

THE EFFECT OF CORPORATE MEMORY AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING ON THE FIRM PERFORMANCE THROUGH CORPORATE CULTURE*

KURUMSAL HAFIZA VE ÖRGÜTSEL ÖĞRENMENİN KURUM KÜLTÜRÜ ARACILIĞIYLA FİRMA PERFORMANSI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study is to determine to what extent and in what direction corporate memory and organizational learning affect firm performance through corporate culture. Within the framework of the research model, the relationships between the sub-dimensions of corporate memory and organizational learning, which are the independent variables, and the sub-dimensions of firm performance, which is the dependent variable, are examined. Within the scope of the study, the mediating role of corporate culture in relations between variables is also questioned. The study is carried out with comprehensive research on Information and Technology companies operating in İstanbul. The survey method is chosen as the data collection method and 7-point Likert-type expressions are used in the scales. 635 questionnaires are collected from Information and Technology companies in the Marmara Region and the hypotheses in the research model are analyzed using the SPSS data processing statistics program. As a result of the analysis, it is determined that corporate culture, organizational learning and corporate memory have significant effects on firm performance. However, it is determined that the mediation role of corporate culture has a partial effect on the effect of corporate memory and organizational learning on firm performance.

Keywords: Corporate Memory, Organizational Learning, Corporate Culture, Firm Performance.

JEL Classification Codes: M10, D83, M14, L25.


ÖZ

Araştırmanın temel amacı, kurumsal hafıza ve örgütsel öğrenmenin kurum kültürü aracılığıyla, firma performansını ne derece ve ne yönde etkilediğinin belirlenmesidir. Bu araştırma modeli çerçevesinde bağımsız değişkenlerimiz olan kurumsal hafıza ve örgütsel öğrenme alt boyutları ile bağımlı değişkenimiz olan firma performansının alt boyutlarının birbirleri ile olan ilişkileri incelenmiştir. Ayrıca araştırma kapsamında, değişkenler arası ilişkilerde kurum kültürünün aracılık rolü sorgulanmıştır. Araştırma İstanbul'da faaliyet gösteren bilişim ve teknoloji firmaları üzerinde kapsamlı bir araştırma ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veri toplama yöntemi olarak anket yöntemi seçilmiş, ölçeklerde 7'li likert tipi ifadeler kullanılmıştır. Araştırma modelinde sunulan hipotezler Marmara Bölgesi'nde bulunan bilişim ve teknoloji firmalarından toplanan toplam 635 adet anket SPSS veri işleme istatistik programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Yapılan analizler çerçevesinde kurum kültürü, örgütsel öğrenme ve kurumsal hafızanın firma performansı üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bununla birlikte kurumsal hafıza ve örgütsel öğrenmenin firma performansı üzerindeki etkisinde kurum kültürünün aracılık rolünün kısmi etkisinin olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kurumsal Hafıza, Örgütsel Öğrenme, Kurum Kültürü, Firma Performansı.

JEL Sınıflandırma Kodları: M10, D83, M14, L25.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Amaç ve Kapsam:

Bilim ve teknolojiye günbegün gelişmelerin etkisiyle, insanoğlunun bilgi toplumuna geçişi ile birlikte kurumların sürdürülebilir rekabet avantajı elde etmeleri ve devamlılıklarını koruyabilmelerini sağlayabilmeleri zorunlu hale gelmektedir. Yaşadığımız çevrenin sürekli biçimde dinamik olmasından ötürü özellikle de örgüt dışı nedenlerden kaynaklanan koşullar kurum ve kuruluşları değişim yapmaya yöneltmektedir. Bundan dolayı her kurumun büyümesi ve hayatta kalabilmesi için yenilikçi bir bakış açısını benimsemesi, yeni teknik ve yöntemler benimseyerek sürekli olarak öğrenmesi ve yetenekli bireyler istihdam ederek başarısını devam ettirebilmesi önem kazanmaktadır. Bu nedenle araştırmamızın örneklemini bilişim ve teknoloji sektöründe faaliyet gösteren firmalar oluşturmaktadır. Tüm bu bilgilerin ışığında; kurumsal hafıza, örgütsel öğrenme, kurum kültürü ve firma performansı kavramlarının açıklamaları ve bunların birbirleriyle ilgili olan ilişkilerin incelenmesi çalışmanın konusunu oluşturmaktadır. Temel olarak çalışmanın amacı, kurumsal hafıza ve örgütsel öğrenmenin kurum kültürü aracılığıyla, firma performansını ne derece ve ne yönde etkilediği sorusunu yanıtlamaktır. Böylelikle araştırmada ele alınmakta olan değişkenlerin firma performansı üzerinde ne derece etkili olduğunun belirlenmesi hedeflenmektedir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye’de Marmara Bölgesi’nde faaliyet gösteren bilişim ve teknoloji firmalarında yapılması sonucunda elde edilen veriler bu firmaları ile sınırlı olmaktadır. Ayrıca ankete katılım gösteren bireylerin soruları cevaplandırılmış olması çalışmanın diğer bir sınırlılığını temsil etmektedir.

Yöntem:

Bu çalışma için Beykent Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırma ve Yayın Etik Kurulundan 17.07.2019 tarihli etik kurul izni alınmıştır. Çalışma için anket yöntemi kullanılarak veriler toplanmıştır. Araştırma sürecinde Mendeley programı kullanılarak elde edilen akademik makale ve diğer yayınlar depolanarak çalışma esnasında erişim kolaylığı sağlamıştır. Anket çalışması; literatürde mevcut çalışılmış ölçekler referans alınarak hazırlanmış olup, örneklem büyüklüğü %95 güven aralığına göre en az 384 adet olarak belirlenmiştir. Uygulamada ise toplam 635 adet geçerli anket değerlendirilmiştir. Bu anketlerin güvenilirliği ve geçerliliği, faktör, korelasyon ve regresyon analizi SPSS istatistik programı aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilmiş olup, sonuçlar analizlerle birlikte yorumlanmıştır.

Bulgular:

Yapılan analizler çerçevesinde kurum kültürü, örgütsel öğrenme ve kurumsal hafızanın firma performansı üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bununla birlikte kurumsal hafıza ve örgütsel öğrenmenin firma performansı üzerindeki etkisinde kurum kültürünün aracılık rolünün kısmi etkisinin olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Tartışma:

Kurumların daha güçlü rekabet edebilmeleri ve verimliliklerini arttırabilmeleri güçlü bir kurum kültürüne ve sağlam bir kurumsal hafızaya sahip olması ile mümkün olduğundan kurumların bu değerleri koruması ve geliştirmesi gerekmektedir. Araştırmanın en temel sınırlılığı bilişim ve teknoloji firmaları ile sınırlandırılması ve söz konusu bu firmalarda faaliyet gösteren çalışan bireylerin görüşlerine göre araştırma sonuçlarının şekillenmesi sağlanmaktadır. Bu açıdan daha sonra yapılacak olan araştırmalarda farklı sektörlerde ve farklı kültürlerde benzer çalışmaların yapılması önemlidir. Ayrıca anket yönteminin kendi içerisinde getirdiği bazı kısıtlar bulunmaktadır.

Sonuç:

Birçok kuruluş rekabet avantajı yakalayabilmek, bilgilerin çeşitli ortam ve aygıtlarda depolanabilmesini sağlayabilmek için teknolojiye önem vermekte ve yatırım yapmaktadır. Teknoloji ile birlikte bilgilerin depo aygıtlarında saklayabilmesi sonucunda kurumlara hız ve zaman kazanımında önemli avantaj sunmaktadır. Bilgi kurum içinden veya dışından sağlanabildikleri gibi aynı zamanda bu bilgiler herhangi bir zaman dilimine de ait olabilmektedir. Kuruluşlarda bilgi yönetiminin etkin bir şekilde uygulanması kurumun zaman içinde kazanmış olduğu hafızayı aktif ve verimli kullanabilmesini sağlamaktadır. Her kurumun bir geçmişe sahip olması, rakip firmalara karşı gelişimine zemin hazırlayan önemli bir durumdur. Kurumların sahip olduğu bilgi depoları, çalışanların tecrübeleri, kurumların deneyimleri ve kurum dışı kaynaklardan toplanan bilgilerin birleşmesi ile somut hale gelmekte ve bunun sonucunda kurumda hafızanın oluşmasını sağlamaktadır. Kurumda oluşan hafıza, stratejik kararların alınmasında önemli bir etken olmakta ve kurumda eylemler sonrasında elde edilen yeni deneyimler hafıza alanına ilave edilerek kazanımlar sağlamaktadır. Bunun sonucunda çalışan bireylerin daha önce yaşamış olduğu veya olacağı hataların tekrar edilmesinin önlenmesinde önemli olup, daha önceki deneyimler üzerine bilgilerin inşa edilmesinde önemli imkân sağlamaktadır. Kurum içinde bilginin çalışan bireyler arasında doğru biçimde paylaşımı ve etkileşimi sayesinde yeni bilgi kazanımlarına ve süreçlere dönüştürülmesine imkân sağlamaktadır. Bilginin kurum içinde paylaşılmasını önemsemeyen örgütler çevrelerine uyum sağlamada zorlanmakta ve rakipleri ile yarışlarda geride kalmaya mahkûm olmaktadır. Dolayısıyla kurum içinde çalışan bireylerin aralarında sağladıkları doğru iletişim ve öğrenme sayesinde rakiplerine karşı rekabet avantajını yakalayabilmekte ve sürekliliğin elde edilmesini sağlamaktadır. Kurumsal kültürün gelişmesi çalışan bireylerin toplu yaşamasının bir sonucu olmakta ve kurumların hem iç uyum hem de dış adaptasyon sürecinde önemli bir faktör olmaktadır. Kurum kültürü kurumsal değerlerin, normların ve standartların anlaşılmasını kolaylaştırması sonucu örgütsel uyumun sağlanmasında önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bunun sonucunda ise, çalışan bireyler kurumsal beklentileri daha iyi kavrayarak hedeflere ulaşabilme konusunda daha tutarlı bir çalışma süreci izleyebilmektedir. Günümüz teknolojisindeki bilgisayar teknolojilerinin kurum kültürünü önemli derecede etkilemesi ile birlikte bilgiye ulaşabilmek artık daha hızlı ve kolay olmaktadır.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the impact of the day-to-day developments in science and technology, the transition of human beings to the information community requires institutions to gain a sustainable competitive advantage and maintain their continuity. Because of the constant dynamic nature of the environment in which we live, in particular the conditions resulting from non-organizational causes lead to change in institutions and organizations. It is, therefore, important that every institution adopts an innovative perspective to grow and survive, to constantly learn by adopting new techniques and methods, and to continue its success by employing talented individuals. For this reason, the sample of our research consists of companies operating in the information and technology sector. Within the light of all this information; explanations of the concepts of corporate memory, organizational learning, corporate culture and firm performance and examining their interrelationships are the subject of the study. Fundamentally, the purpose of the study is to answer the question of how and in what way corporate memory and organizational learning affect firm performance through corporate culture. In this manner, it is aimed to determine how effective the variables discussed in the research area on the performance of the firm.

The data obtained as a result of this study being carried out in the Information and Technology companies operating in the Marmara Region of Turkey is limited to these companies. Moreover, the fact that individuals who participated in the survey answered the questions represents another limitation of the study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Corporate Memory

Every organization has a history that sets the stage for its growth and development. Therefore, every organization has a memory (Al Ahbabi et al., 2019, p. 5). Corporate memory works like the human mind, and it is a mechanism that enables information to be obtained, stored and disseminated so that the information gained from previous experiences can be used within the organization (Farooq, 2019, p. 150). Corporate memory enables this asset to expand and strengthen by obtaining, organizing, distributing and reusing the information created collectively by the employees (Koraz & Al-Habil, 2012, p. 243). “The tools in which organizations store information for their future use” are often referred to as corporate memory. Corporate members’ individual memories, tasks, roles, electronic databases and corporate culture can be given as general examples of corporate memory (Zadayannaya, 2012, p. 3).

Data is ubiquitous and technologies are actively used to deal with the growing number of big data problems (Song & Zhu, 2016, p. 364). Corporate memory provides convenience in obtaining, updating and recalling information when performed well (Gong & Greenwood, 2012, p. 101). Corporate memory allows us to build information on previous experiences and prevent errors by detecting the recurrence of errors (Chakhmoune et al., 2012, p. 28). When organizations cannot remember the past, they are doomed to repeat it and to it. In the light of information from past projects, corporate memory plays an important role in preventing the repetition of mistakes, benefiting from the company’s information map, providing information circulation to improve organizational learning and preserving knowledge after personnel transfer and retirement (Dieng et al., 2006, p. 5-8). An organization’s memory resides in different forms on various platforms such as individuals, standard operating procedures, roles, corporate culture, physical storage devices and electronic devices. These are spread around the organization like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle made by an artist (Watson, 2013, p. 14). Preserving corporate memory is becoming increasingly important for the organization and knowledge is defined as the key to competition (Ngulube, 2018, p. 47). While choosing the physical infrastructure for the protection of corporate memory, using the hardware that provides maximum benefit within the facilities of the institution makes a significant contribution. Organizations need to protect hardware and software integrity in terms of protecting corporate memory (Özhan, 2017, p. 6-7).

The three components that make up the corporate memory consist of learning from the organization’s own experiences, learning from the experiences of other organizations and information gathered from external sources. Corporate memory is used to increase the quality of strategic decisions, and after the actions are taken, new experiences are added to the corporate memory again (Ozorhon et al., 2005, p. 68-69). In addition to being tangible like paper records in an archive, corporate memory is also referred to as invisible (abstract) (Özkan et al., 2002, p. 36). Corporate memory processes ensure that information from the past is transferred to the future. Corporate memory processes include information acquisition, storage, maintenance and retrieval (Hackbarth and Grover, 1999, p. 23). Information acquisition is expressed as the development of skills, insights and relationships. Different

types of knowledge and acquiring new knowledge can improve the performance of individuals, groups or organizations (Bengtsson & Skog, 2018, p. 11). Information storage includes the storage and protection of information in various environments such as individuals, documents, computers and technology. Information storage can also be a tool used in information transfer (Henderson, 2017, p. 45). The information stored in the individual memory of group members can be divided into internal and external components. The internal component consists of information personally known to the group members. The external component, on the other hand, consists of information that is not known personally to the members but can be obtained when necessary. This information is stored in files, electronic storage devices or in the memory of individuals (Anand et al., 1998, p. 797). Information retention is especially important for organizations with a high rate of job rotation, depending on employment and its use in the form of temporary and advisory contracts to produce information (Abazeed, 2018, p. 122). Re-access is the state of obtaining information after accessing the memory content with searching on the system in order to gain access to the previously recorded information after storage (Van Stijn & Wensley, 2016, p. 188). Corporate memory includes both declarative memory and procedural memory as areas of special interest. Traditionally, the declarative memory system represents the memory system underlying the learning and storage of openly available information. However, declarative memory is the long-term memory system that forms the basis of explicit knowledge (Ullman & Pullman, 2015, p. 206-207).

2.2. Organizational Learning

Learning is the initial and subsequent skill acquisition that allows individuals and organizations to plan, organize, and perform specific tasks and actions. As long as an organization is open to development and change, learning takes place (Sicilia, 2006, p. 11). Learning in an organization is not only to increase knowledge and skills but also to identify false assumptions, question the procedures applied, be able to build innovations within the organization by learning from mistakes (Rashid & Mansor, 2018, p. 1257). The learning process can be influenced by the environmental context in which the organization operates. The environmental context of an organization has both external and internal aspects. External aspects include organizations, regulators, and customers, while internal aspects include factors such as culture, identity and strategy that help define the internal boundaries of the organization (De Giacomo et al., 2018, p. 4). Organizational learning is the process of development so that the organization can continue its life by adapting to environmental change (Rao et al., 2018, p. 521).

Learning organizations are organizations that have various abilities in terms of carrying out and developing their functions. Therefore, for a learning organization to develop, these abilities must be developed first. These abilities are realized through organizational learning (Cobb, 2015, p. 236). Organizations can learn through individuals. The learning of the organization makes it easier for the individual to learn. Unless the obstacles to individual learning are removed, it is not possible to achieve organizational learning (Tekeş, 2018, p. 26). Recognizing and predicting the obstacles to learning organizations from the very beginning can help organizations take corrective actions (Aliandrina, 2012, p. 20). Throughout the learning process, a culture is created that becomes a repository for collective learning. As socialization takes place, organizations develop the ability to translate historical inferences into routines that guide behavior (Ren & Ding, 2010, p. 156). A learning organization is defined as an organization that continuously expands its capacity to create its future. Peter Senge states that the learning organization, which forms the basis of organizational learning, consists of five disciplines. The five disciplines defined form the basis of the formation of the learning organization. These disciplines consist of personal mastery, intellectual models, shared vision, team learning and system thinking (Norton, 2017, p. 1). Systematic problem solving in learning organizations is meant to rely on scientific methods in determining and solving the encountered problems, creating decision mechanisms on data and using statistical methods in inferences. There is a continuous development approach based on this ability (Doğru, 2018, p. 462).

Organizational learning is a process that develops organizational abilities and generates information in terms of having organizations that can respond to more flexible and changing business environments and have sustainability in terms of competitive advantage (Zeb et al., 2017, p. 21-22). Knowledge acquisition refers to the process or activity of the formation and development of new ideas, knowledge, and skills that increase the existing information stock of the organization. Knowledge acquisition is the result of the participation of employees and the interaction of resources and technology (Iqbal et al., 2019, p. 40). The dissemination of knowledge affects the quality of the learning process. Effective dissemination of knowledge results in wider learning in organizations and an increase in the opportunity to benefit from resources (Aksoy, 2015, p. 36). Corporate memory is a structure aimed at storing and re-evaluating information and is a formation at an individual and organizational level. The

stored information also plays an important role in future perception and decision-making processes. Therefore, it is very important for the organization that corporate memory has a structure open to development (Çemberci, 2013, p. 101).

2.3. Corporate Culture

Although culture is a subject of anthropology that researches societies, it has also become the subject of various disciplines (sociology, psychology, history, etc.) due to social differences. Therefore, it can be said that too many definitions of culture have emerged (Erez, 2018, p. 12). Culture is a phenomenon that is learned, stored, taught and passed on from generation to generation, including social relationships and behavioral patterns that make a society different from other societies (Ulusoy, 2017, p. 15). Culture is in life. The items we wear, the houses we live in, the way our bodies and homes are decorated, the food we eat, the tools and equipment we use at home and work are a reflection of the culture. Culture is also both the work of the human hand and the tool that brings man to his goal (Hajrullahu, 2016, p. 5-6). The concept of culture is accepted as a metaphor for some as the “glue” that holds an organization together, and for others as a “compass” that gives direction (Tharp, 2009, p. 2).

The concept of corporate culture first appeared in the academic field in 1979 with Pettigrew’s article “Working on Corporate Cultures”, published in the *Journal of Administrative Science Quarterly* and scientific studies on corporate culture developed in the 1980s (Bingöl, 2012, p. 4). Corporate culture is a system of assumptions, values, norms and attitudes that are developed and adopted by the members of an organization through mutual experiences, laid out with symbols that help determine the meaning of the world around them and how they behave (Janićijević, 2017, p. 71). Corporate culture is an integrative force that pulls organizational behavior in the direction desired by management. From a functional perspective, corporate culture is seen as a social control tool in which behaviors and beliefs are shaped and determined (Joseph & Kibera, 2019, p. 3). In terms of the development of an organization, corporate culture can be used as different tools to help the organization achieve success. First, corporate culture is a powerful tool to improve business performance and create a competitive advantage against the organization’s competitors. Second, corporate culture can be a management control tool (Sun, 2008, p. 140).

Culture is not innate instinctive or hereditary, but the whole of habits and behaviors that individuals acquire from birth. Culture can vary depending on time as well as from society to society. Human beings are the only creature that can transfer what they know to the next generation. In this way, the culture transferred from generation to generation shows continuity (Çırak, 2018, p. 4-6). Cultural change is defined as the process of transforming the material and spiritual culture model formed in society into another model. Changes in living conditions, innovations in the information and technology produced or interaction with another culture can lead to social and cultural change (Özsoy, 2018, p. 39). It is not possible to say that there is a unique and correct corporate culture for every business and that the characteristics of this culture are the same under all circumstances. Since cultural characteristics affect employee behavior, employee characteristics are widely linked to performance and employee characteristics have a significant impact on performance (Ismael, 2017, p. 24). Organizations that occur in multiple dynamic forms and manage to use these dynamics interactively with each other can have a strong corporate culture (Bilgili et al., 2016, p. 1009). Factors affecting corporate culture can be listed as vision, mission, motivation, communication, leadership, corporate history and tradition, products and services, customers, corporate expectations, data and control systems, legislation and environment, reward systems, goals, organizational style, values and beliefs (Dal & Ceviz, 2011, p. 12). With a holistic approach, the organization, of course, has more dimensions than corporate culture, corporate structure and individual operational strategy. In a dynamic management process, all these elements are subject to mutual dependence and interaction (Kempa et al., 2018, p. 171). Corporate culture is used to understand the activities of the organization and to guide appropriate behavior. Culture greatly influences an organization’s ability to change its strategic direction, increase its survival rate, and create a foundation for superior competitiveness by improving motivational practices and processes (Rozika et al., 2018, p. 122).

2.4. Firm Performance

Performance is a concept that determines the point reached in accordance with plans made for a specific purpose and determines what is achieved by quality and quantity aspects (Doğan, 2019, p. 64). Performance is a qualitative and quantitative description of the position in which the work performed as a result of individuals, groups or initiatives is in line with the intended goals (Demir & Zehir, 2019, p. 305). Measures of performance are in two forms, financial-quantitative (objective) and non-financial-qualitative (subjective). Some researchers stated that

qualitative and quantitative performance interact with each other and qualitative performance mediates the formation of quantitative performance, and there is a significant and positive relationship between qualitative and quantitative performance (Çınar, 2015, p. 15). Performance measurement is the collection of data regularly, analyzing them and reporting the results so that the businesses can monitor the services and products they produce and the results. Therefore, it plays a key role in developing, implementing and monitoring a strategic plan. Every business has goals and objectives for what they want to achieve. For this reason, performance has a significant effect on managers' evaluation of whether organizational goals are achieved or not and managers' ability to monitor whether the company is moving in the direction it wants to go (Teeratansirikool et al., 2013, p. 169). Rapidly changing environmental conditions and competition are effective factors for organizations to achieve their goals and objectives. Therefore, since organizations are open systems, their ability to keep up with these changes they are affected depends on accurate performance measurement and accurate analysis of their current situation (Alan, 2018, p. 50).

In the literature, it is seen that researchers and academics deal with the performance of the firm in different dimensions. Financial performance is the evaluation of the financial position, monetary policies and activities of enterprises, their investments and the risks they undertake. At the same time, this concept can be used for a firm to compare similar companies in the same industry or to make comparisons by bringing sectors together (Aslan, 2018, p. 67). Firm performance is the function of firm managers' ability to manage their firms efficiently and profitably according to available investment opportunities and financing costs. Competitive advantage causes firm performance to become one of the important values in the business world. It is possible to define the performance of the firm as the level of achievement of the goals of the companies as a result of the studies at certain times, that is, the level of achieving success. Generally, financial performance indicators are obtained on the basis of company statistics. Non-financial data is generated by the perceptions of the employees working within the company (Yeşilyurt, 2019, p. 29-34). Firm performance is not only an abstract concept but is also considered as a whole of the firm's material and human assets. The reason why companies evaluate their financial performance is their desire to give an idea to researchers and practitioners about the degree to which they achieve their basic economic goals. Non-financial performance criteria include innovation, quality of working life, quality, social responsibility and acceptance (Üstün et al., 2018, p. 69). Performing performance evaluation in businesses is extremely important in terms of seeing the success of the business and making the right decisions about the future. Positive and negative decisions, mistakes, deficiencies made in the past and efforts to eliminate them can be controlled by performance evaluation (Bayraktar et al., 2016, p. 42). The growth of a business can take several forms. Their growth patterns are as follows; revenues, total sales, number of customers, number of employees, products offered and facilities needed (Omelogo, 2019, p. 5). There are various motives for the growth of firms. The basic motive for a firm's growth is economic. Firms want to seize opportunities in issues such as reducing their costs by growing, improving their production quality, growing in their markets, and benefiting from the financial facilities that will be provided by growth. In other words, firms want to benefit from the advantages provided by large-scale production. Not only the growth motive is of economic origin, but also the psychological factors play an effective role in the desire to grow (Özkul, 2013, p. 126).

Awadh and Alyahya (2013) evaluated the firm performance of 7600 small businesses from 1999 to 2007 in more than 60 research studies to reveal the relationship between corporate culture and the performance of the firm. In this study, they determined the existence of a positive relationship between corporate culture and the performance of the firm. Strong culture in an organization ensures that workforce employees are managed effectively and efficiently. Corporate culture based on specific conditions helps to improve and achieve competitive superiority. Employee engagement and group efficiency help improve the organization's performance based on sustainability. The nature and strength of corporate culture affect the sustainability and effectiveness of the organization. Our study shows that the effective and efficient management of employees and the positive effect of employee engagement on financial, growth and general performance of the firm are in line with the findings of this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted with information and technology companies operating in the Marmara region in Turkey, and the data is limited to these companies. In practice, 635 valid questionnaires in total were evaluated. The reliability and validity of these questionnaires were carried out through factor, correlation and regression analysis statistics program, and the results were interpreted together with the analysis. 7-point Likert scale was used as a

data collection method in the study. As a result of the literature research on the subject, a 90-question questionnaire was created and applied to the participants in the 7-point Likert system.

Table 1. Sources of Scales Used in The Study

Scale	Number of questions	Received Source
Corporate Memory	12	Dunham and Burt (2011)
Organizational Learning	50	Chegus (2018)
Corporate Culture	16	Naranjo-Valencia et al. (2011)
Firm Performance	12	Vorhies and Morgan (2005), Venkatraman and Ramanujan (1986), Rozenzweig et al. (2003), Lynch et al. (2000), Vorhies et al. (1999), Chang et al. (2003), Antoncic and Hisrich (2001), Zahra et al. (2002), Baker and Sinkula (1999), King and Zeithaml (2001).

The variables and the number of questions used in the study are shown in Table 1. Dunham and Burt's study (2011) was used on the scale of corporate memory, which is one of the independent variables examined in the study. They examined corporate memory in three different dimensions as "requests from colleagues", "request from employees you are in charge of" and "request from managers". Organizational learning, another independent variable, was evaluated as normative and descriptive organizational learning, using Chegus's (2018) study. Normative organizational learning was evaluated in five different dimensions as "goal and mission transparency", "shared leadership and participation", "experience", "knowledge transfer", "teamwork and group problem solving". Descriptive organizational learning, on the other hand, was evaluated in five different dimensions: "information acquisition", "information distribution", "shared comment", "declarative memory" and "operational memory". In the corporate culture, the study of Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez, and Sanz-Valle (2011) was benefited. Corporate culture was examined in four dimensions as "dominant features of the organization", "management of employees", "corporate glue" and "success criteria". Firm performance, which is the dependent variable, was taken from the scales developed by the researchers named Vorhies and Morgan (2005), Venkatraman and Ramanujan (1986), Rozenzweig et al. (2003), Lynch et al. (2000), Vorhies et al. (1999), Chang et al. (2003), Antoncic and Hisrich (2001), Zahra et al. (2002), Baker and Sinkula (1999), King and Zeithaml (2001) and it was examined in two sub-dimensions as "financial performance" and "growth performance".

Table 2. Reliability Analysis of Variables

Variables	Number of questions	Cronbach's Alpha (α) value
Corporate Memory	12	0,852
Organizational Learning: Normative	21	0,778
Organizational Learning: Descriptive	29	0,874
Corporate Culture	16	0,923
Firm Performance	12	0,904
All Variables	90	0,952

As a result of the reliability test, all variables are above the accepted limit value, as shown in Table 2. Therefore, no updates were made on the scales, such as removing, canceling, or adding questions. In the general reliability test, high value like 0.952 was obtained. According to the results of the reliability test, it is revealed that all the questions on the scale were perceived correctly and in the same direction by the participants. Thus, the reliability of the scales used in the study was tested and proved again.

Table 3. Correlation Table

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Request from managers (1)	r 1 p N 635															
Request from employees you are in charge of (2)	r .535** p 0,000 N 635	1														
Requests from colleagues (3)	r .472** p 0,000 N 635	.449**	1													
Goal and Mission Transparency (4)	r .479** p 0,000 N 635	.464**	.457**	1												
Shared Leadership and Participation (5)	r .410** p 0,000 N 635	.356**	.358**	.626**	1											
Experience (6)	r -.184** p 0,000 N 635	-.218**	-.163**	-.331**	-.241**	1										
Knowledge Transfer and Teamwork (7)	r .088* p 0,027 N 635	0,063	0,055	.245**	.183**	-.048	1									
Information acquisition (8)	r .364** p 0,000 N 635	.315**	.386**	.661**	.471**	-.268**	.147**	1								
Information distribution (9)	r .507** p 0,000 N 635	.407**	.372**	.502**	.451**	-.218**	.165**	.492**	1							
Shared Comment (10)	r -.198** p 0,000 N 635	-.188**	-.184**	-.354**	-.252**	.559**	-.234**	-.273**	-.270**	1						
Declarative memory (11)	r .481** p 0,000 N 635	.418**	.382**	.527**	.484**	-.286**	.126**	.499**	.560**	-.209**	1					
Operational memory (12)	r .401** p 0,000 N 635	.350**	.325**	.629**	.462**	-.305**	.168**	.637**	.552**	-.315**	.556**	1				
Dominant features of the organization (13)	r .371** p 0,000 N 635	.340**	.363**	.603**	.448**	-.287**	.198**	.507**	.545**	-.360**	.527**	.626**	1			
Management of employees, corporate glue and success criteria (14)	r .375** p 0,000 N 635	.317**	.398**	.664**	.459**	-.301**	.176**	.613**	.478**	-.350**	.459**	.666**	.684**	1		
Financial performance (15)	r .302** p 0,000 N 635	.299**	.295**	.386**	.321**	-.130**	.113**	.388**	.450**	-.171**	.439**	.412**	.440**	.461**	1	
																635

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
Growth	r	.292**	.268**	.282**	.367**	.299**	-0,032	.158**	.381**	.389**	-.089*	.377**	.384**	.359**	.412**	.677**	1
performance	p	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,419	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,025	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	
(16)	N	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635

*One-to-one relationships between the marked components were accepted as $p < 0.01$ and those marked with * were considered statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

The findings of the correlation analysis conducted within the scope of the research were evaluated comprehensively. The correlation is shown in Table 3, and in the light of these data, it is seen that most of the changes in financial growth performance were affected by independent variables. However, it is also noteworthy that the correlation value of a small number of independent variables took a close value or was negatively oriented. All three sub-dimensions of corporate memory had a low impact on financial and growth performance. These effects varied between 0.268 and 0.302. Changes in corporate memory had a positive impact on financial and growth performance. However, these changes should be evaluated within the framework of mutual interaction, not in a cause and effect relationship. Another striking point is that the dimensions of normative organizational learning unexpectedly showed two different interactions within themselves. For example, while “Goal and Mission Transparency” and “Shared Leadership and Participation” dimensions had a low correlation in the positive direction, the “Experience” dimension was in the negative direction. In addition, the dimension of “Knowledge Transfer and Teamwork” was not correlated with financial and growth performance since it had a very low correlation value. In the descriptive organizational learning dimensions, all other dimensions, except the “Shared Comment” dimension, were found to be associated with financial and growth performance at a low and medium level. Finally, it seems that the lower dimensions of corporate culture interacted at a moderate level. In light of this information in the correlation table, it is possible to accept the existence of a relationship between variables. However, in order to talk about a causality relationship, regression analysis was performed in the next step and the results were shared. The reason why the sub-dimensions of financial and growth performance had high correlation values is that they are two different dimensions of the same factor. Since they served the same purpose, they were highly correlated with each other; Therefore, the relationship between the two concepts cannot be interpreted.

Table 4. Alternative Model Regression Analysis

Model	Coefficients			T	Sig.
	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1,652	0,322		5,126	0,000
Request from managers	-0,028	0,036	-0,035	-0,774	0,439
Request from employees you are in charge of	0,044	0,033	0,057	1,330	0,184
Requests from colleagues	0,055	0,038	0,059	1,426	0,154
Goal and mission transparency	0,036	0,064	0,032	0,558	0,577
Shared leadership and participation	0,010	0,037	0,012	0,271	0,786
Experience	0,062	0,039	0,067	1,564	0,118
Knowledge transfer and teamwork	0,006	0,023	0,009	0,254	0,800
Keep informed	0,079	0,047	0,083	1,668	0,096
Information distribution	0,174	0,039	0,206	4,418	0,000
Shared comment	-0,024	0,037	-0,028	-0,656	0,512
Declarative memory	0,163	0,041	0,185	3,927	0,000
Operational memory	0,094	0,047	0,101	2,006	0,045
R ² : 0,272		F Value: 20,702		Dependent Variable: Financial Performance	

Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0,899	0,333		2,699	0,007
Request from managers	0,006	0,038	0,007	0,159	0,874
Request from employees you are in charge of	0,037	0,034	0,048	1,093	0,275
Requests from colleagues	0,062	0,039	0,067	1,581	0,114
Goal and mission transparency	0,047	0,066	0,042	0,711	0,478
Shared leadership and participation	0,014	0,039	0,017	0,370	0,712
Experience	0,121	0,041	0,129	2,978	0,003
Knowledge transfer and teamwork	0,048	0,024	0,074	2,024	0,043
Keep informed	0,124	0,049	0,130	2,550	0,011
Information distribution	0,119	0,041	0,139	2,919	0,004
Shared comment	0,030	0,038	0,034	0,776	0,438
Declarative memory	0,110	0,043	0,124	2,581	0,010
Operational memory	0,111	0,049	0,117	2,274	0,023
R ² : 0,240		F Value: 17,688		Dependent Variable: Growth Performance	

In this model in which the intermediate variable was examined, in the examinations after the corporate culture variable and its sub-dimensions were excluded from the analysis, it was observed that other sub-dimensions that were not meaningful before were similarly ineffective.

The cultural factor is a concept whose impact is very limited for organizations that cannot be organizationalized. In particular, the priority of newly established and start-up organizations is not to create a corporate culture, but to focus on profit to keep the life course of the organization long. In this case, it is not possible for organizations to create a corporate culture within themselves and to provide organizational socialization with the lower dimensions of this culture. Therefore, the impact on financial and growth performance cannot be realized through the culture tool variable. An important finding was obtained in terms of comparing the corporate culture with foreign studies, where it was considered as a mediator variable.

Table 5. Path Analysis Beta Coefficients

	Original Example (O)	Sample Average (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Value
Corporate Culture -> Firm Performance	0,231	0,229	0,066	3,483	0,001
Corporate Memory -> Corporate Culture	-0,024	-0,024	0,038	0,625	0,532
Corporate Memory -> Firm Performance	0,110	0,115	0,050	2,205	0,028
Mediation Effect -> Firm Performance	-0,046	-0,044	0,027	1,729	0,085
Organizational Learning -> Corporate Culture	0,784	0,787	0,035	22,612	0,000
Organizational Learning -> Firm Performance	0,247	0,249	0,073	3,385	0,001

Analysis conducted in the SMART PLS program together with SPSS shows that the mediating effect in the model has a partial effect. However, it is seen that all other independent variables have partial or full effect on the firm performance which is the dependent variable.

Table 6. Some Statistical Information of the Model

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Corporate Culture	0,924	0,928	0,934	0,475
Corporate Memory	0,853	0,865	0,881	0,389
Firm Performance	0,906	0,912	0,921	0,497
SRMR: 0,061 Chi-Square: 12.558,715		d_ ULS: 15,064		d_ G: 3,918

As can be seen in Table 6, various statistical criteria arising within the scope of the structural equation model are listed. In light of all this information, the research hypotheses were finally explained in detail.

H₁: Corporate Memory and its sub-dimensions have a direct and positive effect on firm performance.

When the corporate memory factor (the first 12 questions of the questionnaire) was evaluated with the firm performance (79-90 questions of the questionnaire), it was concluded that corporate memory factor has a significant effect on firm performance. Thus, the H₁ hypothesis was accepted. As expected, firms with corporate memory have a direct and positive impact on firm performance.

H₂: Organizational Learning and its sub-dimensions have a direct and positive effect on firm performance.

When organizational learning (13-62 questions of the questionnaire) was evaluated with its normative and descriptive upper dimension, it was concluded that organizational learning has a significant effect on firm performance (79-90 questions). Thus, the H₂ hypothesis was accepted. As expected, firms with organizational learning have a direct and positive effect on firm performance.

H₃: Corporate memory and organizational learning have a direct and positive impact on firm performance through corporate culture.

The corporate memory mediation relationship was examined with 63-78 questions of the questionnaire. It was concluded that corporate memory and organizational learning have a significant effect on firm performance through corporate culture. Thus, the H₃ hypothesis was accepted.

4. RESULTS

Within the framework of the analyzes, it was determined that corporate culture, organizational learning and corporate memory have a significant effect on firm performance. However, it was determined that the mediation role of corporate culture has a partial effect on the effect of corporate memory and organizational learning on firm performance.

5. DISCUSSION

Organizations should be able to share this information within the organization and ensure that the shared information is constantly updated and that new information can be produced. Since organizations can compete more strongly and increase their efficiency with a strong corporate culture and a solid corporate memory, organizations need to maintain and develop these values.

Recommendations to managers in the organization are as follows:

- Organizations need to adapt to social, economic, social and cultural changes to maintain their activities dynamically and to protect their assets. Therefore, the existence of organizations is needed in the information society, where change is happening very quickly, and organizations that want to survive need to develop their perceptions of learning organizations.
- Organizations should try to focus on organizational learning activities to be able to draw attention among their competitors by adapting to changes, to use information by producing solutions by keeping up with technological changes.
- To ensure competitive advantage, to eliminate uncertainty and to adapt to change, it becomes necessary for organizations to give importance to learning. In this way, learning provides systematic problem solving and recovery opportunities by providing organizations with the opportunity to use knowledge. Organizations must recognize the importance of individual and organizational learning and take the necessary steps in this regard.

The most basic limitation of the research is that it is limited to information and technology companies and the results of the research were shaped according to the opinions of the individuals working in these companies. In this respect, it is important to conduct similar studies in different sectors and different cultures in future studies. Besides, there are some limitations imposed by the survey method itself.

6. CONCLUSION

Many organizations attach importance to and invest in technology to gain competitive advantage and to ensure that information can be stored in various media and devices. As a result of the ability to store information in storage devices with technology, it offers companies a significant advantage in speed and time gain. It has many benefits, such as keeping the information of individuals working in the organization and including it in the information system. As a result of the continuous need for information in the working process of organizations, it is important to obtain and store information and to access this information in a short time when requested. Memory formed in the organization is an important factor in making strategic decisions, and new experiences obtained after actions in the organization are added to the memory space and provide gains. Besides, the corporate memory is an abstract dynamic system as well as being tangible and it plays an important role in supporting business processes and transferring the information from the past to the future by enabling the acquisition, storage, updating, and retrieval of information when necessary. When the corporate memory is well implemented, it provides many advantages to the organizations in obtaining, updating, and recalling information. One of the important situations that should be noted is the memory loss experienced in organizations due to various reasons over time. These possible memory losses can sometimes reach a level that cannot be compensated. In fact, failure to save or delete the information within the organization in the memory area may cause the working individuals who join the organization later to not learn the job and even slow down the working process. Therefore, information management applications prevent memory loss by ensuring the storage of information. Besides, in cases such as retirement, death, transfer of authority, which may occur over time, a source of information can be provided to new members of the organization thanks to corporate memory.

Information is an important factor in the formation of the core of corporate memory and includes internal and external information sources of the organization. In addition to the importance of the active use of the information obtained in the organization, it is also important to share it among the individuals who work effectively within the organization. Because as long as information is shared, it can be re-meaning and as a result, it leads to the formation of new information. Thanks to the correct sharing and interaction of information among employees within the organization, it provides the opportunity to transform into new knowledge acquisitions and processes. For this reason, information can be applied within the organization if it is assimilated within the framework of the organization's objectives. In addition to this, the working individuals need to communicate among themselves, and the storage of the obtained information facilitates organizational learning. By learning, individuals working in an organization gain opportunities for personal development, which leads them to move away from working like a machine and work voluntarily in a satisfactory way.

The development of corporate culture is a result of the collective life of employees and is an important factor in both the internal adaptation and external adaptation process of the organizations. As a result, working individuals can follow a more consistent working process in terms of achieving the goals by a better understanding of corporate expectations. Computer technologies in today's technology have affected the corporate culture and accessing information is now faster and easier.

DECLARATION OF THE AUTHORS

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