

The Effect of Organizational Skill on Innovation Performance in SME's

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Abstract

Today, innovation studies are seen as essential in all organizations. The fact that innovation is high, especially in SMEs, has a positive share in the country's economy and development. Innovation performance is a necessary concept for the organization to continue its activities and competitiveness. In this case, organizational skills have gained more importance for the improvement of innovation performance. Because organizational skills are a concept based on the capacity of an organization to perform certain activities better than its competitors or to use its resources better. The concept of organizational skills is defined as a source of competitive advantage that enables financial, technological and strategic transformation, adapting to the organization, integrating and maintaining these capabilities.

Keywords: SME, Organizational Skill, Innovation Performance.

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1. Introduction

In order to ensure sustainable innovation as a requirement of globalization, it has become important for organizations to be able to use information rapidly and to make continuous innovations in the production of products, services and processes. The level of innovation and differentiation levels of organizations can provide significant privileges to organizations in terms of the development of innovation performance. In this respect, the organizations' ability to keep up with innovation is through arranging the organizational structure and processes according to innovation. Organizations being innovation-oriented also enables them to show a tendency to adapt more to new ideas and changes required by technology. In addition, the use of existing resources in accordance with the management system accelerates the innovation process (Aygen, 2006). It has become more important for organizations to use their organizational skills efficiently in order to catch innovation. This study aims to analyze the effect of organizational skills on innovation performance.

2. Literature Review

Especially in recent years, research on innovation in organizations has begun to spread, and an increasing literature on the subject has emerged. In addition, as the relationship between organizational skills and innovation performance has been researched and come to light, the interest of large enterprises and SMEs, which want to develop on the basis of innovation, has emerged in recent years. The definitions of SMEs vary from country to country as well as from organization to organization in the same country. All statisticians and economists use criteria such as the number of employees, sales and investment capital in defining SMEs. In addition to these, energy input can be used as a criterion in developing countries (Deniz, 2003). In short, the definition of SMEs varies in individual countries depending on the size of the economy. While defining SMEs, some qualitative and quantitative criteria are taken as basis. These are as follows (Özgener, 2003):

- *Qualitative criteria*: The business has a relatively small share in the business line in which it operates, all or most of the operating capital belongs to the owner, the division of labor and specialization, the entrepreneur's actual work in the business, independent management (usually the owner of the business is also the manager) and inability to apply modern management techniques.

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- *Quantitative criteria*: Number of personnel, capital, production amount, total assets, machinery pact, market share, profit, amount of energy used, sales volume. Although these criteria can be increased in number, a single criterion is not sufficient to make a common definition. Definitions in which more than one criterion is used are sometimes too complex and cannot meet the needs.

In the definition of SMEs, capital and number of employees criteria are generally taken into account. In general, SMEs are defined as economic units that employ less than two hundred and fifty people annually and whose annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet does not exceed twenty-five million TL, and which are classified as micro-enterprises, small enterprises and medium-sized enterprises in the regulation and are briefly called SMEs. SMEs create the basic dynamics of the economy with their important functions such as increasing the efficiency of the market mechanism by adding dynamism and a competitive dimension to the economy, providing sustainable development, creating employment, eliminating regional socio-economic imbalances and spreading development to the base. Types of Organizational Skills Types of organizational skills are grouped under three main headings in the literature. These are: managerial skills, technical skills and output-based skills.

1. **Managerial Skills** A manager is considered as a person who brings together the means of production such as people, money, raw materials, materials, machinery, and fixtures, and provides a suitable combination and harmony between them, in order to achieve the determined goals in a time period. Managerial skills have been defined as having the ability to create a strategic vision and identity for the business, communicate them throughout the organization, and encourage the workforce to achieve them (Lopez, et al., 2006).

2. **Technical Skills** The technical ability of organizations is important to create competitive advantage. However, just like the complementary rings of the value chain, it is difficult to think that only technological talent and superiority in this field will provide competitive advantage to organizations, and this type of talent needs to be integrated with other types of talents in the organization (Porter, 1997).

Technical skill refers to the ability to use work-related knowledge, tools and techniques. Technical skills should be present mostly in lower-level managers. Technical skills are organizational capabilities that contribute when inputs are transformed into outputs. Input-based and transformational abilities are included in this group. These mainly concern the technical

aspects of the creation, production and development of products and services. Technical skill briefly refers to the ability to use work-related knowledge, tools and techniques. Technical skills are closely linked to innovation. Innovation increases competition with rapidly increasing scientific and technological developments and globalization, making the education and adaptation of technology the most important factor for businesses. Moreover, innovation pushes businesses that cannot make a difference and innovate in their operations and processes out of the market.

3. Output-Based Skills These are the skills that are revealed in transforming the inputs used in the organization into outputs. It is possible to talk about three types of output-based skills. These are: customer loyalty, quality orientation and product diversity.

- *Customer loyalty*: It is the strong loyalty of the customer to the product, service, brand or business. The realization of the sales activity, which is the main purpose of marketing, is getting more and more difficult in today's competitive conditions. Developing technology, increasingly conscious consumers, changing demands and needs, products and services that can be imitated easily but cannot be differentiated too much are the main reasons for this. In this context, organizations take different approaches to continue selling to customers and focus on customer retention efforts. In order to retain their existing customers, organizations must first establish customer loyalty by establishing a bond between their customers and their businesses (Kurnuç, 2013).

- *Orientation to quality*: Improving quality is of great importance in order to strengthen the competitive position in today's markets. By improving the quality, material losses due to wastage are reduced or eliminated. Because there is no need for rework to fix the defective product, labor costs and therefore production costs are reduced, and customers receive products and services that are suitable for use. It is also possible to sell high-quality products and services at a higher price compared to competitors, thereby gaining a market share. In general, quality is defined as compliance with the business purpose (Eren, et al., 2005).

- *Product diversity*: In today's world, where competition is increasing and the options for customers are increasing, efforts to create product diversity are gaining weight in innovative organizations that tend to develop. Organizations are making various investments in the race to meet the changing demand and to get the most important share among the customers with special interest in these fields. It is possible to state that the product may be a new product with an attractiveness on its own, as well as a supporting feature for other products, in the studies on creating product diversity in the production sector. (Kılıç, Kurnaz, 2010).

3. The Importance of Organizational Skill

Skills are commonly defined as the set of knowledge and abilities that enable organizations to control activities and exploit their assets. Managers' knowledge and experience are key contributors to the organization's resources and capabilities. There are many different variations in the literature in classifying the concept of skill:

Some authors call it core capability, others collective skills, complex routines, best practices, or organizational skills. Skills are important as a complex, repetitively learned model of coordination between people and resources. In addition, skills are useful for the organization to gain competitive advantage. In this case, the positive effects of organizational skills on the organization are inevitable. In particular, organizational capabilities are the ability of an organization to differentiate itself and to create and develop advantageous internal processes and structures. Skills must also be able to adapt to both internal and external changes. Skills ultimately provide sustainable competitive advantage by enabling the organization to achieve superior performance, compete successfully in and develop their markets. Today, innovation has become both an important competitive tool and an important performance indicator. Following a strategy based on methods such as reducing costs and cutting prices in the market cannot provide organizations more than a limited advantage (Kuczmarsky, 1996).

From this point of view, innovation performance can be measured by the increase in the performance of the organization as a result of innovation studies. An organization's innovation performance can be measured in four different ways. These:

- Ways of financial measurement: Company's market size, share of investment in technology, profitability, and R&D expenditures.
- Industry growth rates: Market rate, number of companies in the industry, number of employees, number and nature of opportunities, number of deals.
- Operational measurement paths: Patent periods, product life cycle rates, R&D expenditure per patent, rejected patent applications.

4. The Importance of Innovation and Innovation Performance

Innovation is the indicator of the quality and quantity of ideas and the efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of these ideas. These two parameters are independent, but together they form the definition of innovation performance (Ryan, 2012). Organizations implement different and value-creating strategies and run their existing processes better. Organizations that carry out these activities create a competitive advantage. The permanence of the created competitive advantage is that it is not copied by competitors. However, as a result of today's technological developments, the copying process has accelerated extremely. The only way to overcome this problem is to create continuous innovation. In this context, continuous innovation provides a permanent competitive advantage. The most important indicators of innovation performance are measurable indicators. These include items such as sales or success rates of new products, profitability and market share. In addition to these, there are numerical scales such as time efficiency and number of new products defined in recent years. In addition, there are non-numerical scales such as the sales success of new products and the success of new products in the market (Dye, et al., 1999). Innovation performance is a necessary concept for the organization to continue its activities and competitiveness. It shows the ways to achieve high performance and different advantages that develop within the organization (Wattanasupachoke, 2012).

5. Relationship between Organizational Skills and Innovation Performance

Organizational skills are related to the organization's ability to use its competitive advantages. Skills relate to the acquired dynamic habits associated with managerial capacity to continually improve the effectiveness of the organization, such as creating new production functions. Innovation performance covers the process from the idea to its commercialization. Innovation performance is evaluated as R&D inputs, number of patents obtained, patent citations and new product announcements in some business lines. According to some academics, perceived innovation effectiveness is important. The common innovation indicator discussed in many studies is patents. In the research, innovations related to business processes and methods, managerial innovations, increasing the quality of products and services, number of new products and projects, percentages of new products in total products, number of patented or patentable products were determined as innovation performance measurement criteria. However, the returns

were only related to innovations in business processes and methods, managerial innovations and the number of new products and projects (Eryiğit, 2013).

Inimitable intangible resources such as organizational skills, innovation and creativity that improve products and services while controlling their quality are key indicators of competitive advantage. According to current management approaches, organizational skills are a valuable feature of the business. Talented and skilled organization has become a new ideal today. From this perspective, organizations should be prudent and foresighted in advancing their existing capabilities and establishing their strategies accordingly. organizational skills can easily transform from strategic assets to strategic imperatives.

Today, innovation studies are seen in all businesses. Especially in today's market where competition is effective, businesses have to respond to the innovations of their competitors. Therefore, organizations that keep their organizational skills high will improve their innovation performance and will be able to compete with their competitors. In this case, organizational skills became more important for the improvement of innovation performance.

6. Purpose and Importance of the Research

In the rapidly globalizing world, organizations must achieve continuous success. An important part of this success is related to innovation performance. An organization with high organizational skills will both increase its innovation success and increase its prestige in the society. In order to achieve this, organizations need to have a good innovation performance and an innovation approach that encourages employees. This study aims to examine the effect of organizational skills on innovation performance in SMEs and to find out how these components are related or not. Therefore, the main purpose of the prepared application study is to investigate whether organizational skills have an effect on innovation performance and, if so, in what direction. The hypotheses determined for the purpose of the research are as follows:

H1: Managerial Skills have a positive and significant effect on Innovation Performance.

H2: Technical Skills have a positive and significant effect on Innovation Performance.

H3: Output Based Skills have a positive and significant effect on Innovation Performance.

Sample The statistical analysis to be applied, the size of the universe and the margin of error that can be tolerated are the main determinants of the size of the sample mass. In this study, 104 of

256 SMEs in Bakude and Lankaran were reached by questionnaire, and application was made on the questionnaires returned from exactly 102 SME managers and owners and suitable for use.

7. Data Collection Tools

Questionnaire was used as a measurement tool in the research. There are 44 questions in total in the survey form, which consists of three parts. The first part contains 6 questions that include the general demographic characteristics of the person. The second part consists of 32 questions and includes questions (management skills, technical skills, and output-based skills) developed by Lopez-Cabrales, Valle and Herrero (1998) and Choi and Lee (2005) for organizational skills and adapted to the country. includes three groups. The third part consists of 6 questions, and the widely used innovation performance scale developed by Walsworth and Verma (2007) and Huang (2009) is used.

The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using the SPSS package program. A 5-point Likert scale was used in the analysis of the data. According to the scale in the second part where the expressions of organizational skills are included and in the third part where the expressions of innovativeness performance are included, the degrees of "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Undecided", "Disagree", "Strongly Disagree" were used. The analysis techniques used can be listed as frequency and percentage calculations, factor analysis and regression analysis.

8. Findings and Comments

Findings Related to Demographic Characteristics and Characteristics of SMEs in this section, findings related to demographic characteristics and characteristics of SMEs will be examined.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants and characteristics of SMEs

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	N	%
GENDER		
Male	91	89,2
Female	11	10,8
POSITION IN THE BUSINESS		
Manager (top level)	19	18,6
Manager (lower level)	54	52,9
Business owner	29	28,4
WORKING TIME IN THE BUSINESS		

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Less than 5 years	33	32,4
6-10 years	22	21,6
11-15 years	28	27,5
16years+	19	18,6
NUMBER OF WORKING PERSONNEL		
Less than 10	3	2,9
11-50	25	24,5
51-100	35	34,3
101-250	39	38,2
AREAS OF ACTIVITY		
Service	3	2,9
Production	88	86,3
Trade	11	10,8
OPERATING SECTOR		
Machine	21	20,6
Metal	21	20,6
Chemical	6	5,9
Automotive	28	27,5
Paper and packaging	4	3,9
Other	22	21,6

As seen in the table, according to the results obtained from the participants who answered the survey, 89.2% (91) of the survey participants are male and 10.8% (11) are female. Accordingly, the majority of the participants are men.

According to the results obtained, 18.6% (19) of the survey participants are senior managers, 52.9% (54) are middle-level managers, and 28.64% (29) are business owners. According to this situation, most of the participants are middle level managers.

Of the survey participants, 32.4% (33) are less than 5 years old, 21.6% (22) are between 6-10 years, 27.5% (28) are between 11-15 years, 18.6% (19) of them have been working for 16 years or more. According to this situation, most of them are the participants who have less than 5 years of service.

As can be seen from the table, 2.9% of SMEs (3) less than 10, 24.5% (25) between 11-50 34.3% (35) between 51-100, 38%, 2 of them (39) consist of personnel between 101-250. According to this situation, most of the SMEs are between 101-250 personnel.

2.9% (3) of SMEs operate in service, 86.3% (88) production and 10.8% (11) trade. According to this situation, most of the SMEs operate in the field of production.

As can be seen from the table, 20.6% (21) of SMEs are machinery, 20.6% (21) metal, 5.9% (6) chemistry, 27.5% (28) automotive, % 3.9 (4) of them operate in paper and packaging and 21.6% (22) of them operate in other sectors. Accordingly, most of the SMEs operate in the automotive sector.

9. Findings Obtained as a result of Factor Analysis

The findings obtained as a result of factor analysis are as follows. In Table 2, firstly, the factor loads of the items were examined and the items with a factor load below 0.40 were eliminated.

Table 2. Factor analysis results on organizational skills

FACTORS	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Average	Explanation rate	Alpha
Managerial skills		1,948	5,26	%8,0	0,75
Our employees can identify and express the common values of the business.	0,779				
There are very few instances where employee actions seem to violate the values that the business clings to.	0,760				
Workgroups create a culture of learning within the business.	0,521				
As managers, we support employees to achieve organizational goals.	0,692				
As managers, we always look for the strengths and weaknesses of the business.	0,689				
In our business, the tasks are broadly designed.	0,685				
Technical Skills		2,120	4,69	%16,9	0,83
In our business it is easy to allocate resources in the form of funds, materials, facilities and information.	0,797				
Our business has mechanisms to develop new ideas.	0,773				
Workgroups in our organization have skills in different ways.	0,676				
Our business accepts and rewards creative work.	0,591				
Output Based Skills		8,783	4,91	%34,3	0,89

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Our business treats all customers fairly and impartially.	0,821				
It provides the business with the ability to refund or replace a bad product.	0,820				
Our business is always open for the critical requirements of its customers.	0,677				
There is a strong commitment to quality at all levels in our business.	0,568				
Our employees critically analyze the quality of their output.	0,723				
KMO: 0.703; sig.; 0,000; Total variance explained: 65.023%; Alpha for full scale: 0.87					

Factor analysis was applied in order to determine the factors that the business owner, top and middle managers who answered the questionnaire took into account in line with their answers regarding organizational skills, and the results in Table 2 were obtained. For the data set to be suitable for factor analysis, the KMO value must be above 0.50. As a result of the analysis, the KMO value was 0.703, which is suitable for factor analysis. Since the Sig value was calculated as (0.000), it was concluded that such an analysis was meaningful. While applying the factor analysis, all items with factor loadings less than 0.40 were excluded from the evaluation and the remaining 15 items were subjected to factor analysis. As a result of factor analysis, when we look at the distribution of factor loads, we see that they are proportionally distributed. In addition, it is seen that the eigenvalues in Table 2 are greater than 1. It was concluded that the averages did not diverge too far from each other. The total variance explanation rate of the factors was calculated as 65.023%. The total variance explanation rate of the factors was calculated as 8.0% for managerial skills, 16.9% for technical skills and 34.3% for output-based skills. The alpha value for the factors in the scale was above 0.70, which is an acceptable number. Thus, it was seen that internal consistency was achieved. The reliability coefficient of the whole scale was found to be 0.87. These values show that the necessary conditions are met for the factor model to be established.

Tablo 3: Yenilikçilik Performansına ilişkin Faktör Analizi Sonuçları

FAKTÖRLER	Faktör Yüklü	Alfa
Yenilikçilik Performansı		0,89
İşletmemizde son üç yılda geliştirilen yeni ürünler ve hizmetlere dair fikir ve projeler artmıştır.	0,899	
İşletmemizin son üç yılda geliştirdiği ürünler ve hizmetlerin kalitesi çok yüksektir.	0,926	
İşletmemizde son üç yılda geliştirilen iş süreç ve yöntemlerine dair yenilikler epeyce çoktur.	0,942	
İşletmemizin son üç yılda üretmeye başladığı ürünlerin birçoğu şu anda pazara sunduğu ürünlerdir.	0,918	
İşletmemiz son üç yılda yeni ürünleri rakiplerden daha önce pazara sunmayı başarmış bulunmaktadır.	0,857	
Sig: 0,000; Açıklanan toplam varyans: %85,41; Ölçeğin tamamı için Alfa: 0,89		

As a result of the factor analysis in Table 3, it was concluded that the items related to innovation performance can be explained by a single factor. Since the Sig value was calculated as (0.000), it was concluded that such an analysis was meaningful. While applying the factor analysis, all items with factor loads lower than 0.40 were excluded from the evaluation, and 5 items remained, and these items were subjected to factor analysis again.

As a result of factor analysis, when we look at the distribution of factor loads, we see that they are proportionally distributed. In addition, the total variance explanation rate of the factors was calculated as 85.41%. The alpha value for the factors in the scale was above 0.70, which is an acceptable number. Thus, it was seen that internal consistency was achieved. The reliability coefficient of innovation performance was found to be 0.89. These values show that the necessary conditions are met for the factor model to be established.

10. Conclusion and Discussion

The most important thing that distinguishes these days, which we are at the beginning of the 21st century, from the century we left behind in terms of organizations is the extraordinary increase in the speed of change. It is one of the issues that organizations struggle most by adapting their structures and processes to this rapid change they face (İraz, Şimşek, 2004). Therefore, in today's globalizing world, it is of great importance to create a change in the competitive advantage of organizations. As a result, organizational skills have become more important for the improvement of innovation performance. Because organizational skills are a concept based on the capacity of an organization to perform certain activities better than its

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competitors or to use its resources better. In particular, there is an undeniable interaction between managerial skills, which is a sub-dimension of organizational skills, and innovation performance.

The findings obtained in this application show that only one of the hypotheses was confirmed. Accordingly, it was found that managerial skills had a positive effect on innovative performance. It was concluded that there was no significant interaction in other hypotheses. If the first hypothesis is accepted as correct, if the managerial skills in SMEs are high, as a result of the innovative performance being positively affected, organizations will be more affected by product, process and technological based innovations. However, the same assumptions are not fully valid in other hypotheses. While creating the scope of the research, the effect of organizational skills on innovation performance was tried to be determined. The basis of the research consists of managerial skills, technical skills, and output-based skills, which are the sub-elements of organizational skills. The research was limited to the effect of organizational skills on innovation performance, and detailed factors affecting innovation performance were not included in the research. The research is limited to the factors mentioned. This study also has some other limitations and shortcomings. However, this study is a guide for future studies, especially since it touches on a subject that has not been studied much before in Azerbaijan.

Although the effect of managerial skills on innovation performance was found, the fact that there was no highly significant relationship for the effect of organizational skills on innovation performance leads us to suggest that this research can be repeated on more SMEs. The fact that a significant interaction was found in only one hypothesis causes us to suggest that the results can be re-evaluated within the scope of the results to be obtained by conducting the application study on other samples other than the SMEs of the organized industrial zone. In future studies, using different branches of business and professions in examining the effects of organizational skills on innovation performance and determining the relationships in this regard will be effective in strengthening the results of this study.

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