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**The Role of Government Incentives in Creating Global Brands: An Example of
Government Incentive from Turkey**

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Abstract

Branding is an important marketing and management practice for every company but especially the ones coming from emerging economies. However, the companies of emerging economies have fallen behind their global rivals. This explains that's why the institutions of these economies also intervene to this process, as well as individual efforts of these companies. In this sense, Turkey has a different government incentive program called as TURQUALITY which claims that it is the world's first and only state sponsored program towards branding. Thus, this study aims to understand the role of TURQUALITY in branding processes of companies within the context of Turkish jewelry industry which is one of the supported industries by the program by employing qualitative research methods. As a result of the study, TURQUALITY has an important role in increasing brand awareness, gaining more corporate structure and providing efficient brand management. Besides this, the intervention of Turkish government and its institutions in branding processes of the companies demonstrates increasing role of emerging economies governments, although the role of governments in economies are tried to be minimized within the framework of neoliberal policies.

Key Words: Brands, Branding, Government Incentives

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, branding is increasingly becoming central to the structuring of economic and commercial activities in almost every part of the world (Askegaard, 2006). Branding as a both marketing and management practice has turned into a commonly used technique among today's companies to serve for today's consumers and to survive in global marketplace because through brands, while companies create added value in order to get more profits (de Chernatony et al., 2011), contemporary consumers who focus on meaning-based consumption can answer the questions about themselves such as who to be, how to live, how to wear, what to buy, and where to go (Elliott et al., 2011). Thus, brands also help contemporary consumers in their self-creation projects and communicate about these with others (Wattanasuwan, 2005).

In order to grab today's customers' attention, almost all of the companies are in need of well-designed branding strategies to make their brands operate like a culture, rather than only creating an external and projected brand image. In a world where customers are in search of creating identities, values, meanings, self-concepts, images and even social relations through the products that they consume rather than only satisfying their physiological needs (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998) and need to identify themselves with the values, images, beliefs, symbols of the brands, creating such a culture for a brand is highly important to serve for contemporary customers. Within this context, both creating and maintaining a strong brand is extremely significant strategy for contemporary companies but especially the ones which are coming from emerging economies (Peters, 2013; Kumar and Steenkamp, 2013).

The companies of emerging economies have already recognized the importance of branding in recent years to compete with their strong global rivals and to serve for contemporary consumers. So, they have started to engage in branding activities more nowadays (Roll, 2006). However they have fallen behind the global rivals coming from developed countries because of many reasons such as lack of experience in brand management, lack of brand awareness and other difficulties that they mostly confront when they go global with their brands (Kumar and Steenkamp, 2013). In this sense, as well as the individual branding efforts of the companies in emerging economies, institutions of these economies which have already

recognized the relationship between having strong brands and economic growth have started to contribute to these companies by promoting them through financial supports and incentives in their going global processes (Luo et al., 2010). Thus, branding becomes a national goal of every rising emerging economies.

Within this context, among the other emerging economies, Turkey has a different place in terms of government supports because Turkey has a program which aims not only support domestic companies financially but also guide these companies strategically in their going global processes with their brands. In addition to this, as being different from the supports of the institutions of other emerging economies, this support program in Turkey, which is called as TURQUALITY program, claims that it is the world's first and only state sponsored program towards branding. In this sense, TURQUALITY program is differing from the governments' incentives and supports of other emerging economies such as China (Luo and Tung, 2007; Luo et al., 2010; Altenburg et al., 2008; Zhiyan et al., 2013) and India (Tewari, 1999; Altenburg et al., 2008) because, via TURQUALITY program, the state and its institutions such as Ministry of Economics support the companies not only towards going global process but also towards branding processes financially and strategically in neoliberal global economy. Thus, TURQUALITY offers a good research area to study how strategic, operational and financial supports of the program provide a change and transformation to Turkish companies towards branding.

In order to examine the role of TURQUALITY program on branding processes, this study focuses on the jewelry industry which is one of the supported industries within the context of TURQUALITY program. In terms of both production and export potentials, jewelry industry is one of the biggest industries in Turkey which Turkey has a competitive advantage (JTR, 2012). Besides this, the main reason that's why jewelry industry is selected to study is based on the nature of product in the industry. Jewellery are fashion and luxury consumption items which transfer symbolic meanings and values for consumers. In this sense, Turkish jewelry industry is an interesting context for inquiring because creating such a brand for a jewelry product requires more complex branding processes than it requires for a functional or low involvement products.

In the literature, there are many studies which are either about branding strategies of developed countries companies in emerging economies (Sakarya et al., 2006; Xie and Boggs, 2006; London and Hart, 2004; Hoskisson et al., 2000) or about emerging economies' going global processes (Nakata and Sivakumar, 1997; Goldstein, 2009; Luo and Tung, 2007) or the role of government and its institutions on going global processes of the companies in emerging economies (Luo et al., 2010). However, there is not any study which is about the role of government and its institutions in branding processes of the companies within emerging economies context while they are going global. In addition to them, although there are many researches about TURQUALITY Program in domestic literature which are also done for: i) understanding the TURQUALITY program's effects on export (Doğan, 2004; Çam and Esengün, 2011); ii) understanding the role of TURQUALITY program on country of origin effects on evaluation of Turkish products (Tac and Aglargoç, 2007); and iii) understanding the importance of branding within global competition strategies (Gemci et al., 2009), there is not any study in the literature to specifically understand the interplay between TURQUALITY program and branding processes of the supported Turkish companies.

All in all, one of the objectives of the study is to understand the role of TURQUALITY Program's strategic and financial incentives on the companies and their branding processes while they are going global with their brands within Turkish jewelry industry context. In order to do this, how Turkish jewelry companies experienced TURQUALITY processes and then what the means of TURQUALITY for these companies are going to be displayed with

qualitative research methods. The other objective is to understand the role of Turkish government incentive in creating global brands within the context of neoliberal policies because although the role and place of governments in economies are tried to be minimized within the framework of neoliberal policies, it seem that the incentives given by Turkish government increases the role of the government in economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since brands provide “more trade acceptance”, “higher price points”, “higher margins” and “low price elasticity” (Elliott et al., 2011: 91), brands make really significant contribution to financial value of the companies (Keller, 2003; Keller and Lehmann, 2006; Elliott et al., 2011; de Chernatony et al., 2011). In addition to this, strong brands also promote creating high brand loyalty which promotes future sales; creating barriers to new competitors and providing less risk for line and product extensions (Elliott et al., 2011). All in all, not only producing a product but also creating a strong brand name with the product is the rule of the game in order to generate added values which induce customers to buy in all over the world.

Within this context, having strong brands is a necessity; for companies operating in the global marketplace because strong brands mean higher return on sale and so more profits for them (de Chernatony et al., 2011); for consumers because strong brands means symbolic resources to construct and communicate their identities (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998) and lastly for countries because strong brands mean having more power in the world economy (Peters, 2013). So, branding turns into an important marketing practice for today’s companies but especially the ones coming from emerging economies that have not strong global brands yet but have a potential to create them (Peters, 2013). Thus, branding becomes a national motto of every growing emerging economy to take a place in global marketplace.

In the literature, the concept of emerging economy is frequently used for describing low income but rapid-growth country (Hoskisson et al., 2000). In other and more elaborative words, the concept of emerging economies is mostly used to refer low or middle income countries which have not been totally industrialized yet but open to foreign investments and have shown recent economic growth due to undergoing economic liberalization (Infosys View Point, 2011).

At first, emerging economies were mostly seen as markets of companies of developed countries (Dawar and Chattopadhyay, 2002). The saturation and either limited or no growth opportunity in developed markets and the increasing number of buyers with enough purchasing power in emerging markets make these markets appeal for developed economies companies and their brands (Nakata and Sivakumar, 1997). For that reason, these countries have always been accepted as a future growth opportunity by the developed countries (Xie and Boggs, 2006) rather than a global player or competitor.

However, today, under the influence of economic liberalization which is used as an engine of growth by emerging economies, their position in global arena is changing (Hoskisson et.al, 2000). “Shifting marketing structures and diffusion of fashion, food, cultural products and technology” in emerging markets increase interest towards these economies (Venkatesh and Penaloza, 2006: 142). Thus, today, emerging economies are seen as countries which have a rapid pace of economic development, government policies favoring economic liberalization and the market economy with free market systems (Arnold and Quelch, 1998).

Under favor of their economic developments, market economies, changes in institutions like governments and their policies and new strategies regarding their foreign trades, emerging economies have “more R&D resources, more marketing resources and the ambition to go global with strong brands” (Peters, 2013: 70). With the aim of creating added value to take

share from the world market and get higher percent return on sale rather than being only exploited by developed countries, branding becomes a strategy for companies of emerging countries in order to take a place in the world economy.

However, there are not really well-known emerging economies' brands in the world yet although emerging markets account for more than 40% of the global output (Minto, 2013). For instance, in all over the world, consumers are surrounded by wide range of "Made in China" products in almost every product type, however, when someone is selected on the street randomly to ask the name of any Chinese brands, you come up empty handed. In this sense, "not just producing a physical product but also establishing relationship with the customer, which is personified either by the company's name or by the brand name on the product itself", is important to go global with brands in terms of emerging markets firms (de Chernatony et al., 2011: 43).

In addition to this, brands provide a sustainable competitive advantage for the company by differentiating and identifying the product of a company among its competitors (de Chernatony et al., 2011). Since creating successful brand with a strong brand name has been recognized by emerging markets as a sustainable competitive advantage in global rivalry, the emerging countries are in rush to understand branding and implement this strategy to their outward investments because no country has ever been developed country without having some strong global brands. What happened in Korea and Japan, and what is going to happen in China and other countries explain the relationship between having global brands and being developed country (Peters, 2013).

However, admittedly, going global is highly difficult for the brands of emerging market countries because of some common problems such as "lack of customer knowledge and brand awareness", "lack of distribution network" and "lack of experience to compete against increased competition" when they go beyond their home markets (Roll, 2006: 106). Moreover, almost all companies in emerging markets have to cope with trust deficit problem which arise from suspicion of developed countries consumers towards brands of emerging markets because of "their low brand familiarity, "their sensitiveness to state ownership or control" and "perceived poor performance against their key trust drivers" (Edelman, 2013). In addition to these, "weak national images of emerging economies, their poor marketing capabilities, their low cost as the sole competitive advantage and limited business models" make creating a global brand difficult in terms of firms in emerging economies (Kumar and Steenkamp, 2013: 13).

Besides all of these problems, because the companies operating in emerging markets are mostly in tendency to provide either natural resources or manufacturing products to the specification of branded companies in developed economies, they are mostly accepted that they operate in B2B market in which companies can generally do their business with the others without brands. For instance, "Brazil leads in coffee exports, Pakistan leads in soccer ball, and China in shoes", however, consumers can not bring any brands from those countries and in those sectors to their minds (Kumar and Steenkamp, 2013: 6).

In order to overcome these problems related to going global processes of emerging economies companies with their brands, the institutions of these countries, especially their governments, support these companies to make them promote their brands in global marketplace as well as their individual efforts. "Many of the larger Chinese firms which have been described as national champions, receive financial support and protection from the Chinese authorities" (Child and Rodrigues, 2005: 384). Besides China, government involvement is seen significantly in emerging economies like India and Indonesia (Dunning and Narula, 2006). For example, the assistance program of Indian government brought foreign designers in local

companies and tried to increase links between Indian companies and foreign customers in 1970s and 1980s with the aim of generating future's dynamic Indian firms which will have learned "how they re-organize their work and skill structures to meet demanding quality and production standards in all over the world through sales to Western customers"(Tewari, 1999: 1666).Moreover, "Indian government's export promotion program in 1991 encouraged Indian companies to expand into new markets through incentives like tax incentives and dutydrawback programs in those years" (Tewari, 1999: 1666). Thus, from the economic liberalization process to now, the efforts of emerging markets governments and their institutions such as Ministry of Economics and/or undersecretariat of Foreign Trade depict that all of these institutions take part in going global process of emerging markets.

However, today, not only going global but also going global with strong brands come into prominence for emerging markets. For that reason, governments of emerging markets somewhat change their incentives to bolster their branded products in their exports or in other types of outward investments. Within this context, Turkey has a special place among the other emerging economies in terms of classic government incentives to export because Turkey has a government incentive which is not only for exporting but also branding as well to bolster the amount of branded products in export of the Turkey. This incentive is called as TURQUALITY program through which strong Turkish companies are supported by the government strategically and operationally towards branding as well as they re supported financially as what the other emerging economies' governments and institutions do.

TURQUALITY program which bands the name of "Turk" and "Quality" together has been launched by the Turkish Government, Ministry of Economics, and Turkish Exporter's Assembly (TEA) since 2004 as the world's first and only state sponsored programs toward branding. As a national brand building program, TURQUALITY aims to facilitate and support the Turkish brands on international markets.¹ TURQUALITY supports brand-building efforts of Turkish companies by helping them to develop their essential capabilities, competences, skills and resources; creates and increases awareness on Turkish brands abroad by supporting PR activities; and helps companies' brand positioning by providing ease access to market intelligence. TURQUALITY program supports the companies which have potential to create global Turkish brands for a period of five years.²The second five years is mostly given to the firms, if they were successful within their first five years.

With the vision of "quality in brand management", the Turkish companies which have product groups that have branding potentials and Turkey has competitive advantage are supported for their all processes from production to marketing, from sales to after sales services with a highly customized strategic coaching and consulting given by international consulting firms which are especially competent at international branding and international marketing.³ Thus, with the TURQUALITY, while Turkey's reputation and "Made in Turkey" image are strengthened, brand power and corporate infrastructure of supported Turkish companies are strengthened as well and so the export of Turkey is going to be increased and brand awareness and conscious in companies in Turkey can be created.⁴

In order to be a supported company by TURQUALITY, the company has to undergo a several processes which are; application process, preliminary examination process, road map for branding development process and financial support process.

¹What is TURQUALITY?, http://www.turquality.com/about-us/what-is-turquality-2?__r=8d2bee365c8f2ee, last accessed on 15.09.2015.

²Objectives of TURQUALITY, <http://www.turquality.com/about-us/objectives-of-turquality>, last accessed on 15.09.2015.

³What is TURQUALITY?, http://www.turquality.com/about-us/what-is-turquality-2?__r=8d2bee365c8f2ee, last accessed on 15.09.2015.

⁴http://www.turquality.com/hakimizda/misyon-ve-hedeflerimiz?__r=8d2bee3edf3d2da, last accessed on 15.09.2015

In “application process”, every company applies to the program by itself by filling the automation system of the program in its website. After getting enough points from the scoring system of the automation, companies apply to TURQUALITY secretariat in Turkish Assembly Exporters with required documents. If there are not any outstanding documents, they undergo a preliminary examination process done by TURQUALITY program consultants.⁵

In “preliminary examination” process, management consulting firms of TURQUALITY program who are delegated by Ministry of Economics examine the companies on site within two days in different areas such as “strategic planning and corporate performance management”, “brand management”, “brand performance”, “supply chain management”, “marketing, customer and trade management”, “product design and R&D”, “financial performance”, “human resources management”, “corporate management” and “information systems management” in order to evaluate their branding potential and determine their branding level. After the evaluation, consultants prepare a report regarding to the company performance in these areas. If the report is positive, the company becomes a supported company by TURQUALITY.⁶

In “road map for branding development” process, the company is analyzed in detail. Every process, weakness and strength of the company is identified. “Improvement projects” are determined by comparing the company with the best companies in its own sector in global markets. Through branding development road map which is developed within a cooperation and collaboration between managers and employees of the company and professional consultants, prescriptions to each department and processes are written in order to develop branding within the company. Thus, TURQUALITY gives chance to the company to create its own strategy for its brand by working with professional experts in branding.⁷

After the detailed analysis and road maps for branding development, the company starts to benefit from the supports of TURQUALITY program financially. Since the program is related to creating a global brand, financial supports are only given to foreign branding activities of the firms. In this sense, expenditure in regard to foreign advertising, promotion and other marketing activities such as store decoration, sponsorship, distribution of samples and promotional materials, publishing and delivering a catalogue or brochure and etc.; expenditures in regard to rent of foreign branches, offices, warehouses, showrooms, shops, stores and etc.; expenditures in regard to quality certification, patent or registration activities if a firm needs, expenditures in regard to employment of designers and consultants and expenditures in regard to software purchase are all supported financially by TURQUALITY program. The program refunds fifty percent of these expenditures relating to these support items to the firms under support⁸.

In addition to these strategic supports, which start with pre-assessment of the potential companies by independent management consultants and continue with preparing strategic road map for branding development, and financial supports which are given for different marketing activities, there are TURQUALITY manager development program and TURQUALITY vision seminars through which the human resources of the supported companies are educated and trained about branding to serve for their brands better in their companies.⁹

⁵<http://www.turquality.com/basvuru/nasil-basvurulur>, last accessed on 14.09.2015

⁶<http://www.turquality.com/basvuru/firma-on-degerlendirme>, last accessed on 14.09.2015

⁷<http://www.turquality.com/destekler/markalasma-gelisim-yol-haritasi>, last accessed on 14.09.2015

⁸<http://www.turquality.com/destekler/turquality-destekleri>, last accessed on 14.09.2015

⁹<http://www.turquality.com/destekler/yonetici-gelistirme>, last accessed on 14.09.2015

All in all, TURQUALITY is not only a classical export incentive which supports domestic companies financially but also guide these companies strategically towards branding in their going global processes. In this sense, although the role and place of governments in economies are tried to be minimized within the framework of neoliberal policies, it seems that Turkish government takes a place in branding process of the companies through incentives. Thus, the study aims to understand the role of TURQUALITY program on branding processes of Turkish companies and also the role of Turkish government incentive in creating global brands within the context of neoliberal policies.

In order to examine these issues, this study focuses on jewelry industry which is one of the supported industries by TURQUALITY. The jewelry industry is selected because although there is a growth potential for the industry; Turkey has an experience coming from the past, competitive advantage, many qualified employees and designers who have enough capability to create and direct jewelry fashion and trends, and the latest technology and modern methods used in design and fabrication of the jewelleries, Turkey has not got any global jewelry brands yet. In addition to that because jewelleries are fashion and luxury consumption meta, Turkish jewelry industry provides an interesting context for inquiring brand building process within TURQUALITY program.

METHOD

In order to the understand the role of TURQUALITY on branding processes of Turkish jewelry firms and also the role of government and institutions in this process within neoliberal economies context, this study adopts qualitative research because qualitative research allows researchers “to understand particular cases in depth and detail; get at meanings in context and capture changes in dynamic environment” (Patton, 2002: 556). Moreover, qualitative research gives an insight to the researchers about “meaning for participants of the events, situations, and actions they are involved and of the accounts that they give of their lives and experiences” as well as help them to “understand the particular context within which the participants act, and the influence of this context on the actions” of them (Maxwell, 1996: 17).

This study is an exploratory research which aims to give insight about the role of TURQUALITY program on branding processes of Turkish jewelry companies. Thus, the aim of the study is to comprehend the interplay between TURQUALITY program and Turkish jewelry companies in their branding processes rather than generalize the findings of the research. Within this context, not generalizability but achieve the categories regarding in what aspects the role of TURQUALITY program can be seen in branding processes of the Turkish jewelry companies becomes more important in the study (McCracken, 1988).

Face to face semi-structured, in depth, conversational interview is employed as a data collection method to gather primary data of the study after evaluating some criteria such as the nature of the research; the relationship between the method utilized in the study and type of data required for data analysis; the nature of the research topic and time and budget constraints of researcher (Berg, 2001). Since it provides rich and detailed information about the individual’s experience and “allow the discussion to lead into the areas which may not have been considered before the interview but may be potentially relevant to the study” (Goulding, 2002: 59), in depth interviews seem to be the best data collection method for the study. In order to get more detailed and longer responses from all of the interviews, open-ended questions are asked to informants and so informants are allowed to express their own experiences and meanings in their own terms and words (McCracken, 1988).

Since the aim of the study is not extending the results to the broader population but understanding the phenomena, to create a sample for collecting data, purposive sampling is employed as a sampling method (Given, 2008). Purposive sampling is a method for selecting

“particular settings, persons, or events deliberately to provide important information” that is unlikely gotten as well from other choices (Maxwell, 1996: 70). In this regard, because the people who are “uniquely able to be informative because they are expert in an area or were privileged witnesses to an event” (Weiss, 1994: 17) are required to provide certain data, the employees and managers from supported Turkish jewelry companies who are responsible for TURQUALITY processes in their company are selected in terms of their knowledge and experience about TURQUALITY program.

Within the context of TURQUALITY, there are four supported Turkish jewelry companies. These are Altınbaş, Atasay, Gilan and Zen. The primary data was collected through in-depth interviews with managers who are both working at several managerial positions in different departments as well as working as a TURQUALITY program coordinator within these organizations. In this sense, to collect data, in-depth interviews were carried out with two managers from Altınbaş, one manager and one specialist from Gilan, one manager from Zen Diamond and one manager from Atasay. Within this scope, 6 interviews were carried out totally. In order to comprehend the beliefs, attitudes and experiences of the informants towards branding processes of these companies with TURQUALITY program, all of these personal interviews were carried out one to one and face to face basis throughout the data collection process.

The data collection process took one month time. Each interview lasted in between approximately 50 minutes to 1.5 hours. In order to decrease the duration and increase the efficiency of the interviews, a specific interview guide with open-ended questions was prepared before the interviews. The interview guide was prepared in Turkish which is the native language of the interviewees to prevent the semantic shift. All the interviewees were allowed to tell and share their own thoughts, stories and experiences in their own terms, during the interviews although there is a well-defined interview guide. Audiotape was used in all interviews to record the interviews to make data analysis later. Thus, all of the interviews were recorded and then they were transcribed. There are totally 28 pages transcribed for data analysis.

In the study, transcribed materials were analyzed with thematic analysis that is used to “unearth the themes salient in a text at different levels, and thematic networks are utilized to facilitate the structuring and depiction of these themes” (Stirling, 2001: 387). In this regard, the thematic networks which systemize the extraction of i) “basic themes” in which lowest-order premises in the text; ii) “organizing themes” in which categories of basic themes grouped together to summarize more abstract principle and lastly iii) “global themes” in which there are super-ordinate themes encapsulating the principle metaphors in the text as a whole (Stirling, 2001: 388) were constructed.

In the study, ethical principles are taken into account, as well. Throughout the study, rights of respondents are protected and their emotionally and intellectually demanding is not neglected. The name of the companies and managers and identifying characteristics of them are not used directly in the research and they are coded not to endanger the privacy of the companies. For that reason, the name of the companies are coded as A, B, C, and D randomly. Moreover, these interviews will be kept confidential.

To provide the trustworthiness, primary data were also supplemented with secondary data such as official websites of the Turkish jewelry companies under TURQUALITY support, official websites of the organizations in the industry such as Turkish Jewelry Association, Istanbul Minerals and Metals Exporters’ Associations, Turkish Exporters’ Assembly, Ministry of Economics, TURQUALITY program, as well. In addition to these, news in daily newspapers and magazines regarding the jewelry industry such as Turkish Jewelry Export

magazine of JTR, industry specific reports of Ministry of Economics, working reports of JTR, regulations of TURQUALITY program, other reports and bulletins regarding the jewelry industry, and advertisements, catalogues and brochures of the these companies were all collected and used as secondary data in this research. While these secondary data are being collected, accuracy and currency of the data are tried to be provided as much as possible. In order to increase the trustworthiness of the data collected, data are recorded, transcribed and interpreted without lies, evasions, misinformation or misrepresentations of informants (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989). In all of the interviews, audiotape is used not to forget and misunderstand anything in data analysis later. Lastly, interviews are conducted with different informants and continued up to get more or less same data from each interview.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In order to understand the role of TURQUALITY in branding processes of the jewelry companies, answering the questions that “how do Turkish jewelry companies experience TURQUALITY processes?”, and “how do Turkish jewelry companies understand TURQUALITY program?” is important.

Every TURQUALITY company has to go through same processes which are application process, preliminary examination process, road map for branding development process and financial support process. Throughout the interviews, at first, how they experience these processes was asked to each informant and then meaning of the program for them was asked. The data are transcribed and analyzed with thematic analysis through “basic themes”, “organizing themes” and “global themes”. As a result of the data analysis, all of these themes are determined in transcribed data and given in Figure 1.

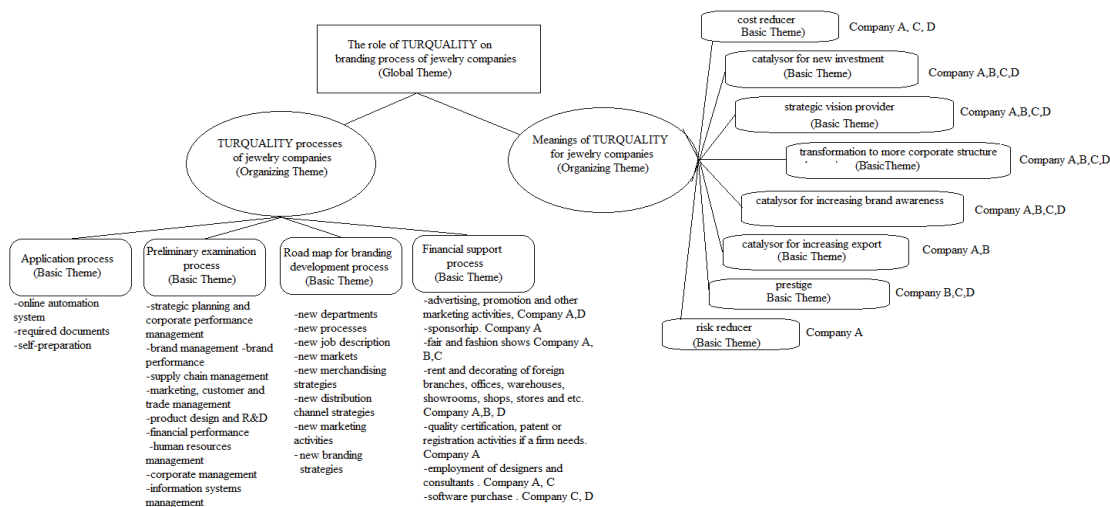


Figure 1 Data Analysis of the Study in terms of Themes

TURQUALITY Processes of Turkish Jewelry Companies

At first, how these companies experienced the TURQUALITY program processes was asked to each manager in these organizations.

The M.O., manager in company A; states their TURQUALITY processes that:

“ ...When I came to the company, an agreement have been already made with **consulting company of TURQUALITY program**. This company was only **Deloitte** at these times. There is a long process in order to be supported company by TURQUALITY program. At first, you **apply to the program online** and **receive an acceptance**. After a while, **consultants of TURQUALITY visit** your company. The consultants also visited our company for **preliminary examination** approximately one year later after we received acceptance from the program...Deloitte contributed us in understanding our deficiencies and weaknesses...the reports of Deloitte were also useful to understand what were our deficiencies. All in all, in january 2012, we were examined by

consultants of Deloitte in two days and as a result of this two days examination, we had a right to get TURQUALITY support... After getting TURQUALITY support, Ministry of Economics sent consultants of Deloitte to our company for 8 weeks **detailed study analysis**. The expenses of this study was also covered by Ministry of Economics. Within this process, both negative and positive sides of our company were identified through series of analysis and then strategic business plan was prepared in a cooperation and collaboration between the consultants and our top management. This **business plan** which includes our **target markets and strategies and actions** regarding to these markets was both shared with us and Ministry of Economics and then we started to get Deloitte consultancy to correct our deficiencies and benefit from the supports of the program to increase our **brand awareness in foreign markets...**" (M.O., manager in company A)

O.B., manager in company B states their TURQUALITY processes that:

" I started to work at this company in 2008. When I came here, our company has already been included in TURQUALITY program. Our brand is the first jewellery brand which is included in TURQUALITY program. In 2005, our company **applied to the program online** with required documents. Then we got acceptance in 2006 and started to be supported by the program. **Deloitte** visited us to examine our departments and processes. In this process, we worked with Deloitte in collaboration and cooperation in **preparation of strategic road maps for each department for branding development**. Every strategy, every action and every responsibility of these departments are identified and planned as strategies which will be followed. Then, we started to use **financial supports of the program** to carry out the strategies that we identified in our strategic business plan in the direction of the strategies identified with strategic road maps..." (Ö.B., manager in company B)

P.H., manager in company C, states their TURQUALITY processes that:

"... In 2006, we prepared a 5 years business plan after a detailed study and presented this business plan to Ministry of Economics. We prepared our business plan by ourselves. No one visited us and helped in preparing our business plan. The program was very new at these times. There was **no consultancy company**. Thus, we individually **applied to the program online** and we individually prepared our **strategic business plan** thanks to our experiences that we got before from brand support program. Then, **Deloitte** visited our company after we started to use **financial supports** of the program because the Ministry of Economics asked an independent audit report and brand awareness reports from us. Then, we also worked with Deloitte in financial audit. After **detailed study analysis**, all of the reports were prepared and all of the **road maps** for each department were defined..." (P.H., manager in company C)

Y.A., manager in company D, states their TURQUALITY processes that:

" we are in our second five years within the context of the program... We directly came under TURQUALITY program... We are the first jewellery company which came under TURQUALITY program... At first, we introduced ourselves to the authorities. Then, the **authorities and consultants** examined us and as a result of this examination we received acceptance for the program. We experienced a standardized procedure which is required to be supported by the program. **Deloitte** and the authorities from Ministry of Economics visited our company and we lived together in approximately six months in our organization for **branding development**. They seriously examined our every process. We had too many deficiencies in several areas. For that reason, especially these studies and analysis of consultants of Deloitte within organization were very beneficial for us to understand our deficiencies. In this process, we worked with consultants in a cooperation, **we re-defined our processes and re-wrote our job descriptions**. We **re-designed** our **organizational structure**, and we established **new departments**. We used an automation system like ERP which was related to jewellery before the program, however, thanks to TURQUALITY program we started to use SAP... Namely, after detailed study analysis and preparation of **strategic road map for each department for branding development**, we started to use the **financial supports** of the program" (Y.A., manager in company D)

As it is seen, all of these jewellery companies applied to the program by using online automation system. Companies B, C and D have been supported by TURQUALITY program since 2006, the company A has been supported by the program since 2012. Companies B, C, and D are in their second five year in TURQUALITY.

In preliminary examination process, Company A, B and D worked with Deloitte consultants for two days to check strategic planning and corporate performance management, brand management, brand performance, supply chain management, marketing, customer and trade management, product design and R&D, financial performance, human resources management, corporate management and information systems management within organizations. This short but effective preliminary examination process makes the companies see their real potential to branding.

After the preliminary examination process, Company A, B, C worked with Deloitte within a cooperation and collaboration for approximately six to eight weeks for preparing strategic road map for their branding process. Company A defined its target markets and strategies and actions regarding to these market. Company B identified every strategy, every action and every responsibility of its departments. Company C determined road maps for each department. Company D re-defined its processes; re-wrote its job descriptions; re-designed its organizational structure and established new departments.

Within their experiences in TURQUALITY framework, the other question asked to respondents is what kind of TURQUALITY supports that they have benefited up to now?

M.O., manager in company A, expresses that;

“ From preparation of strategic business plan to many other financial supports, the most outstanding support that we have benefited within the context of TURQUALITY program is the **consultancy support of Deloitte** through which we **change** our existing product management system with merchandising. Thanks to this support, we **increase efficiency and quality** in our product management processes and we start to give better service to our customers. In addition to this, up to now, we have used **rent support** for our offices and both central and franchise stores in foreign markets; we have used **advertising and promotion support** for our advertising campaigns, catalogues and brochures that we prepared for foreign markets. Recently, TURQUALITY program have supported us in our **sponsorship** agreement with a painter in New York. Moreover, in every year, we **attend to fairs and fashion** shows, and we also used TURQUALITY support to attend these fairs.... Besides these supports, we used TURQUALITY support in our brand registrations and redecoration of our central and franchise stores in foreign markets to update their concepts... We work with foreign designers from time to time. TURQUALITY also supports working with foreign designers. The half of the expense of working with foreign designers are supported by program financially...” (M.O., manager in company A)

Ö.B., manager in company B, explicates that:

“Within the context of TURQUALITY, we have benefited from the program when we **rent offices** in foreign markets and when we **attended fairs**. Moreover, when we opened a store in foreign markets, we used **store supports** in terms of **rent and decoration**. Besides all of these supports, we have benefited from the program when we did **regional marketing researches**... For example, we were supported by TURQUALITY program for our fashion show in New York Metropolitan Museum. Moreover, we **attended manager development programs** at Koc University which are given within the context of TURQUALITY program...” (Ö.B., manager in company B)

S.Ü., specialist in company C, states that:

“ ... Within the context of TURQUALITY program, we **attended fairs**, we did **marketing researches**, we **attended vision seminars** organized by TEA, we received **consultancy service on branding, human resources, information systems management** from accredited international consultancy companies ...we bought **ERP software** for enterprise resources planning, we bought **CRM software** for customer relationships management and we bought software related to production....” (S.Ü., specialist in company C)

Y.A., manager in company D, explains that:

“... However, we also used some support of the program. For example, we **changed our automation system from ERP to SAP** within the context of TURQUALITY program.... Moreover, there are **educations** within the context of TURQUALITY program. All of our **top managers attended a six months MBA program** given by Koc University or Sabanci University. This education is very important for us because through these educations, we have updated our knowledge and refreshed our minds. There is also financial side of the program. We **expanded into Russian market** with TURQUALITY supports. We used TURQUALITY supports financially in **opening, renting and decorating our stores** in Russia, Romania and lastly Middle East. We used TURQUALITY supports financially for our **marketing and promotion activities** in these target markets, as well.”

In financial support process, in order to carry out the strategies determined in road map, Company A, B, C and D have used financial supports for rent and decoration of their offices and stores in foreign markets; for advertising and promotion activities like advertising campaigns, catalogues and brochures that they prepared for foreign markets. Company A, B, and C attended to fairs and fashion shows to increase their brand awareness in foreign markets.

As different from the standards, through the Deloitte consultancy within the context of TURQUALITY, Company A changed its inefficient existing product management system with merchandising for more quality and effective product and brand management. Company A has used financial TURQUALITY supports for sponsorship agreement with a painter in New York to promote their brand name. In addition, with TURQUALITY, Company A gave up its points of sales and franchise stores which did not reflect its visual order and discipline in a right way in foreign markets and turned towards central stores which are directly controlled by itself. Thus, it reflected its visual discipline and brand image efficiently in all over the world.

Company B used financial support of the program for its fashion show in New York Metropolitan Museum. Company C attended vision seminars which increase their motivation to be a global brand in global markets. In addition this, Company C received consultancy service on branding, human resources, information systems management from accredited international consultancy companies, bought ERP software for effective enterprise resources planning, and bought CRM software for effective customer relationships management. Company A, B and C did international marketing researches with TURQUALITY financial supports. Company D also changed its automation system from ERP to SAP, which brings efficiency in using data and makes the company more systematic, within the context of TURQUALITY program. Moreover the managers of Company B and D attended to manager development program of TURQUALITY which provides strategic vision to branding.

Meanings of TURQUALITY Program for Supported Jewelry Companies

According to company A, C, and D, TURQUALITY program is ***“cost-reducer”***.

“...TURQUALITY program provides **cost advantage** to the companies. For example, if you want to make a commercial film and advertise it in Bulgaria, you are supported by the program financially...” (M.O., manager in company A)

“...in order to open a jewellery store and stuff it full of luxury products, you have to bear extensive cost because you sell expensive and value added products. For that reason, in order to sell our products, we mostly used points of sales and franchise stores up now... Opening a store from scratch is very costly, however, TURQUALITY supports us financially in this investment. Thus, it provides a **cost advantage** to us in opening a new store...” (F.A., manager in company A)

“...TURQUALITY program strengthens our hand in financially because we know that we will receive half of the expenses that we spend for our brand. For example, we are attending fairs more than in the past because TURQUALITY is a **cost-reducer** for us... Thanks to its financial supports, we can easily go abroad...” (P.H., manager in company C)

“...Decoration is very costly in jewellery industry, however, we **deal with these costs thanks to financial supports** of TURQUALITY program. We **spend less money** to open and decorate our stores in foreign markets...” (Y.A., manager in company D)

According to the company A, B, C, and D, TURQUALITY program is ***“strategic vision provider”***.

“... thanks to the processes that we passed throughout the TURQUALITY program and the supports that we benefited up to now, we gain a **new perspective towards branding**. With the direction of TURQUALITY program and the supports of our top management, we do our duties more consciously to serve our brand in a better way and to be a global brand... the **strategic vision seminars** given within the context of TURQUALITY program **widen our viewpoint for branding**” (M.O., manager in company A)

“... being a supported company within the context of TURQUALITY program is important in terms of acquiring **strategic vision** towards to be a **global brand**. Through our top management supports and all of the financial supports and strategic directions of the program, **we feel themselves as a strong global player**. Moreover, through **manager development programs** and **vision seminars**, TURQUALITY program **strengthens our branding vision**...” (Ö.B., manager in company B)

“TURQUALITY program **gains** us a **global vision**... However, this program provides us a **strategy** to be **global brand** and **strengthens our top managements vision** about **being a global brand**... In addition to this through

TURQUALITY program, **branding permeates** everything from employees minds and hearts to our every process in the organization...All in all, we keep walking towards being a global brand more consciously.” (S.Ü., manager in company C)

“From top management to bottom, TURQUALITY program **brings us branding vision**. The support of top management in such a program is important. In here, the consultants of the program worked with both top management and other employees within a cooperation and collaboration. Now, we are **more professional in brand management**.... Thus, TURQUALITY strengthens our branding vision.” (Y.A., manager in company D)

According to the company A, B, C and D, TURQUALITY program is **“catalysor for new investment”**.

“We give importance to open our every franchise and central store as a concept store, in which there are only our products sold, since 1990s... with the TURQUALITY support, we accelerate our efforts to open more concept stores. Namely, thanks to the **financial supports** of TURQUALITY, we either **open more concept stores** in foreing markets or update the existing stores which have older concept by redecorating them...” (M.O, manager in company A)

“...TURQUALITY program contributed us financially more in those times when we changed our distribution channels. Thus, thanks to **financial supports** of the program, we opened **more stores** in foreign markets” (Ö.B., manager in company B)

“TURQUALITY program directly influences our investments. For example, when our bosses decide on making new investments, they know they will receive the half of the costs that they have to bear, from the program. In this sense, our **investments increase** thanks to the **financial supports** of the program”(P.H., manager in company C)

“ we operate with a master franchising system in foreign markets. Namely, we bring our know-how and strategies to these markets and we control these stores in terms of every aspect. In this way, we provide standardization among all of our stores in every market. In this sense, when we want to give franchise to someone in foreign markets and when the financial supports of the program are taken into account, the potential franchisees are easily convinced. So, our **new investments increase** thanks to the **financial supports** of the program which is given for office rent, decoration and every kind of advertising and promotion activities” (Y.A., manager in company D)

According to the company A, B, C and D, TURQUALITY program is **“catalysor for increasing brand awareness”**.

“ ... We have already operations and **brand awareness** in both Turkey and foreign markets, however, we **increase our brand awareness** more in foreign markets thanks to TURQUALITY supports. For example, we have got a franchisee in Bulgaria which has 5 stores. According to the market reasearch that we did in Bulgaria, our brand is the second jewellery brand in terms of its **brand awareness**. Namely, we are on the top of many well-known jewellery brands such as Channel in Bulgaria...” (M.O, manager in company A)

“we are not only entering into the foreign markets but we are also gaining specific part of **the market share**. TURQUALITY supports **for increasing brand awareness** like advertising and promotion support and store and decoration support help us to **increase our brand awareness** in our foreign target markets” (Ö.B., manager in company B)

“...with the program, Ministry of Economics asks our **brand awareness** reports regularly. Thus, we are doing marketing researches to measure our brands awareness in foreign markets that we operate now.. According to the results of these researches, we see that we **in cease our brand awareness** in each year. Thus, we can claim that TURQUALITY supports **increase our brand awareness** in all over the world” (P.H., manager in company C)

“TURQUALITY program **increases our brand awareness** in foreign markets where we used the financial supports of the program efficiently. Through the new stores which were opened and decorated within the context of TURQUALITY program and the advertising and promotions that we did under TURQUALITY supports, we introduce ourselves more in our foreign target markets...” (Y.A., manager in company D)

According to the company A and B, TURQUALITY program is **“catalysor for increasing export”**.

“... TURQUALITY supports us to increase our brand awareness to be a global brand. It helps us to be a brand with our employees, processes, quality of our products and services and standardization in our distribution

channels. In this sense, with TURQUALITY program, we observed **an increase in sales of our products** in foreign markets” (F.A., manager in company A).

“In 2008 and 2009, which were the years that we are in TURQUALITY support, as well, we broke an **export record** in Turkey as a jewellery brand. ” (Ö.B., manager in company B)

According to the company B, C and D, TURQUALITY program is **“prestige”**.

“... the most important support of the program is **prestige**. Namely, when you attend a fairs with a state-support, it brings you a **prestige**. Turkey is perceived as a strong economy. Thanks to TURQUALITY program, many supported brands increase the “Made in Turkey” image positively and this changes the attitudes of people in foreign markets towards Turkish brands...” (Ö.B., manager in company B)

“TURQUALITY program strengthens our **country image** in foreing markets. For example, in the past, people refrained from expressing that I am Turk or this product is made in Turkey. However, this program positively influences our **country image**. Today, we are proud of being Turkish jewellery company. In this sense, being one of the supported company is **prestige** for us” (P.H., manager in company C)

“in the past, nobody knew us as a jewellery firm in international fairs. However, today, we are one of the important actors in international jewellery fairs thanks to this created positive “Made in Turkey” **image** and **prestige** by TURQUALITY program” (Y.A., manager in company D)

According to the company A, B, C, and D, TURQUALITY program is **“transformation to more corporate structure”**.

“Our company is **family-owned business**...In order to be supported by the program, you get into a line. Consultants come to your company to analyze and examine your processes...As you know that jewellery industry is far away from corporate structure. Unbranded jewellers that you can see in almost every street dominate more than 90 percent of the industry. In this industry, everything is **based on word** rather than **legal basis**. However, throughout consultants visits, preparation of strategic business plan and strategic road maps, consultants of Deloitte directed us to **prepare regulations, politics and procedure**, to identify specific processes for every operation, to set **new processes and procedures** for departments such as human resources, corporate communication and sales, to create control mechanisms , and to **define new job descriptions** according to the changes in organizational structure of the company. Thus, at the end of this process, we **re-structured** our organization and gain more corporate structure. Even only this support of the TURQUALITY is important for us because providing such a **corporate structure** to any business in jewellery industry is very significant success when the structure of the industry and firms operating in this industry are taken into account” (F.A., manager in company A)

“TURQUALITY program contributes us to develop more **corporate identity**... In the direction of the program, **new departments** are established, **new structures** are formed, **new job descriptions** are done. For example, although we give importance to customer relationship management, we had not any CRM departement until TURQUALITY program. Deloitte showed us our deficiencies and we tried to correct them all together. All in all, our **organizational structurechange** according to the strategies and directions of the program which are going to be followed throughout the program processes” (Ö.B., manager in company B)

“Due to TURQUALITY program, **new departments** such as international trade department and different units were established in our organization. Through the strategic directions and directives of the program, we start to practice **different applications and processes** within departments. So, **new processes, new job descriptions** have changed our **organizational structure** in some degree” (P.H., manager in company C).

“TURQUALITY program has an important role in our **corporate structure** of today. Actually, we were a corporate company before TURQUALITY program. However, we were aware of our deficiencies and we knew that we had to take a step in order to be corporate company in every sense... Especially, the visits and audits of consultants from Deloitte provided us a **recovery process** in order to be a **corporate company**. When consultants of Deloitte asked us about information and documents regarding to our processes and workflows, we responded them “we practice what you want us, however, these are not written in anywhere”. Namely, today I can practice these processes and workflows, however no one can continue the work if I am not here tomorrow. Therefore, thanks to TURQUALITY program, the flow of the processes within our organization became **more systematic** and **free-from the persons**” (Y.A., manager in company D)

All in all, TURQUALITY serves for increasing brand awareness of Turkish jewelry companies in foreign markets through advertising and promotion supports and enhancing their distribution networks through office, store, rent and decoration supports. As well as providing increase in brand awareness, TURQUALITY program processes provide more corporate structure to these companies by making flow of processes within their organizations more systematic and free from the persons. In addition, it brings in strategic vision towards

branding into their organizations, strengthens their organizational culture towards branding and increases their prestige in the eyes of their stakeholders. Thus, TURQUALITY program is strategically important for these companies from the perspective of Roll (2006) which explains the problems of emerging economies that they mostly confront when they go global.

CONCLUSION

The study which aims to understand the role of TURQUALITY on branding process of the Turkish jewelry companies shows that TURQUALITY has a really strategic role in gaining branding perspective to the organizations from top to down. By changing their organizational structure and providing more corporate structure, TURQUALITY programs create an effective branding environment within the organizations. Through its financial supports, it helps to increase brand awareness of the companies in all over the world and contributes to quality in brand management.

All in all, the most outstanding findings of the study shows that in an emerging economy where neoliberal economic policies are diffusing with high pace, intervention of Turkish government and its institutions in going global process of companies demonstrates how a hybrid mode of economic activity forms through marketing practices in today's world.

Limitations

There are some limitations in the study but the main limitations of the study are time and budget constraints. The other limitation is lack of statistical data about the program to support the claims of the study because the statistical data regarding the program is collected and not shared with third parties by Ministry of Economics.

One of the limitations in terms of jewelry companies is finding informants who are capable to talk about TURQUALITY program. In every organization, only one or two managers could talk about TURQUALITY because of being coordination provider of the program although everyone included in TURQUALITY process. Moreover, because TURQUALITY is also strategically important for these jewelry companies and because they abstain from their competitors, the informants give very general information about their TURQUALITY processes.

The other limitation is reasoning from being a cross-sectional study. TURQUALITY program is a process which continues for a period of ten years. Thus, conducting several observations and interviews with the same subject over a period of times is better than cross-sectional study. In addition to this, to understand the role of TURQUALITY on branding processes of Turkish jewelry companies properly, these companies can be compared with the other jewelry companies in the industry which are not under TURQUALITY program support.

Further Research

The limitations of the study open new ways to further researches. At first, because the supports of TURQUALITY are given for a period of 10 years, longitudinal study can be carried out for the future research to understand the changes in these jewelry companies throughout the TURQUALITY processes rather than a cross-sectional study. Second, in order to understand the role of TURQUALITY on branding process of jewelry companies, the scope of the study can be extended for further researches by including other Turkish jewelry companies which have not been supported by TURQUALITY before. Lastly, in order to comprehend the role and guidance of TURQUALITY program and government on branding process of the companies, next studies can be done for different industries in which there are different types of product and so comparative studies can be done.

Managerial Implications

This study gives insight to the companies which have not been supported by TURQUALITY yet but either want to be supported by the program or want to go global with their brands by their own efforts. By examining TURQUALITY processes and TURQUALITY experiences of these companies, the other companies can create their own branding strategies and determine their road maps for effective brand management, while they are operating in both domestic and international markets.

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