

INVESTIGATION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AWARENESS OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

SAĞLIK ÇALIŞANLARININ STRATEJİK PLANLAMA FARKINDALIĞININ İNCELENMESİ

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ÖZET

Stratejik planlama, hastanenin vizyon, amaç ve hedefleri ile kritik başarı göstergelerine ulaşmak için tüm çalışanların seferber edildiği bir süreçtir. Etkili bir stratejik planlama sürecinin uygulanabilmesi, hastane yönetiminin yanı sıra sağlık hizmeti sunumunda önemli rol oynayan sağlık profesyonellerinin sürece ilişkin farkındalığına bağlı olmaktadır. Bu nedenle sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalıklarının hangi değişkenlerden etkilendiğini anlamak yönetim bilimleri açısından önem arz etmektedir. Buradan hareketle araştırmanın amacı, sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalıklarını çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelemektir. Araştırma kesitsel ve tanımlayıcı türde bir çalışmadır. Veriler, İstanbul'da (Türkiye) faaliyet gösteren özel hastanelerde çalışan 450 sağlık çalışanına yüz yüze anket yöntemiyle toplanmıştır. Ölçeğin yapı geçerliliğini test etmek için Amos programı kullanılarak doğrulayıcı faktör analizi ve SPSS programı kullanılarak açıklayıcı faktör analizi uygulanmıştır. Araştırmada üst kademe yönetimin stratejik planlama farkındalığının idari görevi olmayanlara kıyasla daha yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Yanı sıra araştırmada klinik birim çalışanları ile idari birim çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalığı karşılaştırıldığında anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığı bulgusu elde edilmiştir. Stratejik planlama hastanelerin geleceğini şekillendirmede bir rehber görevi görmektedir. Sağlık profesyonelleri ise hastaneleri bu geleceğe taşımada en kritik görevi üstlenecek konumdadır. Bu nedenle sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalığının hastane yönetimi tarafından artırılması gerekmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Stratejik Planlama Farkındalığı, Sağlık Çalışanları, Hastaneler, Stratejik Planlama, Sağlık Sektörü.

ABSTRACT

Strategic planning is a process in which all employees are mobilized to achieve the hospital's vision, goals, and objectives and critical success indicators. The implementation of an effective strategic planning process depends on the awareness of the health professionals, who play an important role in the delivery of health services, as well as the hospital management. For this reason, it is essential for management sciences to understand which variables affect the strategic planning awareness of healthcare professionals. With this background, the aim of the research is to examine the strategic planning awareness of health workers in terms of various variables. The research is a cross-sectional and descriptive study. Data were collected by face-to-face survey method on 450 healthcare professionals working in private hospitals operating in Istanbul (Turkey). To test the construct validity of the scale, confirmatory factor analysis using the Amos program and explanatory factor analysis using the SPSS program were applied. It was determined that the strategic planning awareness of the senior management is higher than those who do not have administrative duties. In addition, it was found in the study that there was no significant difference in the strategic planning awareness of clinical unit employees and administrative unit employees. Strategic planning acts as a guide in shaping the future of hospitals. Health professionals, on the other hand, are in a position to undertake the most critical task in carrying hospitals to this future. For this reason, it is necessary to increase the strategic planning awareness of healthcare professionals by the hospital management.

Keywords: Strategic Planning Awareness, Healthcare Professionals, Hospitals, Strategic Planning, Health Sector.



1. Introduction

Hospitals are organizations that must provide quality services while also determining strategies to work efficiently and effectively within their available resources. To accomplish these objectives, hospital managers frequently utilize the strategic planning tool. Strategic planning serves as a transparent method to assess the current situation, establish goals and objectives, develop effective strategies to achieve them, and monitor and evaluate performance indicators (Aribas, 2015). It enables hospitals to concentrate on various areas, such as service distribution, patient interactions, administrative processes, organizational structure, and project management, from a strategic perspective. Furthermore, it allows them to enhance their processes using data obtained from the internal and external environment.

Strategic planning is a process in which all employees are mobilized to achieve the hospital's vision, goals, objectives, and critical success indicators (Kucuksuleymanoglu, 2008). The effective implementation of strategic planning relies on the perspective and attitude of health professionals, who play a crucial role in delivering health services, as well as hospital managers. The success of strategic planning in hospitals is closely linked to employee relations management and employee loyalty. The perception, level of knowledge, and awareness of healthcare professionals at all levels regarding strategic planning contribute to the adoption of both the plan and the planning process, enabling the organization to attain its goals (Yakut & Korkmazyurek, 2012; Aribas, 2015).

Hospitals determine their scope of influence based on their mission, vision, and strategies. They engage with various stakeholders to fulfill their commitments in this realm. Among these stakeholders, healthcare workers hold significant importance. Fostering the awareness of healthcare professionals regarding strategic planning activities plays a crucial role in achieving the desired scope of influence (Tuna & Kilic, 2020). Therefore, the strategic planning awareness of healthcare professionals is vital for attaining the targeted level of success in hospitals where zero errors are prioritized. With this context in mind, the research aims to investigate the strategic planning awareness among health workers in relation to various variables.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Definition and Content of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a systematic approach in which organizations determine strategic goals and objectives and define necessary processes to achieve their vision. This process takes into account the current situation of the organization, its mission, stakeholder expectations, and environmental factors (Karagoz & Bay, 2018).

Strategic planning involves a process in which organizations analyze gathered information, develop an action plan, and document the plan. Within market conditions, businesses face numerous strategic choices and must bear the consequences of their decisions. Consequently, strategic planning is regarded as the process of determining the most suitable course of action among various alternatives that have the potential to lead the business towards its desired future (Akbolat, 2009).

During the preparation process of strategic plans, businesses are approached holistically, and the path from the current position to the desired destination is outlined. Strategic plans are developed while considering external environmental factors that are beyond the control



of organizations and are relevant to issues impacting their growth (Tengilimoglu et al., 2018; Steiner, 2010:12).

Strategic planning fosters a systematic and planned approach within organizations. By engaging in strategic planning, organizations can better navigate potential positive or negative situations, being prepared and equipped to minimize damage or remain unaffected compared to those without this process (Aktan, 2014).

2.2. The Importance of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning provides benefits for businesses in identifying opportunities in the market in which they operate, taking necessary actions to take advantage of these opportunities, and mobilizing employees (Glaister & Falshaw, 1999). Strategic planning allows organizations to act in a future-oriented manner and ensures that organizational resources are used effectively for common purposes. In this way, strategic planning activities help businesses to increase their performance (Gurer, 2006).

Strategic planning allows businesses to focus on issues such as product and service distribution, administrative processes, organizational structure, and project management from a strategic point of view. Strategic plans are employed by businesses to transparently assess their current situation and define specific goals and objectives. These plans help in crafting effective strategies for achieving these established goals and objectives. Additionally, they are instrumental in monitoring and evaluating performance indicators and accomplishments (Aribas, 2015).

During the preparation of strategic plans, possible changes in environmental conditions are taken into consideration in advance. In this way, it is possible to take precautions and act against the relevant changes. With this feature, the process of preparing strategic plans has a proactive feature (Karagoz & Bay, 2018; Tengilimoglu et al., 2018)

The general goals and objectives of the businesses are determined through strategic plans. For this reason, strategic plans also serve as a reference source for the plans made by the units that make up the businesses. In organizations that act with a holistic approach, other plans are prepared in accordance with the strategic plan to realize the details of the strategic plans. In this respect, strategic plans are likened to the constitution of businesses, and other plans to laws prepared in parallel with this constitution (Karagoz & Bay, 2018; Tengilimoglu et al., 2018).

Competitiveness is considered as one of the most important issues for businesses that have to differentiate their products and services according to changing expectations and consumer needs. This issue makes strategic planning an indispensable managerial tool for businesses (Aktan, 2014). Through strategic planning, businesses take managerial decisions and implement their activities by integrating their existing information with possible future scenarios. The fact that the results of the actions comply with the expectations makes it possible for organizations to be more prepared and equipped compared to their competitors, despite the uncertainty of the future (Altuntug, 2007).

2.3. Strategic Planning for Hospitals

The factors that make strategic planning necessary for hospitals and the benefits it will provide are listed as follows (Gurer, 2006; Akbolat, 2009; Bilgin Demir, 2015):



- Strategic planning offers hospitals the opportunity to concentrate on the areas they have determined priority.
- Strategic planning allows the determination of what should and should not be done today in order to build the future of hospitals.
- Strategic planning helps hospitals operating in a rapidly changing and complex environment to adapt to environmental conditions.
- The survival of hospitals in competition depends on their ability to provide health services with the desired quality. For this, in addition to the effective and efficient use of resources, it is important to analyze consumer needs and expectations correctly. Through strategic planning, hospitals can reach a level that can compete with their competitors in these requirements.
- Strategic planning offers the opportunity to respond to stakeholder expectations for hospitals that have to maintain their activities in intense relationship with their environment.
- Strategic planning allows hospitals to legitimize their decision-making processes and create a consistent infrastructure.
- Strategic planning strengthens teamwork by encouraging the exchange of information and ideas among healthcare professionals.

2.4. The Importance of Strategic Planning Awareness of Healthcare Professionals

Today, when it is accepted that every employee working in the organization is responsible for quality, the importance of this situation increases even more when it comes to health workers who are in the position of knowledge workers. A knowledge worker is in a position to know his job better than anyone else. Their means of production are their knowledge. According to Drucker (2014), wage satisfaction is only a hygiene factor for knowledge workers. Therefore, the factors affecting the motivation of knowledge workers are diverse. In addition to continuous training and development, they need to see the results of their activities. For this, they need to have information about the mission, vision, and goals of the organization.

Knowledge workers should be considered as the most valuable asset that uses resources, not as a source of cost in businesses. In order for businesses to reach their strategic goals, it is necessary to make maximum use of the unique knowledge and power of each employee. For this reason, health workers who are knowledge workers should be managed as volunteers or partners. Partnership means that all partners are equal, the relationship between partners is based on persuasion, not command. In this way, awareness and participation of healthcare professionals in the strategic planning process can be achieved (Drucker, 2014).

In order for hospitals to be successful in a competitive environment, they need to understand the nature and potential effects of changes in the external environment. This requirement makes employee participation in strategic planning processes essential as well as strategic thinking and planning. The level of awareness of healthcare professionals on strategic planning is indispensable for hospitals operating in dynamic environments to respond to changing patient expectations (Swayne et al., 2006).

Awareness of strategic planning offers organizations the opportunity to question the assumptions underlying the decisions to be made and to reflect on goals and objectives.



Thus, strategic planning becomes a two-way process in which the knowledge and experience of the members of the organization is applied and contributes to their knowledge. In a hospital where there are employees with high awareness of strategic planning, it is possible to increase coordination between units and encourage teamwork by facilitating information sharing within the organization (Gurer, 2006).

Hospitals have to understand the events and problems occurring in the external environment correctly, use the information they obtain to reveal creative ideas within the organization and obtain solution alternatives. By making use of these alternatives, it can develop strategies that will provide superiority to its competitors (Akbolat, 2009). The ability of healthcare professionals to develop creative ideas is shaped by their level of awareness about strategic planning. Effective implementation of strategic planning depends on its correct understanding by employees. They are in a position to both influence and be affected by the strategic process. In particular, the perceptions and awareness of healthcare professionals, who are internal stakeholders, are the basis for attitudes and behaviors related to the strategic planning process, and for this reason, they are important in terms of management sciences (Yakut & Korkmazyurek, 2012; Aribas, 2015).

3. Method

In this section, by defining the research type, population and sample; data collection tool, data analysis method and statistical methods used are emphasized.

3.1. Type of Research

The research is a cross-sectional and descriptive study.

3.2. Data Collection Tool

The data were collected using the survey method. The questionnaire consists of the strategic planning awareness scale as well as demographic and professional information. The data were collected face-to-face after the purpose of the study was explained to the employees who agreed to participate in the study at the hospitals included in the study.

3.2.1. Strategic Planning Awareness Scale

The research utilized the strategic planning awareness scale originally developed by Yakut & Korkmazyurek (2012) and modified by the researchers to make it suitable for use in hospitals. The scale comprises three factors: Knowledge, Perception, and Process. Participants responded to the items using a five-point Likert scale, where “1= strongly disagree” and “5= strongly agree”.

3.3. Population and Sample

The population of the research consists of health workers working in private hospitals operating in Istanbul. The stratified sampling method was used in the research, assuming that hospitals are not homogeneous in terms of various factors such as technology, human resources, infrastructure, patient bed capacity and financial situation. The hospitals were classified into three groups (A, B, and C) to form the strata, ensuring homogeneity within each group and significant differences between the groups. The list of active private hospitals on the official website of the General Directorate of Health Services, Department of Private Hospitals affiliated with the Ministry of Health was utilized to determine the stratified



sample (<https://shgmozehasdb.saglik.gov.tr/TR-53567/ozel-hastane-listesi-faal.html#>). A total of 167 private hospitals listed were divided into strata, and hospitals were randomly selected from each stratum to be included in the study. The characteristics of each stratum are described as follows:

- Group A: These hospitals have more than 100 beds and are equipped with advanced technological equipment. They provide luxury hospitality services and advanced medical care.
- Group B: These hospitals have 50-100 beds. They have less advanced technological equipment compared to Group A hospitals but offer a wide range of medical services, excluding those requiring advanced medical care.
- Group C: These hospitals have 25-50 beds. They have limitations in terms of personnel and technological capabilities. They primarily provide basic medical care.

3.4. Sample Size

The sample size calculation was carried out by using the sample size formula, which is valid for situations where the population is not known, in order to avoid any error in the sample size. The formula applied is as follows:

$$\text{Sample Size} = (Z \text{ value})^2 \times p \times (1-p) / (\text{error})^2$$

$$Z \text{ value} = 1.96$$

$$p = 0.50$$

$$\text{Error} = 5\%$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample Size} &= (1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5) / (0.05)^2 \\ &= 3.8416 \times 0.25 / 0.0025 \\ &= 384.16 \end{aligned}$$

It is important to note that this number represents the minimum sample size required for the research. The study involved 475 participants. Nevertheless, 25 questionnaires were excluded from the analysis due to incompleteness or incorrect completion.

3.5. Generalizability of The Research

The study being conducted only in private hospitals in the province of Istanbul limits the generalizability of the research results. It implies that the findings and conclusions of the study can be applied specifically to private hospitals operating in the province of Istanbul, rather than being generalized to the entire country of Turkey. It is important to acknowledge the specific context and characteristics of the sample when interpreting and applying the research findings.

3.6. Analysis of Data

The data analysis process involved the use of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 25.0 and AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) 23.0 programs. To assess the reliability of the strategic planning awareness scale, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. The construct validity of the scale was tested through confirmatory factor analysis using the AMOS program, as well as exploratory factor analysis conducted with the SPSS program. Before conducting the analyses, the normal distribution



assumption was examined by inspecting the histogram, conducting the One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($p>0.05$), and considering the skewness and kurtosis values. Since the data were found to be normally distributed, parametric tests such as independent samples t-test and ANOVA were employed.

3.7. Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the research are given below:

H1: The administrative duty status of health workers has an impact on their strategic planning awareness.

H2: The work unit of healthcare workers influences their strategic planning awareness.

H3: The hospital group affects the strategic planning awareness of healthcare professionals.

These hypotheses aim to investigate the relationships between different variables and the strategic planning awareness of healthcare professionals.

4. Results

The data on the sociodemographic characteristics and professional knowledge of the participants are presented in Table 1. It is observed that 75.1% of the research group is female. It is seen that 40.9% of the participants are administrative staff and 59.1% are clinical staff. While 81.1% of the participants were found to have no administrative duties, 9.8% of them were lower-level managers (Responsible Nurse, Deputy Head of Unit, Team Leader). While 6.4% of them work as middle level managers (Deputy Chief Nurse, Unit Manager); 2.7% are senior managers (Chief Physician, Deputy Chief Physician, Chief Nurse, General Manager).

Table 1

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of The Participants

Variables	Frequency	%
Sex		
Female	338	75.1
Male	112	24.9
Age ranges		
18-24	140	31.1
25-31	164	36.4
32-38	57	12.7
39-45	41	9.1
46 and above	48	10.7
Work Unit		
Clinical Unit	266	59.1
Administrative Unit	184	40.9
Administrative Duty		
None	365	81.1
Lower Level Manager	44	9.8
Middle Manager	29	6.4
Senior Manager	12	2.7
Hospital Group		
Group A	150	33.3
Group B	150	33.3
Group C	150	33.3
Total	450	100.0



The explanatory factor analysis results of the strategic planning scale are presented in Table 2. The analysis yielded a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.962. Based on this result, it was concluded that the sample adequacy was sufficient for factor analysis. KMO values between 0.5 and 1.0 are considered acceptable, indicating that factor analysis is appropriate for the data set (Altunisik et al., 2010:266). Furthermore, when examining the results of the Bartlett's Sphericity test, it can be observed that the obtained chi-square value is significant ($\chi^2(300)=12241.748$, $p<0.05$). This suggests that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, indicating the presence of relationships among the variables, which supports the suitability of factor analysis.

In order to determine the factor pattern of the scale, principal component analysis was employed as the factorization method, and varimax rotation was used. During the explanatory factor analysis, four items (SPA 11, SPA 12, SPA 23, SPA 29) were removed from the scale due to their low factor loadings. The remaining 25 items were grouped into three factors. These factors account for 74% of the total variance, as indicated in Table 2. It is generally accepted in multifactorial designs that an explained variance of over 50% is satisfactory (Buyukozturk, 2007). In this study, the three factors extracted from the analysis explain a substantial portion of the total variance. The reliability of the scale was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which was found to be 0.972. This high value indicates that the scale exhibits a good degree of internal consistency and reliability (Table 2).

Table 2

Explanatory Factor Analysis Results of The Strategic Planning Awareness Scale

Items	Factors			Total Item Correlation
	F1: Knowledge	F2: Perception	F3: Process	
SPA 1	.637			.620
SPA 2	.725			.676
SPA 3	.809			.838
SPA 4	.767			.836
SPA 5	.727			.807
SPA 6	.613			.724
SPA 7	.664			.790
SPA 8	.677			.829
SPA 9	.635			.767
SPA 10	.645			.809
SPA 13		.687		.811
SPA 14		.744		.879
SPA 15		.767		.880
SPA 16		.807		.910
SPA 17		.818		.895
SPA 18		.790		.868
SPA 19		.706		.788
SPA 20		.705		.803
SPA 21		.685		.817
SPA 22			.583	.672
SPA 24			.665	.795
SPA 25			.778	.834
SPA 26			.769	.817
SPA 27			.751	.729
SPA 28			.735	.773
Reliability (α)	.944	.964	.918	.972
Explained Variance (%)	25.592	26.449	21.684	73.726

KMO =0.962; $\chi^2(300) =12241.748$; Bartlett Test of Sphericity (p) = 0.000



Not. α : Cronbach's alpha; KMO: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin.

The confirmatory factor analysis results of the strategic planning scale are presented in Table 3. It is seen that the factor loads of the items are above 0.40 and all correlation relations are significant.

Table 3

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of The Strategic Planning Awareness Scale

Factors	Items	Factor Loading	Std Error	t-value	Sig
Knowledge $\alpha=0.944$	SPA 1	.584	-	-	-
	SPA 2	.636	.061	17.898	*
	SPA 3	.804	.108	13.103	*
	SPA 4	.826	.113	13.320	*
	SPA 5	.831	.121	13.374	*
	SPA 6	.776	.133	12.815	*
	SPA 7	.824	.109	13.306	*
	SPA 8	.878	.121	13.810	*
	SPA 9	.819	.121	13.249	*
	SPA 10	.863	.120	13.671	*
Perception $\alpha=0.964$	SPA 13	.859	-	-	-
	SPA 14	.924	.036	28.689	*
	SPA 15	.934	.036	29.399	*
	SPA 16	.940	.036	29.823	*
	SPA 17	.922	.035	28.559	*
	SPA 18	.885	.037	26.186	*
	SPA 19	.720	.045	18.403	*
	SPA 20	.730	.044	18.787	*
	SPA 21	.722	-	-	-
	Process $\alpha=0.918$	SPA 22	.854	.066	17.920
SPA 24		.880	.069	18.467	*
SPA 25		.857	.073	17.973	*
SPA 26		.755	.079	15.777	*
SPA 27		.793	.073	16.592	*
SPA 28		.758	.043	19.915	*
Total Reliability ($\alpha=0.972$)					

Not. α : Cronbach's alpha; Sig: Significance; Std error: Standard error.

* $p < .05$.

The model fit indices for the strategic planning awareness scale are reported in Table 4, and the obtained values are deemed acceptable. Model fit indices assess how well the observed data align with the proposed theoretical model. The reported fit indices in Table 4 indicate that the proposed model fits the data well. These values suggest a good fit between the observed data and the theoretical model of strategic planning awareness. It implies that the factors and items in the scale adequately capture the underlying construct of strategic planning awareness and demonstrate a reasonable fit to the collected data.



Table 4*Model fit indices of the strategic planning awareness scale*

Model Fit Indices	Observed Values	Acceptable Values and References
CMIN/DF	3.993	≤ 5 (Buyukozturk, 2007; Capik, 2014)
RMSEA	0.082	≤ 0.10 (Kazak, 2010; Shadfar and Malekmohammadi, 2015)
CFI	0.935	≥ 0.80 (Buyukozturk, 2007; Nayir, 2013)
TLI	0.926	≥ 0.80 (Akkus, 2019; Shadfar and Malekmohammadi, 2015)
IFI	0.935	≥ 0.80 (Akkus, 2019)
RFI	0.904	≥ 0.80 (Widodo et al., 2020)
NFI	0.915	≥ 0.80 (Duyguner and Golge, 2019; Wu and Wang, 2006)
SRMR	0.057	≤ 0.10 (Akkus, 2019; Hu and Bentler, 1999)

The results of the normality analysis for the scale and its factors are provided in Table 5. Based on the skewness and kurtosis values, which fall within the range of ± 3 , it can be concluded that the distribution of the data is approximately normal (Shao, 2002). Additionally, the normal distribution assumption is further supported by the One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test result, where a p-value greater than 0.05 indicates that the data follows a normal distribution.

Table 5*Normality Test Results of The Strategic Planning Awareness Scale*

Scale and Factors	Skewness	Kurtosis	Results
Knowledge	-0.765	1.223	Normal
Perception	-1.110	2.538	Normal
Process	-0.744	1.302	Normal
Strategic Planning Awareness Scale	-0.926	2.121	Normal

It was determined that the mean score of the participants from the strategic planning awareness scale was 3.75 ± 0.71 . It was observed that the process factor had the lowest mean score (3.57 ± 0.80) (Table 6).

Table 6*Mean and Standard Deviation*

Scale and Factors	Mean \pm Standard Deviation
Knowledge	3.81 ± 0.77
Perception	3.81 ± 0.78
Process	3.57 ± 0.80
Strategic Planning Awareness Scale	3.75 ± 0.71

The Independent Samples T-Test was applied to test whether the study unit of the participants made a difference to their strategic planning awareness. As a result, it was found that the unit they work in did not make a significant difference on strategic planning awareness ($p > 0.05$) (Table 7).



Table 7*Comparison of The Strategic Planning Awareness According to Work Unit*

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Process					
Clinical Unit	266	3.80	0.80	-0.335	0.73
Administrative Unit	184	3.82	0.73		
Knowledge					
Clinical Unit	266	3.80	0.85	-0.211	0.83
Administrative Unit	184	3.81	0.68		
Perception					
Clinical Unit	266	3.52	0.85	-1.632	0.10
Administrative Unit	184	3.65	0.72		
Strategic Planning Awareness					
Clinical Unit	266	3.73	0.75	-0.667	0.50
Administrative Unit	184	3.78	0.65		

Not. SD: Standard Deviation.

According to the results of the ANOVA test, which was conducted to reveal the effect of the participants' administrative duty on their strategic planning awareness, it was found that this variable created a statistically significant difference in strategic planning awareness. Post-Hoc analysis was applied to determine the source of the difference. Tukey test was used in post-hoc analysis. Accordingly, it was determined that the mean score of the strategic planning awareness scale and the knowledge factor of the senior managers were significantly higher than the employees without administrative duties (Table 8).

Table 8*Comparison of The Strategic Planning Awareness According to Administrative Duty*

The Dependent Variable	Groups with Significant Differences Between	Mean Difference	Standard Error	F	p
Strategic Planning Awareness	Senior Manager	(4.27±0.48)	0.55	2.613	0.04
	No administrative duties	(3.72±0.72)			
Knowledge	Senior Manager	(4.36±0.51)	0.60	3.464	0.04
	No administrative duties	(3.76±0.78)			

According to the results of the ANOVA test, which was conducted to reveal the effect of the hospital group on strategic planning awareness, it was found that this variable created a statistically significant difference on strategic planning awareness. Post-hoc analysis was applied to determine the source of the difference. Tukey test was used in post-hoc analysis. Accordingly, it was determined that the mean score of the knowledge factor of the strategic planning awareness scale of employees in group A hospitals was significantly higher than those working in group B hospitals (Table 9).

Table 9*Comparison of The Strategic Planning Awareness According to Hospital Group*

The Dependent Variable	Groups with Significant Differences Between	Mean Difference	Standard Error	F	p
Knowledge	Group A	(3.94±0.78)	0.23	3.547	0.02
	Group B	(3.70±0.78)			

Table 10 summarizes the results of testing the research hypotheses. Accordingly, although it is confirmed that the administrative duty status and the hospital group have an



effect on strategic planning awareness, it is falsified that the work unit has an effect on strategic planning awareness.

Table 10

Hypothesis Result

Research Hypotheses	Result
H1: The administrative duty status of health workers has an impact on their strategic planning awareness.	H ₁ : accepted
H2: The work unit of healthcare workers influences their strategic planning awareness.	H ₂ : rejected
H3: The hospital group affects the strategic planning awareness of healthcare professionals.	H ₃ : accepted

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The findings from the current study regarding the higher strategic planning awareness of senior managers compared to non-administrative employees are supported by previous research. Orhan & Er (2018) found that managers had higher strategic planning knowledge adequacy scores compared to other employees. Esfahani et al., (2018) highlighted the challenges faced by hospital managers during the implementation of strategic plans. They also reported that employees and managers had varying degrees of participation in the creation of strategic plans, with physicians showing limited involvement. Kilci (2013) found that participants perceived a higher level of personal responsibility of senior management in strategic planning. Soylu & İleri (2010) conducted a study with healthcare professionals and found that a significant portion of employees had limited awareness of the mission, vision, and policy of their institution, which are fundamental elements of strategic planning. This lack of understanding among employees can hinder the organization's ability to achieve its goals. Saleh et al., (2013) reported that while approximately 90% of hospitals had strategic plans, the responsibility for the plan mostly rested with senior managers. The participation of physicians was found to be relatively lower, suggesting a need for increased involvement from all levels of the organization. They emphasized that strategic decisions should not be limited to administrative activities, but should involve all members of the organization to ensure the adoption of common values and principles (Saleh et al., 2013). Overall, the literature supports the idea that successful strategic planning requires the active participation and engagement of employees at all levels. Including a diverse range of perspectives and ideas in the strategy development process can enhance its effectiveness and increase the organization's ability to achieve its goals.

The finding that the strategic planning awareness of employees in Group A hospitals is higher than those working in Group B hospitals aligns with the existing literature on strategic planning in different types of businesses. Kup (2011), in a study examining small-scale businesses, found that many of these businesses lacked sufficient knowledge about strategic planning. They often relied on temporary methods to solve problems instead of implementing comprehensive strategic plans. Similarly, Kilci (2013) reported that 51% of small and medium-sized businesses did not have strategic plans, and only 16% of those with plans had fully implemented them. These findings indicate that strategic planning is not commonly practiced among small businesses. While strategic planning is frequently associated with larger businesses (Aldehayyat & Anchor, 2008), it is important to recognize that strategic planning holds value for organizations of all sizes. Strategic planning helps



minimize uncertainties about the future and enables organizations to attain sustainable competitive advantages. Small businesses can also benefit from strategic planning by setting clear goals, identifying growth opportunities, and effectively allocating resources. Therefore, the current study's finding that employees in Group A hospitals, which typically have larger scales and more resources, exhibit higher strategic planning awareness is consistent with the broader understanding that strategic planning is more prevalent in larger organizations. However, it is crucial to emphasize that strategic planning remains relevant and beneficial for organizations of all sizes, including small businesses.

In the current study, it was found that there was no significant difference in strategic planning awareness between administrative and clinical unit employees. This suggests that the specific work unit or department of the participants did not have a significant impact on their level of strategic planning awareness. In other words, regardless of their unit, participants exhibited similar levels of awareness regarding strategic planning. It is worth noting that this finding differs from the results of a study conducted by Soysal & Kiran (2017), where the strategic planning awareness of administrative and clinical unit managers in a hospital was examined. In their study, they found that administrative unit managers had a significantly higher mean score in the perception dimension of the strategic planning awareness scale compared to clinical unit managers. These contrasting findings may be attributed to the specific context or characteristics of the organizations or participants involved in each study. In the study conducted by Kilci (2013), it was found that 39% of employees agreed with the statement “Employees negate their contributions and remain indifferent to the possibility of incompetence in implementing strategic planning.” This highlights the importance of fostering a common understanding and perception towards strategic planning activities among both administrative and clinical staff. Cooperation and collaboration between these two groups can contribute to the adoption of shared values and principles, ultimately enhancing strategic planning practices in hospitals (Kilci, 2013). Overall, while the current study did not find a significant difference in strategic planning awareness between administrative and clinical unit employees, previous research suggests that differences may exist in specific contexts or roles within organizations. Promoting cooperation and shared understanding among different units and roles can facilitate the effective implementation of strategic planning initiatives.

Indeed, the strategic planning awareness and analysis skills of healthcare professionals play a crucial role in enabling hospitals to effectively respond to patient expectations. When employees at all levels of the organization have a clear understanding of the hospital's mission and vision, they can align their actions and decisions with the strategic goals of the institution. Strategic planning serves as a roadmap for hospitals, guiding them in shaping their future and achieving their objectives. Healthcare professionals, being integral members of the healthcare team, play a vital role in driving the hospital towards that future. Their involvement and active participation in strategic planning processes are essential for the successful implementation of strategic initiatives. Hospital management has an important responsibility in promoting and increasing the strategic planning awareness of healthcare professionals. By providing training, workshops, and educational resources, hospital management can enhance the knowledge and skills of healthcare professionals in strategic planning. This can enable them to contribute actively to the development, implementation, and evaluation of strategic plans. By fostering a culture of strategic thinking and awareness



among healthcare professionals, hospitals can harness the collective expertise and commitment of their workforce to navigate the ever-evolving healthcare landscape. This, in turn, can lead to improved patient outcomes, enhanced organizational performance, and the ability to effectively address the evolving needs and expectations of patients and stakeholders.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Amaç

Hastaneler, mevcut kaynakları dâhilinde verimli ve etkin çalışmak için stratejiler belirleyen ve aynı zamanda kaliteli hizmet sunmak zorunda olan kuruluşlardır. Bu hedeflere ulaşmak için hastane yöneticileri sıklıkla stratejik planlama aracını kullanmaktadır. Stratejik planlama, hastanenin vizyon, amaç ve hedefleri ile kritik başarı göstergelerine ulaşmak için tüm çalışanların seferber edildiği bir süreçtir. Stratejik planlama, hastanelerin hizmet dağılımı, idari süreçler, organizasyon yapısı ve proje yönetimi gibi konulara stratejik bir bakış açısıyla odaklanmasını sağlamaktadır. Stratejik planlar, hastaneler tarafından mevcut durumu şeffaf bir şekilde değerlendirmek, amaç ve hedefleri belirlemek, bu amaç ve hedeflere ulaşmak için etkin stratejiler oluşturmak, performans göstergelerini ve başarıları izlemek için bir araç olarak kullanılmaktadır. Etkili bir stratejik planlama sürecinin uygulanabilmesi, hastane yönetiminin yanı sıra sağlık hizmeti sunumunda önemli rol oynayan sağlık profesyonellerinin stratejik planlama sürecine ilişkin farkındalığına bağlı olmaktadır. Hastanelerin rekabet ortamında başarılı olabilmeleri için dış çevredeki değişikliklerin doğasını ve olası etkilerini anlamaları gerekmektedir. Bu gereklilik, çalışanların stratejik düşünme ve planlama kadar stratejik planlama süreçlerine katılımını da önemli kılmaktadır. Dinamik ortamlarda faaliyet gösteren hastanelerin değişen hasta beklentilerine cevap verebilmesi için sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama konusundaki farkındalık düzeyi önemlidir. Stratejik planlama farkındalığı hastanelere alınacak kararların altında yatan varsayımları sorgulamanın yanı sıra amaç ve hedefler üzerinde düşünme fırsatı sunmaktadır. Bu nedenle sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalıklarının hangi değişkenlerden etkilendiğini anlamak yönetim bilimleri açısından önem arz etmektedir. Buradan hareketle araştırmanın amacı, sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalıklarını çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelemektir.

Yöntem

Araştırma kesitsel ve tanımlayıcı türde bir çalışmadır. Araştırmada tabakalı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Tabakalar A grubu hastaneler, B grubu hastaneler ve C grubu hastaneler olarak belirlenmiştir. Veriler, İstanbul'da faaliyet gösteren özel hastanelerde çalışan 450 sağlık çalışanı ile yüz yüze gerçekleştirilen anket yöntemi aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Anket, stratejik planlama farkındalık ölçeği ile demografik ve mesleki bilgileri içeren sorulardan meydana gelmektedir. Stratejik planlama farkındalığı ölçeği 5'li Likert tipinde derecelendirilmektedir (1=Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum, 5=Kesinlikle Katılıyorum). Stratejik planlama farkındalığı ölçeğinin güvenilirliği Cronbach's alfa katsayısı ile test edilmiştir. Ölçeğin yapı geçerliliğini test etmek için Amos programı kullanılarak doğrulayıcı faktör analizi ve SPSS programı kullanılarak açıklayıcı faktör analizi uygulanmıştır. Hipotez testleri yapılmadan önce histogram incelenerek, One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov testi ($p>0.05$) yapılarak, çarpıklık ve basıklık değerleri dikkate alınarak normal dağılım incelenmiştir. Verilerin normal dağıldığı tespit edildiğinden hipotezlerin testi için parametrik testler kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular ve Tartışma

Stratejik planlama ölçeğinin açıklayıcı faktör analizi sonuçlarına göre Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) değeri 0.962 olarak elde edilmiştir. Bu sonuca göre örneklemin faktör analizi



için yeterli olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Ölçeğin doğrulayıcı faktör analizi sonuçlarına göre elde edilen uyum iyiliği değerlerinin kabul edilebilir sınırlar içerisinde olduğu saptanmıştır (CMIN/DF=3.993, RMSEA=0.082, CFI=0.935). Ölçeğin genel güvenilirliği için hesaplanan Cronbach's alpha katsayısı 0.972 olarak elde edilirken; bilgi boyutu için bu katsayı 0.944, algı boyutu için 0.964 ve süreç boyutu için 0.918 olarak elde edilmiştir. Katılımcıların %40.9'u idari personel, %59.1'i klinik personeldir. Katılımcıların %81.1'inin idari görevi bulunmamakla birlikte, %9.8'i alt düzey yönetici, %6.4'ü orta düzey yönetici ve %2.7'si üst düzey yöneticidir. Katılımcıların stratejik planlama farkındalık ölçeğinden aldıkları puan ortalamasının 3.75 ± 0.71 olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Araştırmada üst kademe yönetimin stratejik planlama farkındalığının idari görevi olmayanlara kıyasla daha yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Literatüre bakıldığında konuya ilişkin yapılan çalışmalarda benzer bulgular elde edildiği görülmektedir. Yapılan farklı çalışmalar üst kademe yöneticilerin stratejik planlama süreçlerine ilişkin bilgilerinin daha yüksek olduğunu, diğer çalışanların katılımlarının daha az olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca idari görevi olmayan çalışanlar üst yönetimin bu konudaki sorumluluğunun daha fazla olduğunu düşünmektedirler. Sağlık profesyonelleri ile yapılan çalışmalarda çalışanların önemli bir bölümünün stratejik planlamanın temel unsurları olan kurumlarının misyon, vizyon ve politikaları hakkında sınırlı farkındalığa sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Çalışanlar arasındaki bu anlayış eksikliği, kuruluşun hedeflerine ulaşma yeteneğini engelleme riski taşımaktadır.

Örgütte ortak değer ve ilkelerin benimsenmesini sağlamak için stratejik kararların sadece idari çalışanlarca yürütülmesi gereken faaliyetler olarak görülmemesi, örgütün tüm üyelerini katılımının sağlanması gerekmektedir. Başarılı stratejik planlamaların hayata geçmesi için her seviyedeki çalışanın aktif katılımı önem arz etmektedir. Strateji geliştirme sürecine çok çeşitli bakış açıları ve fikirler dâhil etmek, stratejinin etkinliğini ve örgütün hedeflerine ulaşma yeteneğini artırabilmektedir. Hastanelerin rekabette ayakta kalabilmeleri, sağlık hizmetlerini istenilen kalite ve kalitede sunabilmelerine bağlıdır. Bunun için kaynakların etkin ve verimli kullanımının yanı sıra hasta ihtiyaç ve beklentilerinin doğru analiz edilmesi önemlidir. Stratejik planlama sayesinde hastaneler bu gereksinimlerde rakipleri ile rekabet edebilecek düzeye gelebilmektedir.

Ayrıca yapılan araştırmada A grubu hastanelerde görev yapan çalışanların stratejik planlama farkındalığının B grubu hastanelerde görev yapanlardan daha yüksek olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bu bulgu farklı işletme türlerinde yapılan araştırmalarla örtüşmektedir. Literatürde konuya ilişkin yer alan çalışmalar stratejik planlamanın küçük işletmeler arasında yaygın olarak uygulanmadığını göstermektedir. Stratejik planlama genellikle daha büyük işletmelerle ilişkilendirilirken, stratejik planlamanın her büyüklükteki kuruluş için değer taşıdığını kabul etmek önemlidir. Stratejik planlama, gelecekle ilgili belirsizlikleri en aza indirmeye yardımcı olarak kuruluşların sürdürülebilir rekabet avantajları elde etmelerini sağlamaktadır. Küçük işletmeler net hedefler belirleyerek, büyüme fırsatlarını belirleyerek ve kaynakları etkin bir şekilde tahsis ederek stratejik planlamadan yararlanabilmelidir. Mevcut çalışmanın bulgusu, daha fazla kaynağa sahip olan A Grubu hastanelerdeki çalışanların daha yüksek stratejik planlama farkındalığı sergilemeleri, stratejik planlamanın büyük ölçekli işletmelerde daha yaygın olduğu yönündeki anlayışla tutarlıdır. Ancak,



stratejik planlamanın küçük işletmeler de dâhil olmak üzere her büyüklükteki kuruluş için geçerli ve yararlı olmaya devam ettiğini vurgulamak önem arz etmektedir.

Yapılan araştırmada klinik birim çalışanları ile idari birim çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalığı karşılaştırıldığında anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığı saptanmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle, katılımcıların çalıştıkları birim ne olursa olsun, stratejik planlama konusunda benzer düzeyde farkındalık sergiledikleri görülmüştür. Literatür incelendiğinde konuya ilişkin yapılan çalışmaların farklı bulgular elde ettikleri, idari birim çalışanlarının stratejik planlama konusundaki bilgi ve farkındalık düzeylerinin daha yüksek olduğu görülmektedir. Bu farklı bulgular, her çalışmada yer alan kuruluşların veya katılımcıların özelliklerine atfedilebilir. Genel olarak, mevcut çalışma, idari ve klinik birim çalışanları arasında stratejik planlama farkındalığında anlamlı bir fark bulmazken, önceki araştırmalar, organizasyonlar içindeki çeşitli rollerde stratejik planlama farkındalığına ilişkin farklılıkların olabileceğini düşündürmektedir. Farklı birimler ve roller arasında iş birliğini ve ortak anlayışı teşvik etmek, stratejik planlama girişimlerinin etkili bir şekilde uygulanmasını kolaylaştırabilmektedir. Hastanelerin rekabette ayakta kalabilmeleri, sağlık hizmetlerini istenilen kalitede sunabilmelerine bağlıdır. Bunun için kaynakların etkin ve verimli kullanımının yanı sıra hasta ihtiyaç ve beklentilerinin doğru analiz edilmesi önemlidir. Stratejik planlama sayesinde hastaneler bu gereksinimlerde rakipleri ile rekabet edebilecek düzeye gelebilmektedir.

Hastanelerin hasta beklentilerine cevap verecek adımlar atabilmeleri, çalışanlarının stratejik farkındalık ve analiz becerilerine bağlıdır. Stratejik planlama farkındalığı yüksek olan sağlık çalışanları arasında bilgi ve fikir alışverişi teşvik edilerek ekip çalışması güçlendirilebilmektedir. Bunun için örgütün her kademesindeki sağlık çalışanlarının hastanenin misyon ve vizyonu hakkında bilgi sahibi olması önemlidir. Stratejik planlama hastanelerin geleceğini şekillendirmede bir rehber görevi görmektedir. Sağlık profesyonelleri ise hastaneleri bu geleceğe taşımada en kritik görevi üstlenecek konumdadır. Bu nedenle sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama farkındalığının hastane yönetimi tarafından artırılması gerekmektedir. Hastanelerin stratejik hedeflerine ulaşabilmeleri için her çalışanın kendine özgü bilgi ve tecrübesinden maksimum düzeyde faydalanmaları gerekmektedir. Bu nedenle bilgi işçisi konumunda olan sağlık çalışanları gönüllü ya da ortaklar olarak görülmeli ve bu bakış açısı ile yönetilmelidir. Yönetimin böyle bir perspektife sahip olduğu örgütlerde ortaklar arasındaki ilişki emretmeye değil ikna etmeye dayanmaktadır. Bu sayede sağlık çalışanlarının stratejik planlama sürecinde farkındalığı ve katılımı sağlanabilmektedir. Stratejik planlama sürecinin doğru ve etkin bir şekilde uygulanabilmesi için stratejik uygulamalardan etkilenen ve aynı zamanda süreci etkileyecek olan çalışanlar ve gruplar tarafından doğru algılanması gerekmektedir. Özellikle iç paydaş niteliğinde olan sağlık meslek mensuplarının algıları ve farkındalıkları, stratejik planlama süreci ile ilgili tutum ve davranışlarının temelini oluşturmaktadır.

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Öneriler



İleride yapılması planlanan arařtırmalar için örneklemin farklı illeri ve kamu hastanelerini de kapsayacak şekilde genişletilmesi önerilmektedir.



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