. Katılımcılardan birisi şunları ifade etmişlerdir:

*“K21: Sosyal sorumluluk kapsamında parayı yine insana dönük projelerde kullanıyoruz. Bölge halkının (Doğu Anadolu) dinamiklerini de harekete geçiren bir yapı oluşturmak istiyoruz.”*

Bir diğer girişimci kadınların zorluklar içerisinde iş hayatında var olduklarını bildiklerini ve bu yüzden kadın çalışanlarına pozitif ayrımcılık yaptıklarını şu şekilde ifade etmiştir:

*“K70: Kadın çalışanlarımıza ekstra hak ediş vermekteyiz. Bunu yapan firma sayısı çok az ülkemizde.”*

Girişimcilerin büyük bir çoğunluğunun öğrencilere ya da ihtiyaç sahiplerine burs verdikleri gözlenmektedir:

*“K91: Kurtsan Vakfını kurduk. Sağlık sektörü profesyonellerine ve öğrencilere burs vermekteyiz.”*

Son olarak sosyal sorumluluk projelerini sosyal tatmin için yapan girişimciler bulgularımız içerisinde yer almaktadır. Literatürde bulgularımıza benzer çalışmalara rastlanılmıştır. Wach vd. (2016, s.1098) çalışmalarında girişimsel başarıya ilişkin altı faktörlü bir yapı önermiştir. Girişimcilerin sosyal tatmini bir başarı kriteri olarak ele alınmıştır. Katılımcılar içerisinde yer alan hastane grubu sahibi bir girişimci şunları ifade etmiştir:

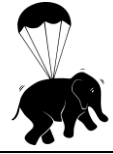
*“K2: Erken doğan bebeklere “bilabedel” (ücretsiz) kalp ameliyatı yapmaktayız.”*

## **5. TARTIŞMA ve SONUÇ**

### **5.1. Teori ve Uygulayıcılara Katkı**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, girişimcilerin başarı kriterlerine yükledikleri anlamları bütünsel olarak (bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal boyutta) ele almak ve bu kriterlere yüklenen anlamları çözümlenektir. Girişimsel başarı literatürü temel alınarak Türkiye’deki 120 işletme sahibi ile ilgili çekilen videolardan yararlanarak, bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal başarı kriterlerini şekillendiren çeşitli kriterler derinlemesine araştırılmıştır. Yapılan nitel araştırma kapsamında elde edilen bulgular girişimsel başarı olgusunu açıklamada yeni bir yaklaşım ortaya



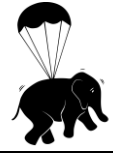


koymaktadır. Video üzerinden yürütülen bu araştırmada girişimcilerle çekilen video veriler analiz edilmiş ve her bir analiz düzeyine ait temalara ilişkin sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır.

Bulgular, genel olarak üç başlıkta sınıflanmaktadır. Türkiye'deki girişimciler başarı kriterlerini bireysel, örgütsel ve toplumsal kriterlerle ifade etmektedirler. Elde edilen bulgular genel literatür eğilimine uygun olmakla beraber her bir kriter açısından Türkiye'ye özgü sonuçları yansıtmaktadır. Araştırma bulguları arasında dikkat çeken bazı hususlar bulunmaktadır.

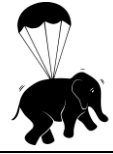
Bireysel başarı faktörleri altında ifade edilen başarı kriterlerinde içerisinde "mayalanmak ve şükretmek" bize özgü sayılabilecek sonuçlar arasında yer almaktadır. Zbierowski ve Gojny-Zbierowska (2022, s.178-179) çalışmalarında, yaşam memnuniyetine benzer şekilde, zevk, umut, merak, sevgi, şükran ve genel olarak duygusal güçlerin, genel iş tatminini ifade ettiğini belirtmişlerdir. Zbierowski ve Gojny-Zbierowska (2022) aynı çalışmalarında benzer şekilde girişimcilerin önemli karakter özelliklerinden birisi olarak şükretmeyi, şükranlık duymayı, özgün ve adaletli olmayı sıralamışlardır. Mayalanma hususunun literatürde genellikle girişimcilik fırsatının mayalanması (Bowey ve Easton, 2007), insanlarla ilişkileri zenginleştirme ve mayalama (Lee vd., 2019, s.539) açısından ele alındığı görülmektedir. Türkiye'deki girişimcilerin ise mayalanma ifadesini çoğunlukla küçük birikimleri büyütme için kullandıkları görülmektedir. Motivasyon kaynakları arasındaki en belirgin fark girişimcilerin çalışmalarını ülkeleri için yaptıklarını defalarca ifade etmeleri ve bu durumun onları çok motive ettiğini belirtmeleridir. Uluslararası literatürde bu hususun vatansever girişimcilik olarak yeni yeni geliştiği gözlenmektedir. Sułkowski vd. (2022, s.297) çalışmalarında vatansever girişimcilik kavramının yönetim ve çalışan eylemleri için önemli bir motivasyon kaynağı olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Polonya'da gerçekleşen çalışmanın sonuçları arasında ülkelerinin iyiliği için çalışmanın, iş kurmanın, onlar için önemli bir motivasyon kaynağı olduğu bulgulanmıştır (Sułkowski vd., 2022, s.308). Bu olgunun dünya genelinde ulus devlet anlayışına doğru ilerlemenin bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıktığı düşünülmektedir. Halihazırdaki literatürde Polonya, Ukrayna ve ülkemizde benzer sonuçların elde edildiği görülmekle birlikte, ulus devlet anlayışının ve jeopolitik risklerin fazla olduğu ülkelerde sonraki yıllarda bu şekilde değerlendirilmesinin muhtemel bir konu olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Örgütsel başarı faktörleri arasında belirtilen gelişim süreçlerinde bize özgü olarak nitelendirilebilecek bir konu bulunmamaktadır ve genel literatür trendine uygun sonuçlar elde edilmektedir. Ancak örgütsel faktörler içerisinde ifade edilen kategoriler arasında girişimcilerin yaşadığı bize özgü engeller bulunmaktadır. Bunlardan "kıskançlık meselesi" hemen hemen her girişimci tarafından dile getirilmiş, çözüm önerileri ortaya konulmuş ve olgu incelenmiştir. Uluslararası literatürde girişimsel başarının önünde bir engel olarak kıskançlık meselesi yeni yeni ele alınan bir olgudur. Malakoti vd. (2023, s.803) İran'da yaptıkları çalışmalarında, bu girişimsel engeller arasında meslektaş kıskançlığı ve profesyonel olmayan tutumları ifade etmişlerdir. Nambiar (2015, s.51) çalışmasında kadın girişimcilerin tecrübe ettikleri zorluklar ve engeller arasında "kıskançlık ve toplumdan destek eksikliği" ifade etmiştir. Literatürde girişimsel başarıya ilişkin yapılan çalışmaların kıskançlık ve engeller olarak çoğunlukla kadın



girişimciler üzerinde olması dikkat çekicidir (Ghiat, 2014). Bu durum örneklemimizden bu noktada farklılaşmaktadır. Katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğu erkeklerden oluşmaktadır. Bu hususla ilgili literatür gelişimi çoğunlukla gelişmekte olan ülkelerden bulgularla desteklenmiştir (Hatala, 2005; Meyer ve Mostert, 2016; Mohamad ve Bakar, 2017). Örgütsel manada girişimcilerin tecrübe ettikleri engeller içerisinde iş yaşam dengesinin kurulmadığı görülmektedir. Bakıcı ve Aydın (2020, s.92) çalışmalarında bu hususa vurgu yapmışlar ve “iş yaşam dengesi sağlandığında bireylerin iş ve iş dışı yaşam memnuniyetlerinin yüksek olacağını” ifade etmişlerdir. Örgütsel faktörler arasında özellikle değinilebilecek bir diğer nokta ise birçok girişimcinin, girişimlerinin ilk yıllarında kazandıkları ilk parayı işlerine yatırmak yerine hemen lüks tüketime yönelmeleridir. Bu konunun finansal ve örgütsel sonuçlarının olduğu ve işletmeleri iflasa sürükleyebileceğini ifade etmek gerekir. Çalışmanın bulgularını destekler nitelikte Chow vd. (2001, s.191) Çinli girişimcilerin tüketim alışkanlıklarını analiz etmiş ve işletmelerinden kar elde eden girişimcilerin lüks yemeklere, seyahate, çocuklara yönelik özel eğitime ve lüks eşyalara daha fazla para harcadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Literatürde bu manada görülen eksikliklerden bir diğeri ise ticari kazancın geçici niteliği göz önüne alındığında gösterişçi tüketimle ilişkilendirilmemesi sayılabilir. Lüks tüketim uzun zamandır nadirlik, benzersizlik, yüksek fiyatlandırma ve mükemmel kalite gibi ayrıcalıklı niteliklerle ilişkilendirilmiş ve hazcılık, estetik ve özgünlük gibi içsel ürün özelliklerini aşan unsurlarla tanımlanmıştır (Christodoulides vd., 2021, s.89). Girişimcilerin lüks tüketime yönelmelerinin kendileriyle ilgili algılarının hedonist ve hak ettiklerini düşünmelerinden kaynaklı olabileceği söylenebilir. Bu unsurlar girişimsel başarı açısından hem ülkemiz hem de yabancı literatürde engeller içerisinde ele alınmıştır.

Bu çalışma, sosyal başarı faktörleri ve sonuçları başlığı altında ifade edilen ülkemiz gençliğine yönelik önerileri ve şirketlerin sosyal sorumluluk anlayışı içerisinde bize özel iyi uygulamaları içermektedir. Gençlere verilen öğütlerden “ileriye düşmek” konusu detaylı bir şekilde anlatılmış, “para kazanmanın kolay olmadığı” vurgulanmış ve “umutsuz kestirme yollardan” vazgeçilmesi tavsiye edilmiştir. Uluslararası literatürde de benzer tavsiye ve öğütlere rastlanılmıştır. Cull (2006, s.17) çalışmasında genç girişimcilerin başarı faktörlerini incelemiş ve onlara bulgularımıza benzer tavsiyelerde bulunmuştur. Bu tavsiyeler arasında mentör edinme, olumlu katkılar biriktirme, iletişimi geliştirme, aileye bağlılık sıralanmıştır. Ülkemizde yapılan çalışmalardan birisi olan Çitçi vd. (2018) çalışmalarının amacını öznel girişimsel başarı literatüründe ihmal edilen “bağlamın” etkisini ortaya koymak olarak ifade etmişler, üç düzeyli bağlam modeli geliştirmişlerdir. Sosyal sorumluluk başlığı altında ise bizim öz kültürümüzde var olan hayır ve zekât gibi kavramlar zaten ülkemizi Müslüman olmayan coğrafyalardan ayırmaktadır. Sosyal eşitliğin sağlanmasının bir yolu olarak zekât ve hayır, işletme sahipleri açısından işlerinin bir parçası olarak algılanmaktadır. Hayır hususu yeni yeni diğer kültürlerde sosyal sorumluluk açısından (Bowen, 2013; Moon, 2002) ele alınmaya başlanmıştır. Perić ve Turalija (2018, s.35) çalışmalarında sosyal sorumluluğun “önemli bir tartışma konusu haline geldiğini çünkü bu kavramın uygulanmasının yalnızca şirketin işlerini değil, aynı zamanda şirketin faaliyet gösterdiği dar ve daha geniş topluluğu da etkilediğini” ifade etmişlerdir.



Bu çalışmanın mevcut literatüre katkılarından bir diğeri, girişimsel başarı literatürünü bütüncül manada ele almasıdır. Mevcut literatürden farklı olarak ayrı ayrı değil tüm analiz düzeylerine odaklanılmıştır. Ülkemizde benzer çalışmaların nispeten az yapılmış olması araştırmayı kıymetli kılmaktadır. Araştırmanın girişimsel başarı literatürüne katkısının yanında, ekonomik ve sosyal kalkınmanın ana aktörlerinden olan girişimci profilinin değer yaratma süreçlerinin anlaşılması açısından önemlidir. Bu kapsamda bulgular devlette ve özel sektörde politika yürütücüler için önemli ipuçları vermektedir.

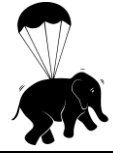
Örneklemeimiz içerisinde geçen girişimcilerin konuşmalarında bahsettikleri ya da vurguladıkları, yaşamlarında ve girişimcilik süreçlerinde tecrübe ettikleri kritik olaylar ile ilgili detaylar sunulmuştur. Kritik olaylar girişimciler açısından dönüm noktası olmuş, onların hayatlarını ve özellikle girişimcilik serüvenlerinin seyrini değiştirmiş hususlar olması noktasında önem arz etmektedir. Girişimcilerin tecrübe ettikleri kritik olaylar şu şekilde ifade edilmiştir: Eski patronlarının vefatı, okul ve çalışma arasında seçime zorlanma, üniversitede bölüm değiştirme, işle ilgili yeni bir sertifika ya da mezuniyet, yurtdışına açılan ilk şirket olma, pazarda ilk olma, ebeveyn iflası, ebeveyn vefatı ya da ayrılığı, büyük şehirlere göç etme, tersine göç, inovatif ürün patenti, yurtdışı eğitim, pazar kaymağını alma, sektör değiştirme, deprem vb. doğal afetler, doğru insanları işe alma, 2008 yılı mobil devrimi, çocukluk çağından itibaren usta çırak ilişkisi içinde olma, ilk ürünlerin tutması, ebeveyn rahatsızlığı sonucu işin başına mecburen geçme, ebeveyn işlerine uygun olmadığını düşünme, yönetmelik ya da yasaların işletme lehine çıkması ve bunun gibi kritik olaylar olarak sıralanmıştır.

## 5.2. Araştırmanın Kısıtları

Araştırmanın örneklem büyüklüğü, katılımcıların geniş coğrafi dağılımı ve katılımcılarla zaman sınırlaması nedeniyle genelleme potansiyeli açısından bazı sınırlamaları bulunmaktadır. Video temelli bu araştırma yaklaşımının avantajları olduğu kadar dezavantajları da bulunmaktadır. Bunlar içerisinde video veri setine sahip olan bu araştırma verisinin durağan yapısı noktasında sabit ve toplandıktan sonra değiştirilemez olması sayılabilir. Nitel araştırmaların genelinde var olan genellebilirlikle ilgili sıkıntılar bu araştırmanın kısıtları arasında ifade edilmelidir. Örneklem seçimi noktasında “StoryBox” kanalının genelde büyük ve ülke çapında faaliyet gösteren işletmeleri tercih etmesi, KOBİ’lerdeki girişimsel başarıyı ele almaması araştırmanın kısıtları arasında sayılabilir.

## 5.3. Gelecek Çalışmalar için Öneriler

Bu araştırma makalesi içerisinde bulguların Tablo 5’teki kategorilerin birçoğu nicel araştırmalardan kullanılmak için elverişli değişkenlerdir. Çalışma, konu ile ilgilenen akademisyenlerin model geliştirmesine temel olabilir. Çalışmada belirlenen temaların potansiyel olarak girişimci adaylarının girişimsel başarı öncüllerini ve sonuçlarını daha iyi analiz etmelerine yardımcı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Diğer ülkelerde yapılan çalışmalar ile kültürler arası başarı kriterleri karşılaştırılabilir. Gelişmekte olan ülkeler ile gelişmiş ülkelerin girişimcilikle ilgili başarı faktörleri karşılaştırmalı değerlendirmeye alınabilir. Ölçülebilir



nitelikteki nicel değişkenlerin kullanımı ile bu çalışma da vurgulanan hususlar, ileri istatistiksel analize konu olabilir. Sonraki çalışmalarda kesinlikle video temelli araştırmalara yönelmesi tavsiye edilmektedir. Yeni nesil denilebilecek bir araştırma modeli olarak video temelli araştırmaların özellikle girişimcilik ve strateji alanında uygulanabilecek potansiyele sahip olduğu düşünülmektedir. Literatür içerisinde rastlanılan “bilgi zenginliği teorisi ve kanal genişletme teorisi” video görüşmelerde kullanılabilir teorik lensler arasında yer alabilir. Videolar üzerinden daha detaylı nitel ve karma araştırmalar yapılabilir. Video temelli araştırmalara çeşitli yazılımların ve yapay zekâ vb. teknolojik araçların entegrasyonu önerilmektedir. Araştırmanın bulguları, girişimcilerin başarıyı anlama şekillerinde önemli farklılıklar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu ek motivasyonlardan yararlanarak, daha fazla kişi girişimci bir kariyere çekilebilir. Girişimcilerin firmalarını nasıl geliştirdiklerine dair bulgularımız, aynı zamanda farklı türdeki girişimcilerin firmalarını daha da geliştirmeye teşvik edecek potansiyel unsurlara da işaret etmektedir. Ülkemizde girişimciliğe yönelmek isteyen gençlerin, başarılı girişimcilerin tecrübelerinden ve deneyimlerinden faydalanmaları, işletmeleri açısından karşılaştıkları zorluklara hazırlıklı olmaları, öngörü geliştirmeleri ve başarılı girişimci olma yolunda birey olarak kendilerini geliştirmeleri önerilmektedir.

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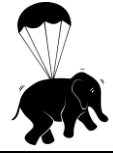
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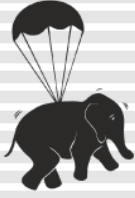
**Katkı Oranı Beyanı:** Yazar çalışmayı tek başına gerçekleřtirmiřtir.

**Destek ve Teřekkür Beyanı:** Çalışmada herhangi bir kurum ya da kuruluřtan destek alınmamıřtır. Katkıları bu makalenin gelişimini büyük ölçüde etkiledięi için hakemlere ve editöre teřekkür ederim.

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Bu makale **benzerlik** tespit yazılımlarıyla taranmıřtır.



## *Deinstitutionalized Careers: Intersectionality of Gender Pay Gap among Women Knowledge Workers\**

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore women knowledge workers' experiences of the intersectionality of the gender pay gap and to scrutinize the reasons behind gender pay gap. The study problematizes the gender pay gap phenomenon by using intersectionality theory. The study describes how the gender pay gap varies based on ethnical differences besides being women and reveals how this situation deinstitutionalizes women's careers. The study utilized a descriptive qualitative research design employing thematic analysis conducted in Germany and Türkiye with a purposively selected sample of participants. The study's empirical material was generated through semi-structured interviews with women knowledge workers who differ in ethnicity and generally work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. The study's findings indicated that ethnicity should be considered among other intersectional factors to analyze the gender pay gap comprehensively. The reasons behind the gender pay gap are found to be the lack of transparency in the workplace, gender-based occupational segregation, culture, the glass ceiling, the existence of male-dominated informal communication channels, and the fact that women workers are more easily preferred in organizational downsizing initiatives.

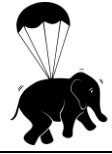
**Keywords:** gender pay gap, intersectionality theory, women knowledge workers, Germany, Türkiye

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\* The data-gathering protocol for this study was designed in 2019 and implemented between 2019 and 2020, therefore, it is exempt from ethics committee approval.

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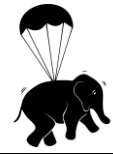


## *Kariyer Çözülmesi: Kadın Bilgi Çalışanlarında Cinsiyete Dayalı Ücret Eşitsizliğinin Kesişimselliği*

### **Özet**

Bu çalışmanın amacı kadın bilgi çalışanlarının cinsiyete dayalı ücret eşitsizliğinin kesişimselliğine ilişkin deneyimlerin keşfedilmesi ve cinsiyete dayalı ücret eşitsizliğinin sebeplerinin sorgulanmasıdır. Çalışma, cinsiyete dayalı ücret eşitsizliği olgusunu kesişimsellik teorisi bağlamında sorunsallaştırmaktadır. Çalışmada ücret eşitsizliğinin kadın olmanın yanında etnik köken farklılıkları açısından nasıl değiştiği ve kadınların kariyerlerinde nasıl bir çözülmeye neden olduğu betimlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Betimsel nitel tasarımın kullanıldığı çalışma tematik analize dayalı olarak Almanya ve Türkiye’de amaçlı olarak seçilen katılımcılarla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmanın görgül materyalini etnik köken açısından farklılık gösteren, genelde bilim, teknoloji, mühendislik ve matematik alanlarında çalışan bilgi çalışanı kadınlarla yapılan yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler oluşturmaktadır. Çalışma sonuçları cinsiyete dayalı ücret eşitsizliğinin kapsamlı analizinde etnik kökenin diğer kesişimsel faktörlerle birlikte ele alınması gerektiğine işaret etmektedir. Cinsiyete dayalı ücret eşitsizliğinin nedenleri arasında ise işyerinde şeffaflığın olmayışı, cinsiyete dayalı mesleki ayrımcılık, kültür, cam tavan, erkek egemen biçimsel olmayan iletişim kanallarının varlığı ve kadın çalışanların örgütsel küçülme girişimlerinde daha kolay tercih edilebilmeleri sıralanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** cinsiyete dayalı ücret eşitsizliği, kesişimsellik teorisi, kadın bilgi çalışanları, Almanya, Türkiye



## 1. INTRODUCTION

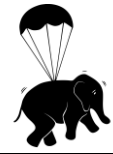
The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has awarded the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2023 to Claudia Goldin ([The Swedish Academy of Sciences, 2023](#)). Claudia Goldin has been recognized for her contributions to our understanding of women's labor market outcomes (see [Goldin, 1990](#)). With this award, the issue of the gender pay gap has come into the spotlight once again. Numerous studies have been conducted to explore the gender pay gap and explained the factors that contribute to it ([Bishu and Alkadry, 2017](#); [Acker, 2012](#)). According to these studies, men tend to earn more than women in all kinds of organizations, whether they are female-dominated, male-dominated, or gender-balanced ([Budig, 2002](#)). Furthermore, the gender pay gap demonstrates that even if the job-related characteristics of men and women were the same, they would still receive different wages across the wage distribution ([Arulampalam et al., 2007](#)).

Recent Pew Research findings suggest that the gender pay gap, which has barely improved in the past twenty years, has stalled, and remains unchanged, even for college graduates ([Kochhar, 2023](#)). Efforts are being made to diminish gender pay gap. Despite the progress made so far, it is not happening as quickly as it should, and more efforts are needed to achieve significant change ([Bishu and Alkadry, 2017](#); [Alkadry and Tower, 2013](#); [Jarrell and Stanley, 2004](#); [Weichselbaumer and Winter-Ebmer, 2005](#)). Even countries like Iceland ([Henshall, 2018](#)), benchmarked for combating the gender pay gap, struggle with addressing the issue ([Vock, 2023](#)).

The gender pay gap can have devastating consequences for one's career, since organizational wage-setting processes can create gendered subcultures through identity work, interactions, and acculturation ([Acker, 2012](#)). Arthur and Rousseau ([1996, p.3](#)) define a career as a series of work experiences over time, and they discuss a shift from traditional organizational careers to boundaryless careers. Over three decades ago, people started to experience fragmented careers, according to Arthur and Rousseau ([1996](#)). Fragmentation resulting from flexibility increases career and retirement risks ([Settersten, 2006](#)). Similarly, women often experience career disadvantages, leading to fragmented and discontinuous careers for various reasons ([Cohen and Duberley, 2020](#)). Deinstitutionalization is a term that refers to the disruption of an institution, which can lead to the erosion or discontinuity of an institutionalized organizational activity or practice ([Oliver, 1992, p.564](#)). However, studies on deinstitutionalization are rare, as noted by Maguire and Hardy ([2009](#)). If we consider career as an institution, it is argued in this study that the gender pay gap has led to the deinstitutionalization of careers for women.

It is self-evident that gender inequalities still exist across nations, with varying degrees of reduction ([Acker, 2012](#)). In addition to cross-national differences, global immigration adds another dimension, making understanding the dynamics of the gender pay gap even more complicated within national borders. For this reason, it is important to understand the career struggles of women through an intersectional lens ([Crenshaw, 1991](#)) that considers their cultural





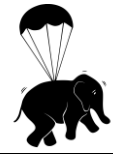
background, in addition to their gender. Intersectionality is a framework that has been widely used by social justice advocates and scholars who are socially conscious (Tomlinson, 2013). The power web that surrounds human beings in multiple ways can be deconstructed by fine-tuning the intersectionality lens (Özbilgin et al., 2011). Moreover, it is argued that intersectionality can overcome single-axis thinking, thus enhance social justice (Cho et al., 2013). Therefore, this study aims to shed light on the intersectionality of the gender pay gap among women, most of them are employed within science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers, in Germany and Türkiye inquiring how gender pay gap is deinstitutionalizing women's careers. Our utmost objective with this study is to investigate the gender pay gap's impact on women's work experience and explore how intersectional this phenomenon is. The article will proceed as follows: Firstly, the theoretical background of the study will be introduced, which includes the gender pay gap and intersectionality theory. Secondly, the methodological approach used in the study will be elaborated. Thirdly, the empirical findings of the study will be described. Lastly, the article will be concluded with the discussion of the findings.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap, also known as the gender wage gap, refers to the unequal payment between male and female employees, regardless of their performance, competence, and knowledge. This pay gap adversely affects the performance and motivation of women, and prevents them from having equal opportunities for hiring, promotion, and career advancement. Rubery and Koukiadaki (2016) observed that women have made significant progress in the workforce by becoming more continuous members and receiving better education, diversifying their university subjects, taking dual breadwinner roles, and joining trade unions. In fact, women join trade unions as frequently as men when they work in organized sectors. Moreover, social policy support for women's employment has grown with an increase in state-paid leave and childcare support. However, the gender pay gap persists across all demographics and earnings definitions (Roos and Gatta, 1999). Moreover, according to Acker (2012) organizations perpetuate gender inequalities through embedded gender assumptions about femininity and masculinity.

Parenthood, age, industrial characteristics, and occupational gender segregation contribute to the gender pay gap (Kochhar, 2023). The gender pay gap and gender discrimination go against modern societies' values and disrupt social order. International corporations are increasingly supporting movements like "HeForShe" to boost the number of women in various roles, including hiring and promotion (UN Women, 2024). But what causes the gender pay gap? According to Blau and Kahn (2017), the gender pay gap can be attributed to two main factors: human capital and gender segregation. The human capital factor is related to the education and training opportunities available to women, which affects their performance and wages. In contrast, discrimination plays a role in limiting women's presence in the workplace and their



advancement to higher organizational levels. Explanation of the causes are also bifurcated. The gender pay gap can be explained through two different theories: individualist and institutionalist. Individualist theories suggest that the gender pay gap exists because of certain “attitudes, preferences or qualifications” that make women less productive than men. On the other hand, institutionalist theories argue that the gender pay gap is a result of “the competitive market breaking down, creating constraints and limitations that restrict women’s choices” (Roos and Gatta, 1999, p.106-110).

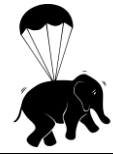
Social world is constructed on the multiple grounds therefore our analysis should be capable of engulfing these various identities (Crenshaw, 1991). Although there are theoretical attempts to explain gender pay gap, there is still ambiguity on what causes the gender pay gap, thus making the phenomenon more complicated to overcome. For instance, according to Klode et al. (2017), the gender pay gap among human resources managers in Germany may be caused by invisible factors. Moreover, Chevalier (2007) states that a significant part of the difference in earnings between genders remains unexplained, contributing to the gender pay gap. Research suggests that women’s attitudes towards competition and performance-based contracts explain only a small portion of the gender wage gap (Manning and Saidi, 2010). It is still interestingly unclear what portion of the gender pay gap can be attributed to personality traits or social norms. (Roethlisberger et al., 2023).

It has been argued that simply analyzing gender alone is not sufficient to fully understand and address inequalities related to the gender pay gap. Acker (2012) suggests that intersectionalities play a crucial role in their reproduction. Recent research has highlighted that the gender pay gap varies depending on race and ethnicity (Kochhar, 2023; Woodhams et al., 2021). Therefore, it becomes necessary to adjust our approach to the gender pay gap by utilizing the intersectionality theory.

## 2.2. Intersectionality Theory

This study uses intersectionality theory to explain the gender pay gap, utilizing its analytic sensibility to illuminate contextual power dynamics (Cho et al., 2013). Intersectionality theory has gained prominence in recent years, and it has been interpreted in two main ways. For some, it is seen as a result of the “postmodern turn” in academia and aims to explain the perceived fragmentation of identities within political movements in the late twentieth century. However, for others, intersectionality provides a set of tools for complicating our understanding of the systems and processes that define society. It is a method for examining how inequality is reproduced within institutions such as the state, family, or legal structures (Grabham et al., 2009). Intersectionality has been found to be a productive concept for many disciplines including organizational studies (Cho et al., 2013).

The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a leading authority in civil rights, Black feminist legal theory, and race, racism, and the law. In her groundbreaking work titled “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of

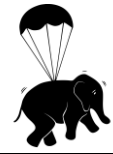


Color,” Crenshaw employed intersectionality to highlight how social movement organization and advocacy around violence against women ignored the vulnerabilities of women of color, particularly those from immigrant and socially disadvantaged communities (Carbado et al., 2013). For Crenshaw (1991) intersectionality is used to denote how gender and race interact shaping being as a Black woman. According to Crenshaw (1991) social categorizations need to be reconsidered as these categories may hinder or blur the intragroup differences. For instance, violence against women can result from multiple factors beyond their gender and should not be reduced to an issue of identity politics (Crenshaw, 1991).

Intersectionality has the potential to widen our horizon on inclusionary action and discourse (Cho et al., 2013). Intersectionality refers to the interconnectedness of different types of oppression through institutional and symbolic mechanisms. This perspective recognizes the complexity of power relations and is seen as a productive approach by many scholars (Carbado et al., 2013). Crenshaw’s works are instrumental in uncovering and challenging the ways in which institutionalized discourses, such as the law, legitimize existing power structures and marginalize certain groups. Crenshaw (1991) also highlighted that even movements of resistance, like feminism and antiracism, can themselves perpetuate marginalization (Carbado et al., 2013). Intersectional subordination states Crenshaw (1991) does not have to be intentionally produced; it can emerge when preexisting conditions interact thus creating intersectional disempowerment. Therefore, it can be concluded that intersectionality is a term used for focusing on “difference and sameness” in the context of anti-discrimination and social movements and its relation to power (Cho et al., 2013, p.787).

Intersectionality has become increasingly popular among feminist and antiracist scholars across the globe (Cho et al., 2013). Intersectionality problematizes the limitations of mainstream discourses by incorporating multidimensional experiences from Black feminist thought (Tomlinson, 2013). Intersectionality refers to the ways in which an individual’s various identities can intersect and lead to unique forms of discrimination. These identities are often social or political, and when discussing intersectionality, the most commonly considered factors are gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and class (Center for Intersectional Justice, 2024). Various metaphors such as the road intersection, matrix and the interlocked vision of oppression has been used to depict what intersectionality is (Cho et al., 2013, p.787).

The experience at the intersection can be much larger and heavier than the dimensions analyzed alone (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality views identities as “both/and” not “either/or” kind of completions (Chun et al., 2013, p.921). Özbilgin et al. (2011) argued that any social phenomena regarding power and diversity is inherently intersectional. For instance, in addition to racial and ethnic discrimination, LGBTQ and disabled women in the US are facing a wider gender pay gap than White women (Kochhar, 2023). Additional burden is more than mere addition making former one least bearable (Crenshaw, 1991). For instance, discrimination is normalized against black men and white women, while it is often a blind spot for black women narratives (Cho et



al., 2013). It is even asserted that women of color were marginalized even within feminist and antiracist discourses (Crenshaw, 1991). Thus, only intersectional analysis according to Crenshaw (1991, p.1283) can provide “intellectual and political response” to this dilemma.

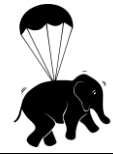
Experiences of women according to Crenshaw (1991) is the product of other intersecting patterns. Uncovering differences beyond gender at work can also highlight other aspects of diversity, such as disability, religion, belief, and sexuality (Özbilgin et al., 2011). Intersectionality adds complexity to our understanding of gender by highlighting how gender processes intersect with and are influenced by race and class processes, as well as other forms of inequality and exclusion (Acker, 2012). In other words, gender cannot be studied in isolation and must be viewed in the broader context of social hierarchies and power relations.

Not every difference is a difference (Tomlinson, 2013). Intersectionality provides an antiessentialist critique for the socially constructed identities siloed in categories for the sake of “linguistic economy of difference” (Crenshaw, 1991, p.1296). Compound marginalization of identities cannot be analyzed by using single-axis tendencies, as those identities can fall into the intellectual voids (Crenshaw, 1991). The ones trapped in the void are challenged by power exercised mutually reinforcing by each dimension (Crenshaw, 1991), since their sorrows are often overlooked. Hence, coalitions of identities should be forged to combat societal struggles (Chun et al., 2013). In this study, intersectionality theory is used to better understand the gender pay gap. It is expected that gender pay gap can be analyzed more comprehensively than employing single-axis theoretical frameworks (Cho et al., 2013).

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

The study utilized a descriptive qualitative research design employing thematic analysis conducted in Germany and Turkey with a purposively selected sample of participants. According to Creswell (2016), qualitative research has several characteristics that can help researchers apply it better. Qualitative research involves reporting how people talk about things, describe things, and see the world. It also involves going out to a particular setting and studying it firsthand. This helps the researcher to focus on how the context or setting shapes what they have to say. Qualitative research is exploratory research, which means that it helps researchers to explore a situation in an open-ended way. This way, they can develop a complex understanding of the situation. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p.10), the method of research in question is a field that is “interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary, crosscutting the humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences.” It is important to note that using given categorical identities alone may not be enough to fully understand and explore complex identities (Chun et al., 2013), which is why the methodological choice made in this study was necessary.

A descriptive qualitative design (Doyle et al., 2020) was preferred for the overall construction of the study. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews to examine the gender pay gap and its intersectionality. Qualitative research methods aim to explore



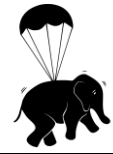
experience, meaning, and perspective from the participants' point of view (Hammarberg et al., 2016). The techniques used in qualitative research include small-group discussions, semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, and the analysis of texts and documents. These techniques are employed to investigate beliefs, attitudes, concepts of normative behavior, views on a focused topic, background information, institutional perspective, and private knowledge (Hammarberg et al., 2016). Qualitative researchers strive to maintain the integrity of their work through various means such as trustworthiness, credibility, applicability, and consistency (Leininger, 1994). The qualitative method provides a comprehensive understanding of everyday life including attitudes, behaviors, interactions, events, and social processes. This enables social scientists to gain insight into how society-wide factors like social structure, social order, and various social forces influence everyday life (Crossman, 2020). In the upcoming sections, how the empirical material of the study was generated, and the research participants were selected will be described.

### 3.1. Semi-Structured Interviews

Empirical material of this study was generated by conducting semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are a type of data gathering technique that make use of both open-ended, pre-planned and theory driven questions. The goal is to generate empirical material based on the experiences of the participants, as well as on established concepts within the field of study. This method can be used with individuals or groups, and it allows for easy comparison of responses. Additionally, it can help the interviewer reach a consensus more efficiently on key issues related to the research topic (Galletta, 2013).

According to Adams (2015), semi-structured interviews are time-consuming, labor-intensive, and require an interviewer to be intelligent, sensitive, poised, nimble, and knowledgeable about relevant substantive issues. Alvesson (2003) provides several strategies for comprehending and constructing research based on interviews. Semi-structured interviews are a great way to establish good communication between the interviewer and interviewee, making it easy for the interviewer to obtain detailed information (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Eye contact is an important factor during the interview process. It enables the interviewer to empathize with the interviewee and facilitates the researcher's entry into the interviewee's world (Dempsey et al., 2016). Maintaining eye contact helps the interviewer establish trust and confidentiality, which is essential for studies of this nature.

A semi-structured interview guide with 13 questions and corresponding probes was developed based on the theoretical background of the study and Kallio et al.'s (2016) recommendations, acknowledging the investigative notion of research interviews (Czarniawska, 2014). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the semi-structured interviews that were originally planned to be conducted face-to-face had to be conducted either online or face-to-face. The interviews were conducted with four groups of women workers from Germany and Türkiye. This purposeful selection of participants, described in detail below, contributed to the study by providing



valuable insights on subjects such as the intersectionality of the gender pay gap and gender discrimination.

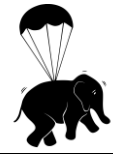
The semi-structured interviews were carried out in the participants' respective languages, which included Turkish, English, and German. The interviewees were given the choice of language, and their preference was adhered to. The questions were prepared and translated into all three languages prior to the interviews. This helped the participants to express themselves clearly, reduced ambiguity during the interview process, and alleviated their anxiety about language and expressing their ideas.

To ensure that there was no ambiguity about the semi-structured interview guide, a pilot interview was conducted. The answers given during this interview were compared with the theoretical background of the study to ensure coherence. The participants were informed about the confidentiality of their personal information and were asked to sign a voluntary participation permission form before the interview. This form contained their rights as participants. Additionally, a participant information form was filled in by every participant, which contained their age, birthplace, educational background, position, sector, and other relevant information. While verbal permissions were obtained and recorded during all interviews, in some of the online interviews written consent were not supplied.

### **3.2. Research Participants**

Given the novel and ever-evolving nature of the intersectionality of the gender pay gap, a purposeful sampling strategy based on theory was utilized (Palinkas et al., 2015). It is observed in previous studies that the geographical location has significant effect on gender pay gap (Chapman and Benis, 2017). For this study, participants were selected from a diverse group of women knowledge workers in Germany and Türkiye, considering factors such as birthplace, nationality, and work country, to maximize diversity (Patton, 2002). The aim of this selection was to obtain a wider range of answers and real-life experiences related to the research questions. The study included 40 participants in total, consisting of 10 Turkish women workers who work in Türkiye, 10 Turkish women workers who were born in Germany, 10 Turkish women workers who immigrated from Türkiye to Germany, and 10 German women workers who work in Germany. The group classification was designed to better understand the research subjects and address the main research questions. Knowing group unity may force us to think group uniformity in the long run (Chun et al., 2013), within group nuances revealed during the interviews were highlighted coherent with the purpose of the study.

The participants in this study had diverse backgrounds, including differences in age, occupation, sector, education, and position within their workplace. The background information of each participant is presented in the four tables below (Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4), which include details such as their age, occupation, sector, years of experience, and the gender of their first line manager. Participants provided short or long responses to each question on the participant information form. The interviews were conducted between June 2019 and



August 2020, and lasted 10 to 20 minutes, an average length of about 12 minutes. Due to the relative sensitivity of the phenomenon under scrutiny, the interviews had to be shorter than expected. Code names were assigned to each participants denoting their intersectionality such as “Türkiye as birthplace Turkish participants working in Türkiye” were coded as Tb/Tw\_n, “Türkiye as birthplace Turkish participants working in Germany” were coded as Tb/Gw\_n, “Germany as birthplace Turkish participants working in Germany” was coded Gb/Gw\_TR\_n, and “German participants working in Germany” were coded as Gb/Gw\_DE\_n.

**Table 1.** Türkiye as birthplace Turkish participants working in Türkiye

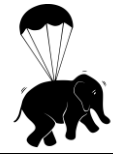
Name	Age	Occupation	Sector	Year	Gender of the First Line Manager
Tb/Tw_1	25-35	Software Engineer	Private	2	Male
Tb/Tw_2	25-35	English Teacher	Public	3	Male
Tb/Tw_3	25-35	Human Resources Consultant	Private	4	Male
Tb/Tw_4	25-35	English Teacher	Public	2	Male
Tb/Tw_5	25-35	Civil Engineer	Private	4	Male
Tb/Tw_6	25-35	Clinical Psychologist	Private	4	Male
Tb/Tw_7	25-35	Psychological Counselor	Private	5	Male
Tb/Tw_8	25-35	Operational Coordinator	Public	4	Male
Tb/Tw_9	25-35	Method Engineer	Private	2	Male
Tb/Tw_10	46-55	Nurse	Public	10+	Female

**Table 2.** Türkiye as birthplace Turkish participants working in Germany

Name	Age	Occupation	Sector	Year	Gender of the First Line Manager
Tb/Gw_1	25-35	Software Engineer	Private	7	Male
Tb/Gw_2	25-35	Data Analyst	Private	3	Male
Tb/Gw_3	25-35	Civil Engineer	Private	2	Male
Tb/Gw_4	36-45	Information Security Architect	Private	3	Male
Tb/Gw_5	25-35	Dentist	Private	4	Female
Tb/Gw_6	25-35	Nurse	Private	4	Male
Tb/Gw_7	25-35	Purchase Manager	Private	9	Male
Tb/Gw_8	25-35	Central Tender Manager	Private	2	Male
Tb/Gw_9	25-35	Brand Manager	Private	9	Female
Tb/Gw_10	36-45	Teacher	Public	10+	Male

**Table 3.** Germany as birthplace Turkish participants working in Germany

Name	Age	Occupation	Sector	Year	Gender of the First Line Manager
Gb/Gw_TR_1	36-45	German Teacher	Public	10+	Female
Gb/Gw_TR_2	25-35	Physiotherapist	Private	9	Male
Gb/Gw_TR_3	25-35	Architect	Private	10+	Male
Gb/Gw_TR_4	25-35	Architect	Private	2	Female
Gb/Gw_TR_5	36-45	Teacher of Mentally Handicapped	Public	7	Male



Gb/Gw_TR_6	25-35	Buying Specialist	Public	5	Male
Gb/Gw_TR_7	25-35	Buying Specialist	Public	2	Female
Gb/Gw_TR_8	25-35	Industrial Manager	Private	8	Male
Gb/Gw_TR_9	25-35	Therapist	Private	8	Female
Gb/Gw_TR_10	25-35	External Quality Controller	Private	2	Male

**Table 4.** German participants working in Germany

Name	Age	Occupation	Sector	Year	Gender of the First Line Manager
Gb/Gw_DE_1	25-35	Group Partner Manager	Private	1	Male
Gb/Gw_DE_2	25-35	Big Data Engineer	Private	9	Male
Gb/Gw_DE_3	25-35	Consultant	Private	2	Male
Gb/Gw_DE_4	25-35	Junior Project Manager	Private	2	Male
Gb/Gw_DE_5	25-35	Teacher (D.A.F.)	Public	3	Female
Gb/Gw_DE_6	25-35	Requirements Engineer	Private	1	Male
Gb/Gw_DE_7	25-35	Master and Business Analyst	Private	4	Female
Gb/Gw_DE_8	36-45	Sales Manager	Private	4	Male
Gb/Gw_DE_9	25-35	Requirements Engineer	Public	1	Male
Gb/Gw_DE_10	25-35	Industrial Engineer	Public	4	Male

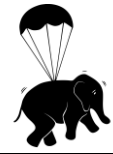
## 4. FINDINGS

This study is designed as a qualitative descriptive study (Kim et al., 2017), and thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2022) was conducted to understand the intersectionality of the gender pay gap. According to Lambert and Lambert (2012, p.255) main goal of this type of design is to generate “a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals” who are facing the phenomenon under scrutiny. The interview transcripts were translated from Turkish and German to English. To avoid misunderstandings and ambiguities, the terms mentioned by participants were expressed in English, and verbatim comments were included with their direct quotations to make them more coherent. The findings will be presented in two parts below: intersectionality of the gender pay gap and causes of other discriminatory issues related with the gender pay gap uncovered during the interviews.

### 4.1. Intersectionality of Gender Pay Gap

Convergence of various diversity factors requires intervention strategies that will not be designed for single diversity factor (Crenshaw, 1991). Utilizing an intersectional lens, we can understand the multidimensional oppression experienced by women workers with an immigrant background, recognizing that “no single oppression is subordinate to another” (Chun et al. 2013, p.918). The analysis revealed that the gender pay gap or gender discrimination is not solely caused by gender factors. Other factors like nationality, language, cultural background, and religion also contribute to it. Women report experiencing discrimination not only on the





basis of their gender, but also due to their race and ethnicity. The intersectionality of these factors results in wage disparities and barriers to career advancement.

*“The wage distribution is unequal in my organization. My male colleagues who do the same job as me and although we are at the same age and have the same qualifications, they earn 15,000 EURO per year more than me. Because of the gender and nationality factor, I earn less than my male colleagues.” (Participant Tb/Gw\_7)*

Some of the participants stated that Turkish women who have immigrated to Germany experience gender and race-based wage discrimination, as well as ethnic discrimination.

*“Due to my language problem, don’t think that it seems possible to rise to the executive position for me. But still, I believe that male candidates are chosen, and they have priority in top managerial positions.” (Participant Tb/Gw\_8)*

According to Erbil et al. (2023), linguistic capital is generally acknowledged as reflecting talent at work. It is unfortunate that language proficiency can lead to discrimination against women employees. Non-native speakers may face obstacles in career advancement, even if they are fluent in English. For instance, a woman who cannot speak German well might be overlooked for a promotion, particularly if she is competing with native speakers. This problem is particularly pronounced for women who were not born in Germany. However, Turkish women who were born in Germany have the advantage of being bilingual in both languages.

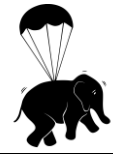
When we take into account language and ethnic background and categorize these groups in a triangle, women from Turkey are at the lowest point, just below women born in Germany. Learning a new language is a time-consuming process, and many German companies require proficiency in German, especially for local firms and higher positions. Women born in Germany seem to be more optimistic about their chances of getting promoted.

*“Of course, I can get a promotion. Right now, I am already on the promotion process. Our goal with my boss is that he will remain from his position completely, then he will do his works and I will be like an assistant manager. During this process being a woman, I had no difficulties.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_TR\_3)*

*“Definitely, I can get a promotion, and gender or other things do not play a role in this.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_TR\_5)*

During the interviews, the participants talked about their personal experiences and emotions related to the gender pay gap, discrimination, and cultural issues that exist in both Türkiye and Germany. They mentioned that the distribution of wages has changed over the years, leading to a pay gap between man and woman employees.

*“At first, the payment was the same with me and my male colleagues at hiring. However, in the following periods, I see that men are selected to rise or get promotions faster and women stay*



*behind them. This situation leads to their election for high positions and the pay gap between genders.” (Participant Tb/Gw\_3)*

According to the research findings, the government needs to address gender discrimination and the issue of unequal pay gaps. To tackle this problem, it is suggested that suitable legislation should be implemented to regulate and control such practices. The government should use its legislative power to ensure that those who breach the law are penalized accordingly.

*“It does not matter whether women or men in my workplace, however, I see that in many organizations, men earn higher than women. The government should tighten the laws to get the pay gap under control.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_TR\_7)*

The gender pay gap is more prevalent among participants who are classified as “Türkiye as birthplace Turkish participants who work in Germany (Tb/Gw)”. These participants find it difficult to adapt to German culture and tend to reflect Turkish culture more than the group “Germany as birthplace Turkish participant work in Germany (Gb/Gw\_TR).” The latter group is more assimilated to German culture and language, making it easier for them to understand the local people. Lack of German language skills can cause discrimination against Turkish women workers, especially in higher positions.

#### **4.2. Causes of Gender-Based Discrimination and Gender Pay Gap**

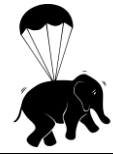
This section summarizes participants’ views on the causes of gender-based discrimination and the gender pay gap.

##### **4.2.1. Lack of Workplace Transparency**

Transparency in wages leads to a diminishing gender pay gap (Abudy et al., 2023; Bennedsen et al., 2023). However, woman employees are often unable to determine if they are being paid fairly due to the lack of transparency in wage distribution. They are not provided with information about the wages of male employees who have the same job position. This lack of transparency encourages firms to implement different wage distributions which can lead to unequal pay for women. Participant Tb/Gw\_2, who works as a data analyst in Germany, highlights this issue.

*“I am curious about the earnings of my male colleagues, but I do not have any data that they earn. The company says that there is no discrimination in this way, but I want to trust their words because they don’t publish everyone’s salaries. If male employees earn more, this has been never acceptable and salaries should be according to performance and experiences, not considering gender differences. The government should also detect this issue and if such injustice is concerned, it should be urgently intervened and eliminated.” (Participant Tb/Gw\_2)*

Findings of the study has shown that a considerable number of workers in both countries are uncertain whether they receive equal pay as their male colleagues. Their respective companies



tend to keep the salary information confidential. The absence of transparency in payment reinforces women's conviction that there is a gender pay gap, even if it is not present.

*"I do not have any clear information about the salaries of my male colleagues, but I guess they are getting more than me." (Participant Gb/Gw\_TR\_2)*

*"From time to time I think about how much my male colleagues earn, and I do not find wage inequality normal. I also do not know if any initiative has been taken for this situation in my company. As for the government, it should also determine the wage policy by measuring positions, not individuals." (Participant Tb/Gw\_9)*

#### **4.2.2. Human Capital Theory Is Not Working**

Although the percentage of women with a bachelor's degree has increased, the gender pay gap in the US has remained stagnant for the last two decades (Kochhar, 2023) which is not in line with the issues raised during the interviews. According to the findings of this research, the human capital theory is not a significant factor in explaining the root causes of gender-based discrimination and the pay gap between genders. This is because women are of the opinion that they have the same opportunities as men when it comes to education and training.

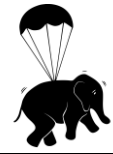
*"I don't see any difference in human capital, because in the field of education we have the same opportunities, and we get the same education. In this regard, I would like to have the opportunity to work as men have by taking more responsibility for my job satisfaction. I think that women should be given more responsibility in the business world." (Participant Tb/Gw\_3)*

*"I have never thought that the human capital differs because practically all opportunities are available for both women and men in Germany and I decide my job without considering as it is men or women's job." (Participant Gb/Gw\_TR\_1)*

#### **4.2.3. Occupational Segregation**

Highlighted by intersectional approaches, power work unevenly with the society (Chun et al., 2013). Although our purposeful sample had more women working in STEM areas, early-career women in social sciences, humanities, and business administration (excluding accounting) face a higher gender pay gap (Morgan, 2008). Our findings revealed that gender-based occupational segregation creates an unfair pay gap by dividing jobs into well-paid and low-paid.

*"Occupational segregation is true for some other occupational groups, although it does not include software. For example, you cannot see a female construction worker, or a taxi driver or a bus driver. In other countries, women also work in these occupational groups. I think it is related to the perspective of society. Construction work may be a power-based job that women may not prefer especially. You can never see a female municipal employee. I do not know what the reason for this is. It may be because there are unfamiliar professions, a woman may be uneasy to work in these environments, even if she prefers in case of compulsory need. How can*



*I woman in 100 men work peacefully? The same goes for taxi, minibüs, bus driver. How can work in this profession without harassment in Turkey, I cannot imagine a woman in those positions.” (Participant Tb/Gw\_1)*

*“I think that the tasks and positions are not equal. I observe that the responsible duties which seem important to the society are given to men, while women are assigned to jobs which are less important, in the background and seem lower.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_TR\_8)*

#### **4.2.4. Culture**

Unsolved problems of the society require new forms of identity coalitions (Chun et al., 2013). Gender roles play a significant function in determining how women act and behave in society. Cultural norms have a profound impact on the occupational segregation of genders. Women are often pressured to conform to societal expectations of femininity, which often result in them being directed towards jobs that are considered more suitable for women. As a result, women are expected to behave, act and work in a manner that aligns with these gender norms.

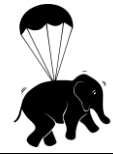
*“I always think that certain jobs are done by certain genders in society. I have been living in Antalya for 25 years and I saw a woman chauffeur for the first-time last year. I was surprised too, although I am a woman. The chauffeur as an occupation is done by men in Turkey. Men always use machines, for example, the shovel operators are always men, and managers also consist of men. When you say ‘chauffeur’, everybody thinks man first and if you ask it, from 5 people, 4 of them will be considered such as that.” (Participant Tb/Tw\_4)*

*“I wanted to be an electric-electronic engineer, while I was deciding on my university preferences, but in that time electric-electronic engineering was known as a male-specific profession. The majority in the class and the faculty consisted of male students. Let’s say that there are 60-person in a class, the number of women is not more than 3 or 4. Because of these prejudices, I decided on being a computer engineer. Like electrical-electronics engineering, civil engineering has also this impression that men do it better. While I was going to choose the area which I wanted, I had to choose a different area.” (Participant Tb/Tw\_1)*

#### **4.2.5. Glass Ceiling**

Gender, immigration status and poverty are found to be used for labor exploitation purposes in previous studies (Chun et al., 2013). The current study also reveals that women in Türkiye and Germany face a glass ceiling that hinders their promotion opportunities.

*“I do not think that I can get a promotion for the management positions. In fact, I think, I have good knowledge and experience in my field. With the certificates I have received, I think I am better than my colleagues with my competences. But the thing that my institution keeps in the highest priority is the gender factor, so in order to get a promotion, your gender must be male.” (Participant Tb/Tw\_7)*



*“According to research that we have conducted, management positions are not still dispersed equally between men and women. The glass ceiling phenomenon, even if foreign companies’ operations in Turkey, is still there, because this is a social issue, and it is also in the perspective of companies that women should be more interested in their homes after giving birth, especially after having a baby. Therefore, it does not appear equal in the currently.” (Participant Tb/Tw\_3)*

*“Men are working on more managerial roles. In my organization, from 7 head of directors, 6 of them are men.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_TR\_7)*

*“I would say to the promotion process to managerial positions in my institution is not transparent or how the gender plays a role” (Participant Gb/Gw\_DE\_1)*

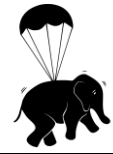
In Germany, as in Türkiye, women often report experiencing gender discrimination and encountering a glass ceiling in managerial positions. This discrimination is particularly prevalent among older generations and can be especially felt by women working in firms where there is a generation gap. Participant Gb/Gw\_DE\_4, a junior project manager, has shared her personal experiences of navigating being a woman manager within her company.

*“Actually, I feel sometimes women are rejected. For example, in my project manager position, I come across a lot of old men who did not want to help or inform or follow suggestions or decisions just because I am a younger woman. However, in today’s life, it is a more conservative attitude rather than misleading organizations.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_DE\_4)*

Regarding promotion, there is a noticeable difference between Türkiye and Germany for women workers. In Türkiye, cultural norms tend to limit women’s chances to rise to higher positions in an organization. On the other hand, the corporate sector in Germany focuses on tackling the gender pay gap and gender-based discrimination. Strategies are being implemented to increase the global commitment to gender equity. However, managerial positions in Germany are still predominantly held by men. This can be attributed to the strong effect of the glass ceiling, which is prevalent in most countries, including Germany. As stated by Arulampalam et al. (2007) the gender pay gap tends to be more significant at the top of the wage distribution, and this is due to the glass ceiling effect.

#### **4.2.6. Male Grapevine**

We are living in social groups that make us similar and different than the others (Chun et al., 2013). Findings reveal that men tend to be more effective than women at gaining work-related critical information through informal channels due to the fact that most managerial positions are held by men. The informal connections between men in the workplace facilitate the flow of work-related critical information. Unfortunately, this can leave women feeling excluded or alienated. Women often report that they only learn important news or information through their male colleagues.



*“My male colleagues who smoke with my manager always get information before me or my manager tells them to forward the information to me.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_DE\_2)*

*“If the manager is male, I do believe that information gets spread more quickly between them. I have not yet felt alienated due to this situation, but I have felt not included in my job.” (Participant Gb/Gw\_DE\_6)*

*“Men definitely have better informal connections than women, especially in Turkey the work-related information is learned after football matches in the evenings.” (Participant Tb/Gw\_4)*

*“I think the work-related key information flows more man to man. In general, men dwell in top positions more than women. Therefore, employees of the same sex can be closer to each other and become better friends. Because there can be misunderstandings in the relationship between men and women, male-to-male communications are easier than the opposite sex.” (Participant Tb/Tw\_5)*

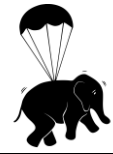
#### **4.2.7. Downsizability**

The likelihood of women being downsized more than men, due to physical abilities or traditional gender roles, is a significant factor causing gender-based discrimination and the pay gap. For instance, COVID-19 has disproportionately affected women, resulting in a “she-cession” (Gupta, 2020). Physical force often plays a significant role in determining who gets dismissed during downsizing. Women who work in jobs that require more physical strength are more likely to be laid off than men. This is due to the perception that women are physically weaker than men, which negatively affects their performance evaluation. However, this factor has a minor impact on knowledge-based work. While most participants agree that women are more likely to be laid off than men, none of them have reported being dismissed due to physical force requirements.

*“The removal of women, in general, is a situation that I have come across by my friends around me. Generally, women are dismissed because it is thought that men have more powerful than women. Or, if the woman is at home and has a child, or if she is likely to become pregnant, the managers decide that women should be removed.” (Participant Tb/Gw\_5)*

Perceived gender roles in Turkish society dictate that women are primarily responsible for caring for and serving the household, while men are responsible for earning money. Unfortunately, these social norms often result in women being dismissed from their jobs more frequently than men. These cultural and traditional beliefs have a significant impact on the way women are treated in the workplace in Turkey.

*“It seems that women are more likely to be dismissed in case of downsizing because when you are a woman, you have different responsibilities at home. Our society has given women some duties and responsibilities. We have learned and taken these responsibilities from our*



*childhood... If a woman is married, then her husband is already looking after her about money. If she is single, then her family look after her.” (Participant Tb/Tw\_1)*

## 5. DISCUSSION

*A civilization that proves incapable of solving the problems it creates is a decadent civilization.*

*A civilization that chooses to close its eyes to its most crucial problems is a stricken civilization.*

*A civilization that uses its principles for trickery and deceit is a dying civilization.*

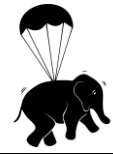
*(Aimé Césaire, 2000, p.31)*

“Most White people do not want to be called racists; many men do not want to be accused of sexism. And almost no one talks about class” Acker (2012, p.221) concluding that this is making it harder to pinpoint intersectional inequalities. When one digest Césaire’s (2000, p.31) verses together with Acker’s (2012, p.221) points, in a “tricked and deceit” system of civilization, it becomes impossible to find out and cure several vulnerabilities of women of the contemporary working life, and eventually most of us may found ourselves in these societal voids. We should remember that categorizations and under- or non-acknowledgement of current and potential identity coalitions impose power with its social and material consequences (Crenshaw, 1991). That’s why differentiating the distinctions, which are otherwise blurred, can empower subgroups that are part of a larger group (Chun et al., 2013).

The gender pay gap is multidimensional, complicated, and abstruse. Under the given circumstances, this study tried to unravel the dynamics that create and sustain gender pay gap for women knowledge workers in different cultural settings. Through this study, a significant question related to the intersectionality of the gender pay gap faced by Turkish women knowledge workers in Germany due to cultural, religious, and linguistic factors has been explored in-depth. This has been achieved by examining various processes, such as hiring, promotions, access to knowledge, authority, and exit management. The empirical data collected through the study reveals that Turkish women knowledge workers who have migrated from Türkiye to Germany are subjected to discrimination based on their gender and race. Furthermore, their language skills also impact their chances of getting promotions or earning as much as their German-speaking colleagues. The current study and other research in this area may help fostering mutual understanding and respect among women which is strongly needed according to Chun et al. (2013) for overcoming intersectional inequalities.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Intersectionality provides the nodal point from which researchers can further their research endeavors about various inequalities (Cho et al., 2013). Tomlinson (2013, p.996) states that intersectional understanding revealed “how politics defined identities, rather than identities defining politics.” Integrating individualist and institutionalist perspectives is needed to better understand and address the gender pay gap (Roos and Gatta, 1999). Intersectionality is the idea



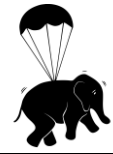
that social identities, like race and gender, are interconnected and cannot be understood separately from each other. It is a framework for understanding how different forms of oppression intersect and it emphasizes the importance of addressing these intersections to achieve a more democratic and egalitarian society (Chun et al., 2013). Based on the experiences gained by analyzing women of color, intersectional critique can foster our understanding of other coalitions of identities (Crenshaw, 1991). It can also be argued that education may overcome gender pay gap, but over the past 40 years, the gender pay gap has decreased more for women without a bachelor's degree in the US than for women with a bachelor's degree (Kochhar, 2023). It can be concluded that providing support for educating women is one thing, but not everything in terms of battling with the gender pay gap.

As with other empirical studies, the findings of this study have limitations and practical implications. It should be noted that the claims of discrimination based on gender and race presented in this study require further empirical evidence to be considered systemic and therefore strengthened. Although more studies similar to this one are needed, the following suggestions aim to minimize the gender pay gap and its intersectionality for women in Germany and Türkiye. Discrimination against Turkish immigrant women must be addressed, and the German government should focus on controlling multicultural organizations in terms of racial discrimination. Governments should also strictly regulate the private sector to ensure gender distribution is equal for both men and women in Germany and Türkiye. Governments must also balance the number of women employees in the public sector, not just in lower positions but also in higher ones. Family-friendly policies are recommended to address the gender pay gap resulting from differing child-rearing expectations (Chevalier, 2007). Organizations are also advised to raise awareness of gender discrimination and the negative effects of the gender pay gap, and gender balance should be monitored at higher levels of the organizational hierarchy as well. Lastly, in addition to racial and ethnic discrimination, LGBTQ and/or disabled women's intersectionalities should be analyzed further. Since it is known that LGBTQ and disabled women in the US are facing a wider gender pay gap than White women in the US (Kochhar, 2023), this issue should also be considered in future studies on gender pay gap.

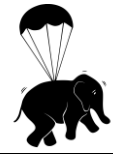
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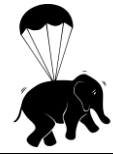




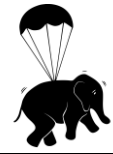
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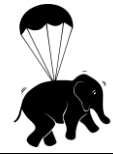
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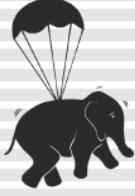
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## *As a Continuity of the Different Forms of Violence: Gender-Based Digital Violence Against Women*

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### Abstract

The terms online or digital gender-based violence (GBV) and cyber violence against women (VAW) are generally used synonymously to address acts of online/technology-facilitated abuse against women and girls committed against them because of their gender. This paper evaluates that although online or digital dimension of VAW may not be stated and referenced in the international and regional legal frameworks, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Council of Europe Convention on the Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention), it is interpreted as a form of discrimination against women aligning with the spirit of Articles 1 and 3 of the CEDAW and several articles of the Istanbul Convention can be applied to the specific topic of digital/online violence such as Article 33 (psychological violence), Article 34 (stalking), and Article 40 (sexual harassment). This paper is desk-based research paper which analyses the issue methodologically through the CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention and their recommendations which address digital dimension of VAW.

**Keywords:** gender-based violence, digital violence, online violence, the CEDAW, the Istanbul Convention

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# *Farklı Şiddet Biçimlerinin Bir Sürekliliği Olarak Kadına Yönelik Toplumsal Cinsiyet Temelli Dijital Şiddet*

## **Özet**

Çevrimiçi veya dijital toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı şiddet ve kadına yönelik siber şiddet terimleri, kadınlara ve kız çocuklarına karşı toplumsal cinsiyetleri nedeniyle işlenen çevrimiçi/teknoloji destekli istismar eylemlerini ele almak için genellikle eşanlamli olarak kullanılmaktadır. Bu çalışma, kadına yönelik şiddetin çevrimiçi veya dijital boyutunun, Kadınlara Karşı Her Türlü Ayrımcılığın Önlenmesi Sözleşmesi (CEDAW) ve İstanbul Sözleşmesi gibi uluslararası ve bölgesel yasal çerçevelerde açıkça belirtilmemiş olmasına rağmen; CEDAW'ın 1. ve 3. maddelerinin kapsamına uygun olarak kadınlara karşı bir ayrımcılık biçimi olarak yorumlanmakta ve İstanbul Sözleşmesi'nin 33. maddesi (psikolojik şiddet), 34. maddesi (ısrarlı takip) ve 40. maddesi (cinsel taciz) gibi çeşitli maddeleri kapsamında dijital/çevrimiçi toplumsal cinsiyet temelli şiddet analiz edilmektedir. Bu çalışma, konuyu CEDAW ve İstanbul Sözleşmesi ve kadına yönelik şiddetin dijital boyutunu ele alan tavsiye kararları üzerinden metodolojik olarak analiz eden bir masa başı çalışmasıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı şiddet, dijital şiddet, çevrimiçi şiddet, CEDAW, İstanbul Sözleşmesi



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Technologies are known as double-edged sword on violence against women (hereafter VAW). First, using technology is crucial on combatting VAW, for instance, women can demand their rights to live free from violence via social media platforms (Boethius et al., 2023). Social networks have permitted women to become a voice at an unprecedented scale and to build transnational impactful movements (Wilk, 2018). Second, technology can be also used to perpetrate VAW. By using technology, sexual, physical, and psychological violence taking place offline is spread and worsened. Gender stereotypes and online misogyny are also settled in the creation of these social platforms. Violations of women's and girls' human rights have become much more visible through the ever-rising rates of internet access globally and the wider use of digital technologies. Further, maximum impact for technology-facilitated violence and abuse is delivered through distinctive features of information communication technologies such as reach, portability and speed (Hall and Hearn, 2017).

Although VAW has been rooted in gender inequality in all societies and cultures across the world, it depends on the specific social, economic, cultural, and political context. Thereby, different, or new forms of VAW may arise when societies undergo political and economic changes, or cultural and social shifts. Emphasising Kelly's conceptualisation as a 'continuum of violence' (Kelly, 1988), digital or technology related violence is the continuity of the different forms of violence against women taking place offline (Wilk, 2021). Acts of violence against women and girls are committed through information and communication technologies (ICTs) and they have become a primary concern for individuals and communities. While digital/online violence or cyberviolence may be targeted at any individual or group and may involve a broad kind of acts, this paper focuses on women, who are often the victims of online violence. Acts of gender-based violence are committed by using technology such as social media platforms, phones, or the internet. This has a serious effect on women's lives, including psychological and physical health, their livelihoods, their physical safety, and their reputation (Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, General Recommendation No.1, 2021).

Recently, there is no international convention to define or regulate the phenomenon of gender-based digital dimension of violence against women. Although the United Nations recognizes online violence as a continuum of violence, international legal framework is not completely addressing this phenomenon. Therefore this paper evaluates that although online or digital dimension of VAW may not be stated and referenced in the international and regional legal frameworks, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Council of Europe Convention on the Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) (Council of Europe, 2011a), it is interpreted as a form of discrimination against women aligning with the spirit of Articles 1 and 3 of the CEDAW and several articles of the Istanbul Convention can be applied to the specific topic of digital/online violence such as Article 33 (psychological





violence), Article 34 (stalking), and Article 40 (sexual harassment). With General Recommendation No. 1 of the Istanbul Convention, the Committee introduced the definition of digital dimension VAW. There are other fundamental mechanisms to combat digital violence which are Council of Europe's Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and its additional protocols regulating cybercrimes (Council of Europe, 2001) and Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Council of Europe, 2010). However, these legal instruments are not addressed specifically digital dimension VAW and thus, this is the limitation of this research.

Online violence and abuse are prevalent and illustrated through surveys and reports across the world. For instance, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)'s survey of 28 European states on VAW revealed that 11% of women have received unwanted and sexually, and offensive explicit emails or SMS messages or inappropriate advances on social media platforms (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014). Moreover, Pew Research Centre works on online harassment found that "21% of women ages 18 to 29 report being sexually harassed online, a figure that is more than double the share among men in the same age group (9%)" (Duggan, 2017, p.7). 38% of respondents who live in the UK experienced online abuse according to Glitch UK and End Violence Against Women Coalition (2020). According to KONDA Research and Consultancy, one in five people have been subjected to digital violence in Turkey (Şener and Abınık, 2021). While women have experienced digital violence because of their gender and physical appearance, men have faced to digital violence because of their political views (Şener and Abınık, 2021). 51% of women receive texts, voice, or video harassment messages in digital environments, and 46% are persistently face online stalking (Şener and Abınık, 2021). People are most exposed to digital violence by people they don't know and trolls. The platforms where acts of digital violence are most common are Instagram (53%), Facebook (35%) and Twitter (19%) (Şener and Abınık, 2021). Although this paper is desk-based research paper which analyses the issue methodologically through the CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention and their recommendations which address digital dimension of VAW, these reports and surveys indicate the prevalence and the importance of the digital dimension of violence against women throughout the world.

## 2. DEFINING DIGITAL DIMENSION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

As Harris (2020) evaluates violence is the root and effect of inequalities and social control, which evidences structurally and institutionally, offline, and online. These forces various forms of technologies. The use of technologies provides insight into how violence is enacted, fostered, and normalised (Harris, 2020). Digital or technology-facilitated VAW covers variety of very specific forms of violence that have an important impact on victims (Wilk, 2021). Most of them are existing crimes and offences but expanded via the internet and digital technologies (Wilk, 2021). Moreover, it comprises acts of gender based VAW aggravated, committed, in partly or fully, by the use of ICTs and includes:



*amongst others, cyberstalking, bullying, threats, blackmail and sexual harassment; accessing or uploading/disseminating intimate photos, videos or audio clips without consent; accessing or disseminating private data without consent; uploading/disseminating altered photos or videos through dating, pornography or other kinds of websites; creating fake profiles and other forms of identity theft; mob attacks; grooming predation (of children in particular); doxxing (searching and publicising another's personal data) and exploitation of women and girls (Association for Progressive Communications, 2015).*

According to United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (UNSRW), Dubrovka Simonovic offered a broad definition of online or ICT-facilitated forms of violence:

*The definition of online violence against women [...] extends to any act of gender-based violence against women that is committed, assisted, or aggravated in part or fully by the use of ICT, such as mobile phones and smartphones, the Internet, social media platforms or email, against a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018, p.23).*

Yet, Simonovic stated that while the general term “information and communications technology” (ICT) is used in several official UN documents, “online violence”, “digital violence” or “cyberviolence” are used interchangeably in other reports (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018, p.15). Correspondingly, European Parliamentary Research Service’s (2021) report used the expression ‘gender-based cyberviolence’, emphasising the gendered nature of cyber violence. The term ‘cyber’ is helpful to link the definition to cybercrimes, particularly to the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (2001), also known as Budapest Convention.

Technology-facilitated violence and online abuse have carried out using technologies such as mobile devices or internet (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2020). Therefore, the phenomenon of digital VAW on social media platforms is called with different terms such as “*cyber harassment, cyber violence, cyber bullying, cyber sexism*” in the literature. Thereby, the terms are more commonly used interchangeably. I consider using the expression ‘gender-based digital violence’ by emphasizing that violence stems from gender-based discrimination.

### **3. ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED DIGITAL VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CEDAW**

Violence against women is a form of discrimination against women and human rights violation as recognised under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other international and regional instruments. Although online or digital dimension of VAW may expressly not be stated in the CEDAW, but it is interpreted as a form of discrimination against women aligning with the spirit of Articles 1 and 3 of the CEDAW (Arimatsu, 2019). Article 1 of the CEDAW, ‘discrimination against women’ is defined as: “*any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise by women...on a basis of*



*equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field*". The broad definition used in Article 3 obliges States to *"take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men"*. Reading these two articles together foresees the emergence of new forms of discrimination that may not have considered at the time of drafting of the CEDAW Convention (Arimatsu, 2019, p.199). Thus, discrimination against women in the digital space is one such example.

Moreover, CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation No. 35 (GR. No.35) on gender-based VAW, updating General Recommendation No. 19, being catalyst for this process recognised *"the continuum multiple, interrelated, and recurring forms of gender-based VAW, in a range of settings, from private to public, including 'technology-mediated settings'"* (CEDAW Committee, 2017, p.6). The Committee further called States to take preventive measure to combat online VAW, including self-regulatory mechanisms created or strengthened by online and social media (CEDAW Committee, 2017, p.37(a)). Yet, CEDAW GR. No. 35 did not address in detail the gender-based nature of online abuse of women and its harmful effects and nor elaborated the obligations of State Parties in preventing and fighting against online VAW (Barker and Jurasz, 2019).

Further, pursuant to Article 1 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW), the wording of 'any act of gender-based violence against women' can be extended to the definition of online violence *"that is committed, assisted, or aggravated in part or fully by the use of ICT, such as mobile phones and smartphones, the Internet, social media platforms or email, against a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately"* (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018, p.22-23). As pointed out in the report that *"women and girls across the world have increasingly voiced their concern at harmful, sexist, misogynistic and violent content and behaviour online"* (UNHRC, 2018, p.14). Appropriately, Simonovic also noted on the States' failure to recognize VAW in digital sphere as a 'real' form of violence (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018).

The terms online or digital gender-based violence (GBV) and cyber VAW are generally used synonymously to address acts of online/technology-facilitated abuse against women and girls committed against them because of their gender. However, Dorokhova et al. (2021, p.9) points out that cyber VAW comprises violence in the form of online harassment; online sexual harassment; online defamation; cyber stalking and surveillance/ tracking; hacking; impersonation; identity theft; image-based abuse; malicious distribution (including threats thereof); cyber bullying and many other forms of abuse. In case of domestic violence, for instance, *"Trolling, verbal abuse, sextortion, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, the manipulation of photos, cyberstalking, doxing, hacking, damage to intellectual property, and distributed denial-of-service attacks (DDOS attacks) may occur exclusively online, they may*



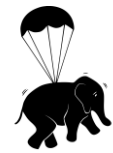
also occur in connection with offline events, and they almost always have repercussions that are experienced both on- and offline” (Ging and Siapera, 2018). Owing to the extensive range of the phenomena and the variety of categories, the Working Group of the Council of Europe (2018) reached consensus on using ‘cyberviolence’, defining as “*cyberviolence is the use of computer systems to cause, facilitate, or threaten violence against individuals that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering and may include the exploitation of the individual’s circumstances, characteristics or vulnerabilities*” (Council of Europe, 2018, p.5)

This adaptation of the wording of ‘cyber’ is from the context of the definition of VAW of Article 3 of the Istanbul Convention to encompass all forms of violence. Correspondingly, Article 1 of the Inter-American Convention on the prevention, punishment, and eradication of violence against women (the Belém do Para Convention) provides a definition on VAW as “*any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere*”. These definitions on VAW that are common in the context of the violence are not limited to physical harm. The Working Group of CoE acknowledges that using cyberviolence is rather broad and need to mature further (Council of Europe, 2018, p.5).

#### **4. APPLICATION OF GENDER-BASED DIGITAL VIOLENCE FROM THE CONTEXT OF THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION**

Although the Istanbul Convention does not contain an explicit reference to the digital dimension of VAW, several articles of the Convention can be applied to the specific topic of digital/online violence such as in Article 33 (psychological violence), Article 34 (stalking), and Article 40 (sexual harassment). Besides, its scope as outlined in Article 2 encompasses violence committed in the digital sphere, as this was intended by its drafters (Wilk, 2021, p.7). Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) which has been monitoring the implementation of the Convention by the State Parties since 2016, has gradually increased attention to the technology related VAW (GREVIO, 2021). It also noted the existence of the crime of revenge porn to prosecute sexual harassment committed on the Internet since 2016 (GREVIO, 2021). Recently, GREVIO published General Recommendation No.1 (GR No. 1) on the digital dimension of VAW in November 2021. The Istanbul Convention encompasses forms of digital dimension of violence against women in several articles that will be analysed in this section.

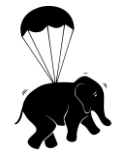
First, sexual harassment forms “*any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment*” (Article 40 of the Istanbul Convention). This definition applies to online and technology-facilitated sexual harassment. This comes under GREVIO’s GR No. 1 considering the behaviour online or through digital means to come under the definition of Article 40 of the



Convention, as follows: 1) non-consensual image or video sharing; 2) non-consensual taking, producing, or procuring of intimate images or videos; 3) exploitation, coercion, and threats 4) sexualised bullying; and 5) cyberflashing (GREVIO, 2021, p.38). These behaviours are also identified as sexist hate speech recognised by the Committee of Ministers Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism (Council of Europe, 2019). This recommendation points out that “*these acts are often humiliating and contribute to a social climate where women are demeaned, their self-regard lowered and their activities and choices restricted, including at work, in the private, public or online sphere*” (Council of Europe, 2019, p.4). As a sexist behaviour, for instance, sexist hate speech forming a first step of the physical violence, may escalate to or incite overtly offensive and threatening acts, including sexual abuse or violence, rape, or potentially lethal action (Council of Europe, 2019, p.4). Thus, sexist behaviour comes within the remit of Article 40 of the Convention.

Second, Article 34 of the Istanbul Convention also applies to online and technology-facilitated stalking. It defines stalking as “*the intentional conduct of repeatedly engaging in threatening conduct directed at another person, causing her or him to fear for her or his safety*”. Council of Europe Explanatory Report to the Istanbul Convention (2011b, p.182) (hereafter Explanatory Report) extends the scope of Article 34 to the digital sphere, as the threatening behaviour consisting of repeatedly following another person physically or following the victim in the virtual world (chat rooms, social networking sites, etc.). In line with the Explanatory Report, GREVIO elucidates stalking practices perpetrated in the digital sphere including “*monitoring and gathering of private information on the victim, solicitation for sex, identity theft, threats of economic, physical, psychological or sexual nature, impersonating the victim*” (GREVIO, 2021, p.41).

Third, many forms of online and technology-facilitated violence can result serious psychological damages on women and girls. The Istanbul Convention requires to criminalise psychological violence pursuant to Article 33 that takes on significant meaning. Article 33 defines psychological violence as “*the intentional conduct of seriously impairing a person’s psychological integrity through coercion or threats*”. Explanatory Report of the Istanbul Convention clarifies that Article 33 discusses to a course of conduct rather than a single event. It is intended to capture the criminal nature of an abusive pattern of behaviour occurring over time – within or outside the family (Council of Europe, 2011b, p.181). In the context of domestic violence, forms of psychological violence doubled with new technology take radical forms (GREVIO, 2021, p.43). For instance, perpetrators who are most commonly former or current intimate partners misuse victim’s intimate images through physical devices (like phones, computer), platforms (such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube), and virtual or electronic accounts (including social media profiles, online customer accounts, or email or employments accounts). Such practises of digital violence have harmful effects mentally and physically on women. Moreover, concerning psychological violence, Boukemidja (2018) states that verbal abuse can lead to various behavioural, emotional, and physical problems. Furthermore, online psychological violence can take the form of threat, coercing the victims or their family that can



lead incitement to suicide or self-harm (GREVIO, 2021, p.46). This is another rising phenomenon, *“the impacts of which are intensified by the anonymity offered to perpetrators online, the longevity of content and the ease of bringing together a large number of perpetrators to commit a mass attack on the victim”* (Wilk, 2021, p.36).

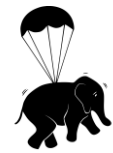
On the other hand, women who are multiple identities, such as journalists, bloggers, women’s human rights defenders, women with disabilities, indigenous women, and women from marginalized groups and political parties are also targeted by digital violence (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018). GREVIO also takes attention on the risk of intersecting forms of discrimination within digital forms of gender based VAW. Digital forms of gender-based VAW can be particularly pronounced for women and girls at risk of or exposed to intersecting forms of discrimination, and may be exacerbated by factors including migration status, sexual orientation, disability, religion, political affiliation, social origin, or celebrity status, among others” (GREVIO, 2021, p.12).

## 5. CONCLUSION

Digital technologies can bring enormous benefits that support the advancement of women and gender equality, by enabling women and girls to exercise their human rights. However, the misuse of these technologies might limit women’s enjoyment of their human rights, and even worse, threaten their security.

The omnipresence of gender based digital violence against women urges an evaluation of domestic legal frameworks and security policies under its obligations of the CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention. State Parties have a due diligence obligation to prevent, protect and punish acts of VAW, including gender-based digital violence. Thus, the CEDAW Committee called State Parties that *“online and social media should be encouraged to create or strengthen mechanisms focusing on the eradication of gender stereotypes, and to end any gender-based violence committed on their platforms”* (CEDAW Committee, 2017, p.63). The Committee promotes these standards extensively in the digital space. Further, the GR No.1 of the Istanbul Convention also cope with the digital dimension of VAW. This is reflected as an important step to tackle with the gender based digital VAW.

On the other hand, the Istanbul Convention is criticised since it has not included digital dimension of VAW in its core text in 2012. Rather, it has brought into account this issue through its GR No. 1. However, the Recommendation shows how the gender based digital VAW is taken seriously within the concept of the Istanbul Convention in specific and the mainstream understanding of VAW in general from the international human rights law. With GR No. 1, the Committee introduced the definition of digital dimension VAW and offered a guidance for application of some forms of VAW of the Istanbul Convention, such as cyberviolence, online harassment or cyberstalking. On the other hand, both recommendations of the CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention are soft law mechanisms which mean not legally binding. This paper



contributes to the literature since there is no effective international legal framework to specifically define and regulate gender-based digital dimension of VAW.

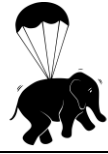
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