THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF MARKET RESEARCH COMPANIES IN TURKEY: THE RE-PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

The Ethnography of Market Research Companies in Turkey: The Re-Production of Knowledge

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This study is an attempt to investigate and analyze market research sector in Turkey in its various aspects and to understand market research *ethos*. Corporations from different sectors increasingly tend to work together with market research companies in all over the world. In parallel with this, private sector actors in Turkey ask market research companies to conduct researches in order to sell their products in a broader market and try to determine the future of their corporations. In that sense, market research companies have emerged as a response to a certain necessity and they produce "useful" and "effective" knowledge in accordance with this necessity. Those companies conduct their researches mostly by using social scientific and statistical methods and techniques. Thus, we may claim that who works in the sector are widely the graduates of social sciences. Therefore, in this study, I discuss opinions, feelings, working experience and observations of those workers by using active participant observation and in-depth interviews. I also examine the scientific status, value and the reliability of methods and researches of market research companies while they are carrying out their business.

Keywords: Market Research Ethos, Knowledge, Science, Value

ÖZ

Türkiye'deki Pazar Araştırması Şirketlerinin Etnografisi: Bilginin Yeniden Üretimi

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Bu çalışma, en temelde Türkiye'deki pazar araştırması şirketlerinin farklı veçhelerini birbirleriyle ilişkileri çerçevesinde çözümlemeyi amaçlamakta ve pazar araştırması *ethosu*nu anlamaya ve kavramaya odaklanmaktadır. Farklı sektörlerden şirketler bütün dünyada giderek artan bir biçimde pazar araştırmaları yaptırmaya yönelmektedir. Türkiye'de de buna koşut olarak özel sektör aktörleri pazar araştırma şirketlerine çok çeşitli konularda araştırmalar yaptırarak bir taraftan ürettikleri ürünleri daha geniş bir pazarda satmaya diğer taraftan da şirketlerinin gelecekteki pozisyonunu belirlemeye çalışmaktadır. Bu anlamda pazar araştırması şirketleri son derece rekabetçi kapitalist pazarda belirli bir ihtiyaca cevap olarak ortaya çıkmış ve bu ihtiyaca dönük olarak "faydalı" ve "işe yarar" bir tür bilgi üretimi gerçekleştirmeye başlamıştır. Söz konusu şirketler araştırmalarını daha ziyade sosyal bilim ve istatistik yöntem ve teknikleriyle gerçekleştirmektedir. Bu nedenle pazar araştırması sektöründe çalışanların önemli bir çoğunluğu da üniversitelerin sosyal bilimler mezunlarıdır. Bu anlamda bu çalışmada, bir yandan aktif katılımcı gözlem ve derinlemesine görüşmeler ile sektörün çalışanlarının sektöre dair düşüncelerini, hislerini, çalışma deneyimlerini ve gözlemlerini değerlendirirken diğer yandan da sektörde üretilen bilginin bilimsel değeri tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Pazar Araştırması Ethosu, Bilgi, Bilim, Değer

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To Adniye, Alim, Onur and Ecem

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The sociological and anthropological research methods have been used in market research sector for decades in all over the world. By the increasing demand of corporations regarding the knowledge of customer behavior, these methods have been mobilized by anthropologists and sociologists for the needs of capitalist market. This has always been a mutual relationship for both parties. On the one hand, the companies have acquired a new tool, which decreases the uncertainty and the unpredictability of the "consumer behavior" and, doing so, they play their cards more consciously in a very competitive market. On the other hand, anthropologists and sociologists have been able to "unlock" a key, which opens up the doors of corporate circles, and they have realized that their "scientific knowledge" has a new bidder. They, maybe for the first time - if we put aside their relation with the states during colonization period -, have discovered that that very "scientific knowledge" is something "valuable" outside of the university walls which cannot be reduced only to a question of money or to a new job opportunity. Some corporate "white collars" have made them *feel* that they, social scientists, can be as valuable and important as an engineer in the capitalist market, in a time which Weber himself defines the academic life as a "wild venture" and urges young scholars by saying *lasciate ogni speranza* (Abandon all hope, you who enter here)" in 1918 (Weber, 2008, p. 30)[1].

By an irony of fate, Weber was complaining the tendency among young scholars of perceiving science as "an arithmetic calculation, which can be manufactured, as 'in a factory', in laboratories, or statistical card index systems, by cool reason alone"; and condemning the very productions of "manufacturing" processes as "precious little" (2008, p. 31). In Weber's point of view, it is very understandable why he finds these products nearly worthless, but in a couple of years after he wrote, the cooperation between corporations and social scientists, which will become a "billion dollars" industry in 2000s, has already begun. Today, sociologists and anthropologists are working together with corporations in a range of tasks from understanding the simple consumer behavior to designing driverless cars[2]. Market research industry made possible to bring these two entities together and become one of the "factories" of knowledge economy, which crafts and manufactures a new kind of knowledge for the sake of capitalist market.

I intentionally put a stress on the verb "feel" above while I was trying to express the effect of this relationship on social scientists, because I was feeling exactly in

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[1] Weber uses this expression particularly for "young Jewish" scholars in 1910s' Germany, but it would not be a mistake to use it today for every young scholar who has not got his/her tenure position in a university. Again, Weber himself says that: "We must be clear about this: it is not only thanks to the inadequacy of selection through the collective will that decisions about academic destinies are so largely determined by 'chance' (Weber, 2008, p. 29)."

[2] As an example, Melissa Cefkin, a design anthropologist, has been working in a project financed by Nissan to design a new driverless car since 2015. She defines the project as this: "We focus on two main topics. The first is the communication between man and machine – inside the vehicle, as well as between the vehicle and its environment. How do we create the necessary confidence of passengers in the ProPilot? How do we inform other road users about what our car is thinking and doing?" https://www.2025ad.com/in-the-news/blog/nissan-melissa-cefkin-driverless-cars/

the same way when I began to work in a market research company in 2015. I was simply feeling that my "scholarly skills" was creating a "tangible impact" on something. A couple of months later we finished the market research project that I was working for, I saw the TV commercial of a well-known international company which ordered that project and heard the words of an interviewee whom I conducted an interview with in "verbatim". I vividly remember that I felt simply "happy" when I saw the concrete outcome of my work. As one can imagine that it made a striking effect on me on personal level. I have been working in a university as a research assistant for nearly 10 years, and, for the first time I deeply felt that "I did something with my academic skills", "something valuable".

This study, roughly speaking, is the outcome of "scratching" of this feeling by my "academic persona". What do I mean by that? I was having a new experience as a project director in a market research company which was mostly carrying out qualitative, and particularly ethnographic research for their clients. I was responsible for many things –except making financial deals - from designing, conducting and presenting a research to leading a research team and dealing with the representatives of the client during the whole research process. Although this whole process was quite satisfying for a social scientist, I have begun to realize the differences and even contradictions between this market research process and the researches that we were learning/teaching/conducting for academic purposes. The very limited time constraints, the discussions with the client in terms of how to conduct research and how to choose sampling, preparation process of presentation and many other things were quite different from how we do research at the university. My academic and market research *personas* were clashing, and this clash paved the way to criticize what actually I was doing in that market research company. I do not mean, in any sense, that I despised the way that we were doing research in the company. I was simply *wondering* (*thaumazein* in

Ancient Greek) in what ways the methods, the techniques and the practices that we use in market research differentiate from "purely" (social) scientific research.

Thus, in this study, I would like to analyze and question the market research *ethos* in Turkey. More specifically, I intend to examine the scientific status, the value and the reliability of the methods and the practices of market research companies while they are carrying out their business. In addition to that, I also aim to investigate the role of social scientists that are working in market research sector. Although almost all those market research companies assert that they use the "scientific methods", which make their researches "valuable" in the market, I propose that the real/daily working conditions of market research companies and the company workers (mostly social sciences graduates) cast a doubt on this assertion. In addition to that, the "nature" of the relation between clients (corporations) and market research companies makes itself open to manipulations in terms of the outcome of the researches. Here, I do not imply that market research companies are cheating their clients; but the very process of research causes some "unintended consequences", so to speak.

We may assert that the main idea behind a market research is to get "effective results" as much as possible for "actionable insights" of the marketing policies of the client companies. Every company practically needs the knowledge of how they sell their product more, how they reorganize their inner structure, how they increase the positive perception of their company; in short, they need "useful" knowledge to produce effective results in their operations. However, they need this knowledge quickly and as cheap as possible as these are dictated on the companies by the competitive market conditions. This situation forces market research companies - as I will give the details in the following chapters - to compromise on the quality, value and the scientific status of their research.

Although there is no actual numbers, it is told me several times during my fieldwork that the employee turnover rates are high in market research sector. Especially, the social sciences graduates who are working at lower levels in market research companies either force themselves to work under harsh working conditions or quit the job and tend to find another job in a different sector. The critical thing is, although they are expected to produce “insightful” knowledge for the clients, in many market research companies they are forced to work in several researches simultaneously and therefore, they alienate from the work and the product itself. As I will describe in the following chapters, some of the “big players” of market research sector, due to their higher business volume, are carrying out their projects under a very strict division of labor. This means that they divide all the steps of a project and let different departments to handle each specific step. More specifically, while one department is responsible for conducting the surveys, another department is carrying out analysis of row data and another one interpret the results and present them to the client. There is a huge gap between the workers who actually conduct research and those who interpret it. I will discuss in this study that this process itself constitutes one of the biggest obstacle to produce “actionable insights”. As a result, researches usually are conducted in rush and the efforts of divided departments can produce “prosaic insights” at best.

We have to make a distinction between qualitative and quantitative research here. As I will discuss later, the research process I mentioned above is not always compatible to acquire qualitative knowledge, since qualitative research requires a more face-to-face relation with the subjects of the study, in some market research companies, which conduct mostly qualitative researches, this division of labor necessarily diminishes. The researcher who conducts the qualitative research would also analyze the results and prepare the presentation; and even if s/he does not present the project s/he is not affected much by this alienation. In K. Research, for instance, a project director handles almost all the steps of a research, and therefore, s/he may easily claim that that project belongs to him/her.

1. The "Why" Question or What Are Market Research Companies For?

> *"We got a Money Friendly opportunity that we think absolutely for you! Tahsildaroğlu 525 gr Ezine Sliced Classical Cheese is just 16.45TL. It's in Migros between 21st of July and 3rd of August" (a text message)*

How does Migros, one of the leaders of the retail sector in Turkey, know that I really like this particular brand's, specific kind of cheese? The answer is simple; because I told them while I was paying for that cheese. Since I wanted to pay less for my shopping, I used the "customer card" given by Migros. By using that card, I voluntarily gave the information of what I purchased; and their database stored this information. I purchased that particular kind of cheese a couple of times more and I gave that information to the system too. I also purchased several other things and Migros has the knowledge of that as well. In addition to what I purchased, Migros also knows when I purchased (in a weekday or at the weekend; at a daytime or at the evening; at a national holiday or in New Year's Eve); how much I paid for that shopping and for the previous ones. Migros also knows my age, my sex, my education, my address and my mobile number because I gave them by writing them on a form which is compulsory in order to get that customer card. So, Migros basically has the knowledge of shopping patterns of hundreds of thousands of customers[3]. In doing so, with a simple text message it can make its own advertisement because they know that I will buy some other things in addition to the cheese when I go for shopping.

In all over the world, the big corporations use the same method to get the knowledge of consuming patterns for the exchange of a very small amount of discount. In doing so, they are collecting every kind of information about their customers constituting a huge collection of data is called *Big Data*. Big Data is simply the "massive quantities of information produced by and about people, things, and their interactions" (Boyd & Crawford, 2012, p. 662). It consists every kind of information, such as health records, consumption patterns, Internet habits etc. that are continuously collected and indeed, given freely by the people. It is known that, for instance, our every post in Facebook and search in Google, even if we delete them later, stay in online data banks. However, since the utilization of this huge data requires special techniques which, in their turn, necessitates considerable investment, this data can only be used by big corporations. For all corporations, the biggest problem is how to process this data and get meaningful deductions (insights) of out that. They are still searching for the ways and algorithms to find out specific results in order to guess my future shopping, reduce uncertainty and take an advantage in the competitive market conditions. In

[3] During a conversation a friend of mine, who is working for a company running its business in FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods) sector, told me that her company is paying a considerable amount of money to several retail corporations for those information in order to find the "target consumers" and to make their own products' advertisement by sending the customers text messages or emails.

the pursuit of that goal, the social scientists, engineers, economists and mathematicians work together in big corporations[4].

However, even Migros, which has a strong Research and Development Department, is not able to give a meaningful answer to one particular question: “Why”. Why do I prefer that specific brand’s cheese but not the other ones? What is my motivation when I purchase that specific item? Do I simply find it tasty or I prefer that one because it’s cheaper? My purchase of that product may be the indicator of many things and it may denote my eating preferences but the corporation still needs to know why I behaved in that way, as they want to be sure whether I will be purchasing the same product in my next shopping. It may be easier to learn my motivations for a retailer since they come face to face with the clients all the time in the supermarkets. The store manager, if s/he is interested in talking to the customers, can ask some questions regarding, for instance, the conditions of supermarket (the heat in the store, the music that plays, whether there are enough cash desks etc.). But, imagine an IT engineer who designs electronic devices on his/her desk; for him/her the whole world of end-user would be a total “mystery”. S/he would love to know the complaints, experiences and expectations of his actual end-user in order to develop much better or desirable systems. Flynn and Lovejoy, who are working for Microsoft as anthropologists, point out how the findings of a research helps engineers:

> While there is tension that by the time we have a beta product it is at a point in the product cycle we may not have enough time to fix problems that are discovered before

[4] One of the most famous examples of that cooperation has been realized in a project undertaken by Intel under the leadership of an anthropologist Genevieve Bell. She has been working in Intel since 1998 and until quite recently she was the Vice President responsible the company's Corporate Sensing & Insights group. She and her team in Intel are the developers of several patents concerning Big-Data processing algorithms. For one of her speeches on the issue see, “The Secret Life of Big Data” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNoi-XqwJnA

> the product ships, the power of real people suffering through bad experiences puts tremendous weight behind these findings to be priorities (Flynn & Lovejoy, 2008, p. 244)

Knowing the "why(s)" provides a much deeper knowledge when we compare it to basic consumer patterns. Moreover, uncovering the motivations of the customers needs "special skills" which enables the companies to take those reasons out of the customers' minds. This is where market researchers/companies come into picture. The main function of market researchers is to find out practical and useful insights and answers to those "why" questions in order to explain the consumer behavior, predict the future actions and make projections to reduce uncertainty and unpredictability of a competitive market. The focus of the researches may vary in accordance with the expectations of the corporations. Some researches may target to get the knowledge of the customer behavior and choices, while some others may focus on the inner organizational structure and the coordination/cooperation of the employees. As Melissa Cefkin states: "Much ethnographic work in and for businesses and organizations has been concentrated on the intersecting arenas of workplace and consumer studies" (2009, p. 20). Yet, whatever the corporations may desire to know, the fundamental purpose beneath the market researches is to solve a practical problem. The value of a market research depends on to what extend it provides, insights and workable solutions to the problems of the client corporations. Therefore, we may suggest that a market researcher has a problem-oriented approach to the object of his/her study. As Baba suggests,

> Probably the most important difference between university and industry research is goal differentiation. The primary goal of university research is the creation of new knowledge for its own sake, whereas industry strives to develop new knowledge in order to solve specific problems related to business objectives. (…) While data contained herein may support, refute, or build theoretical constructs, the initial intent was improvement of organizational products and processes (1988, p. 8)

Anthropologists and sociologists, and their ethnographic studies have gained visibility especially by the beginning of 21st century as Cefkin suggests, due to the "technological developments together with changes in policy and practices governing labor structures and the organization of work have contributed to the ability to transform from mass production to both mass customization and niche-market production" (2009, p. 13). Again, Cefkin proposes that the customers do not basically consume the knowledge they pay for, but they also buy "a set of ongoing relations and interactions" (ibid., p. 15). Within this market environment the ethnographers' position (as market researchers) here is to disclose the secret of those relations and set up a bridge between the consumer and the company. I am not sure whether customers/users benefit from those researches as much as companies do (as knowledge mostly flows in one direction), and I plan to discuss this issue in the following chapters. But, from a marketing point of view, market researches are valuable assets to create tangible results for business. They make serious impacts on profitability, on reorganization of firms and they provide insights of costumer behavior.

In this sense, Flynn and Lovejoy describe the role of ethnographers in the market research as "sense-makers", who are "deciphering and isolating patterns of meaning within complex landscapes of people, things, places and the sociocultural dynamics that define our various interactions" (Flynn & Lovejoy, 2008, p. 238). In their study, they give an account of their work in Microsoft by mentioning both their both successes and failures. They assert that even when they failed, this is not because their ethnographic research was bad in its own right. They have no doubts regarding the validity or quality of the research. According to them, the main reason of the failure was closely connected with the "expected metrics" of the executives of the company. They suggest that, since their project did "not appear to have direct relevance to the short or medium term business goals", their study was not found as “worthy” for the investment (2008, p. 242). On the other hand, the successful projects are the ones that meet some expectations, such as “providing a strong, clear connection to defined immediate or medium-term business goals” and “providing feature-specific data from the field” (ibid., p. 243). Their experience clearly shows that any project, which does not meet the criteria of “utility”, is not considered as something “valuable” by the company executives. No matter how “true” their findings are, if they do not provide profound and tangible policies, the projects would be useless in the eyes of company. Therefore, the real measure of the value of knowledge generated by the research is its ability to create concrete outcomes. The knowledge “for the sake of knowledge” is not an option for corporate circles.

2. The Condition of Knowledge in Scientific Field and Market Research

There seems, at first sight, a quite clear distinction between the researches conducted at the universities and in the market research sector. As it is broadly accepted at least ideally, the sole purpose of the academia is to deal with science for the sake of science, whereas the market research sector serves to increase consumerism by focusing on the consuming patterns and codes of people. So, we tend to think that the logic of what we do and what we produce under the framework of the academia is positioning itself on the opposite side of the capitalist logic. If we follow the same logic, we should see the universities as the institutions (even the private ones), which seek the advancement of knowledge for its own sake.

However, as I will try to discuss in the following chapters, this argument is very problematic when we investigate the condition of knowledge production in academia and the situation in which scientific field is positioning itself in today’s universities. What was expected from the students who got their education in a Humboldian modern university is to be free thinkers and seek the knowledge for the sake of knowledge. By doing so, they were expected to be useful individuals for the society as well. Their duty was to put aside the pragmatic and practical purposes, and devote themselves to the practice of "pure science". The sole purpose of their scientific research should be to generate the knowledge without considering usefulness of knowledge for any practical purpose. However, we have witnessed an ever-increasing collaboration between the academia and the industry from the beginning of 1950s. This collaboration has brought a new logic into the scientific field which aims to generate more practical outcomes from research for the benefit of the industry.

Especially by the beginning of 1980s, the association between industry and the universities has found its legal ground to enhance this relationship and become "partners"[5]. This partnership gives universities (either public or private) the role of an institution, which serves as the locus of the production of "valuable" and "useful" knowledge that can be commodified and commercialized in the market. In this connection, knowledge becomes a commodity which is loosing its intrinsic quality and transforms into something that creates economic value. This transformation has been read as the "crisis of academia" or "crisis of science" in the literature. But it is not hard to guess that this crisis has affected the social sciences and the humanities departments of the universities more than any other field. Since the nature of these fields cannot allow them to produce tangible assets that can be commercialized in the market, they have been trying to find out the ways of surviving in the academic circles. I will argue that, the market research

[5] Derek Bok argues that the beginning of this partnership is US Congress' Bayh-Dole Act "which made it much easier for universities to own and license patents on discoveries made through research paid for with public funds". (Bok, 2003, p. 11)

sector is one of those ways, which enables the graduates of social sciences departments who do not have a chance to secure a place in academia to practice their profession for the benefit of industry. In that sense, I will try to discuss that the similarities and connections between the academia (especially social sciences) and the market research sector is more than their differences.

In so doing, my main purpose is to discuss how market research sector tends to construct itself as if it produces scientific knowledge even though executives or owners in the sector do not directly claim that their job is to make contributions to science. The only goal of market research sector is to produce useful knowledge for its clients. Yet, by using the tools in researchers such as the methods, techniques and theoretical accumulation of social sciences, market research sector presents itself as a scientific activity, not the science *per se*. This tendency is a quite important aspect of market research sector. It is crucial to understand why this sector tries to establish connections with scientific field. I will try to answer the question that why market research sector needs to refer to science and scientific research while presenting itself.

3. Method of the Study: Fieldwork and "Going-Native"

Honestly, I chose neither the topic nor the method of this study; but they chose me. Between August 2015 and June 2016, thank to one of my friends who was working in a market research company I become aware of such institutions for the first time. Even though I knew some research companies specialized on public opinion surveys, actually I had never heard before that there are some companies especially conducting qualitative methods for market research. I remember that I listened her experience in the company with a quite excitement. For me, the most interesting and challenging part was how market research companies use the social theory and methods of social sciences in their researches. So, I wanted to know more about them and I began to send my CV to some of them. I was not very optimistic about this application method since I had never had any experience in market research. I had some ethnographic fieldwork experience in various topics and places, but I had no idea what a market research was. Although I was thinking that no company would call "an academic" who was in his thirties for a job interview, two market research companies called me for an interview.

These two companies had major differences. The first one was running its business from a middle-size plaza and it had more than ten branches in all over Turkey. Its clients were huge international corporations and the company was mostly conducting quantitative researches for their clients. My friend advised me to wear "business-casual" clothes before the interview because all the workers of the company were bound with clothing rules and codes of conduct. The doors inside the company building could only open with magnetic cards. During the interview the two senior executives of the company told me that although they normally do not outsource their researches, this time, they needed someone who has fieldwork experience and who can speak English. They asked me many questions in a conference room and the second half of the interview was in English. Then they told me about the job. It was a one-month, project-based job which included a survey, reporting and translation to the senior executives of the client. At the end of the interview they decided to give me the job.

Two days later, I had another interview with K. Research Company[6]. I was invited the job interview by one of the two owners of the company who had worked in a Turkish University as an anthropology professor before she founded this company with his brother. Her response to my email was flattering for me. She said that she liked my CV and she wanted to see me as soon as possible. Contrary to the other company, K. Research was conducting mostly qualitative, and particularly ethnographic researches for its national level clients. It was founded three years ago and their business volume was much lesser than the previous company. It had less than ten workers who were mostly the graduates of anthropology departments and the former students of the co-owner of the company. This time, I did not have to wear "business-casual"; in the contrary, after our meeting, I realized that it would be funny to wear such serious staff. They were running their business in a duplex large house. When I arrived the office they were having a meeting in their small size hall. They invited me to the balcony to have our conversation (it was definitely not a job interview!) as the weather was sunny. After we had our conversation with lots of laughing and chitchatting, they invited me to their business meeting since they wanted me to work in their new ethnographic project.

Since the timing was suitable, I was able to work in both projects. But my experience in those projects – as I will mention in the following chapters - were quite different and striking. Both were market research companies but there was no similarity between their business style, their approach to research, and their methods for conducting a research. First of all, those differences make a huge

[6] Throughout this study, all the real names of market research companies will be replaced with nicknames

impact on the outcomes of the study. As I will discuss in following chapters, not only the method(ology) but how one applies this method in an actual research determines the results of the study. For instance, "the business style" (not their quantitative method *per se*) of the first company does not allow me to write my comments and opinions regarding my face to face experience with interviewees. My job was to conduct a survey which has more than a hundred question. But after a certain point, the survey was turning into an interview which questions behind what people do not (or cannot) tell in a confined closed-end question. They wanted to talk more and I wrote all those "extra" comments in a notebook. However, the research company and their client never wanted me to write them in my daily reports. They strictly asked me to write just some certain points but not more than that. In fact, once one of the senior executives of the client who came to Turkey in the first week of the study to audit our work, urged me ungraciously regarding not to exceed the limits they put for the reporting system. So, he was expecting me to be like an "operator", not a sociologist or ethnographer who wants to give hidden details of the interviews in his report. But I was sure that they missed very important points appeared in those informal conversations.

Contrary to that, in K. Research project, I was totally free to write any detail in my report. Beyond being a mere interviewer, they ask me to unleash all my talents to catch even small details showing up during my fieldwork. At the end of the fieldwork, I had the chance to give shape to the final presentation for the client. My opinions, comments and objections were seriously taken into consideration by the research team and even applied to the presentation. But I had never had that chance in the other company's quantitative research. As I said before, this difference is not implicit in the method itself. What determines these different results are the expectations of the client and the "business style" of the market research company?

After those two projects, K. Research offered me to work in the company as a full-time project director. At first, although I really wanted to work with them, I told them that I couldn't because I was a research assistant in a university and it would be difficult to run both jobs together. However, they told me that they would allow me to go to Ankara whenever I chose as long as I carried out my responsibilities in the company. So, I accepted the offer. Now I was leading projects with a team and responsible for all processes. Everything was new and exciting to me. Projects were similar in its method to the ones that I had conducted in the university. But there were also many differences that strikes me starting from the goal of the research to preparation of the final report. In one of those days, one of my professors asked me if I would consider to study this "experience" in my thesis. I was thinking a similar thing. I discussed this idea with my advisor and the owners of K. Research. They all accepted that and I have begun my research.

This study relies on 10-months experience and "active participant observation" in a market research company. For anthropologists and social scientists, participant observation is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011, p. 1). It is a specific method which can be seen under the frame of qualitative research methods. The rationale for this approach is that; by "being there" and actively taking part in the interactions at hand, the researcher can come closer to experiencing and understanding the "insider's" point of view (Hume & Mulcock, 2004, p. xi).

The participant observation is maybe the most effective but also the most controversial method in anthropological tradition. On the one hand, it is effective, simply because it gives the researcher the opportunity to have more intensive research experience while studying some social groups which are particularly difficult to penetrate in. It is a useful tool both for asking the research questions directly to the "observed" in many ways and testing the reliability of the answers by "observation"[7]. On the other hand, the debate regarding the method is two-fold which are closely related. First problem arises from an epistemological –and in a sense, ontological- point of view. The method implies that a researcher from his/her subject position can (and should) grasp the "other's" (as objects of the study) perspective. In other words, according to those who criticize the method, it is expected from the researcher to preserve his/her researcher position and acquire the "objective" knowledge of the other, while at the same time pretending to think and act (become?) as an insider to be able to get the "real" knowledge of the other. Although I will not be able to discuss all the epistemological implications of this approach due to the limitations of the study[8], it should be noted that we have at least an "objectivity problem" here. Bronislaw Malinowski, in his study *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, gives an account of his methodology and by suggesting "to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world", he becomes the pioneer of this approach (Malinowski, 1922, p. 25). In doing so, he was searching for the genuine knowledge of the natives of Trobriand Islands. In 1950s, his approach was began to be called "emic"

[7] A perfect example can be given from one of my previous fieldwork experiences. During my master's thesis fieldwork in Kızıltepe/Mardin, I conducted an interview with a young teacher who was also a local person. He, from the beginning of the interview till the end, complained about the "existence" of tribes and their impact on the society. From a "modernist" point of view, he defended the eradication of the tribal influences in the region. However, at the end of our interview he got a call from someone and left the building immediately. After a while I learned that, that day, he went to a "potential gun fight" to defend his fellow tribe members against another tribe with his own pistol. I personally did not think that he was lying to me while he was complaining about tribalism. Instead, after a one-month of experience in the field, I realized that, even if you hate that particular social structure prevailing in the region, you should act according to the tribal life which was already acting as an external force on you.

[8] For a further discussion see, Hume & Mulcock, 2004, pp. 89–98

perspective which implies a “from within” view as opposed to “etic” or comparative perspective (Gobo, 2008, p. 8). In my point of view, although every research and fieldwork should be analyzed and criticized in its own right with regard to what extend it achieves objectivity, a careful distance between the researcher and subjects about whom s/he is conducting his/her research must be established.

This brings us the second debate on participant observation, i.e., the dangers of “going native”. Going native in ethnography represents a romantic attempt to capture the authenticity of the native experience (Prasad, 2005, p. 83). In that sense, it has a close relation with the first debate and objectivity problem. The dangers of going-native become more apparent in “active participant observation” in which researcher becomes a member of the community or the group and acquire his/her findings by getting involved the daily routine and practices of the group. Researcher may get involved too much to the identity of the group or adopt the social role of a group as member of it; and this may lead him/her to, let’s say, distort the facts or conceal them.

Michael Burawoy, in his *The Extended Case Method*, suggests transcending those discussions and binary oppositions between the participant and the observer, micro and macro, history and sociology, the theoretical tradition and empirical research by “bringing them into dialogue”.

> First, we do not strive to separate observer from participant, subject from object, but recognize their antagonistic coexistence. No matter how we approach our research, we are always simultaneously participant and observer, because inescapably we live in the world we study. The technique of participant observation simply makes us acutely aware of this existential and ethical conundrum (Burawoy, 2009, pp. 8–9)

All those dangers of "going native" are applicable as a possibility in my research. I worked in K. Research as a project director and, in so doing, experienced the whole steps of market research. I was responsible for writing the "proposal", setting up a team, conducting the research, managing the relations with the client, preparing the presentation and present it. So, I took almost all responsibility for success and failure as being a part of the company. I have to admit that, it was harder than I thought to put a distance between my work and my study time to time. I was doing a job and actually I was doing it meticulously and carefully. Most of the time I was just thinking how to do the job better, not to collect the data for my research. However, most probably because of a professional (de)formation, the data for my study revealed itself to me even I searched for it. The data that I needed was striking me unconsciously. Even if I got involved in the work and felt more and more like a market researcher, I was –let's say- "automatically" gathering the information for my study. Therefore, I believe that, despite the fact that it was hard to separate two "existences" during the whole process, the dangers of "going-native" affected my study less than I thought. Furthermore, I tried to turn all those possible dangers into advantages. For instance, I would never know what happens in a "client meeting", if I didn't work in a market research company. I had the chance to hear and see what executives of the client company with their very limited knowledge on ethnographic research, felt and thought about our projects. I closely observed their perception of market research and specifically ethnographic research.

A market research has plenty of steps ranging from the getting the "Brief" from the clients, which shows their fundamental questions and expectations from the research, to the presentation of the project to the executives. All those steps have their own story behind them. In every step you have to make decisions, convince the client regarding the value of the project and lead a research team to get useful outcomes. Therefore, I intend to analyze every step to uncover the market research sector's *ethos*, that is, the practices, thinking and business style.

In addition, I also conducted 16 semi-structured interviews with the employees, ex-employees and the owners of various market research companies in order to make a comparison among various experiences in the sector. Every interview took almost two hours. The questions and topics that I asked can be summarized as follows: 1) demographic questions, 2) how they feel about their everyday work life (their expectations, dreams etc.), 3) how long they have been working in the sector (if they quit the job, how many years did they did work in the sector), 4) The general story of how they come into touch with the sector (why market research?), 5) The details of a research project (how do they start, conduct and present the research), 6) The working conditions of the market research company (what are the difficulties? whether the conditions can satisfy their expectations), 7) Their relations with the clients, 8) What they think regarding the differences and/or similarities between a research conducted in a market research company and at a university, 9) If they quit the job what are the reasons and whether they would like to turn back to market research sector again. In so doing, I mainly tried to grasp their perception of the market research as a vocation and a sector. Additionally, I asked them to compare scientific knowledge and the knowledge producing by market research projects. As being mostly social sciences graduates (some of them also have post-graduate degrees) their opinions about (social) scientific knowledge mean a great deal for my study. All those interviews gave me a great opportunity to see the variations in market research sector and I will broadly use them in this study.

4. The Outline of The Study

Market research sector can be analyzed and discussed in many respects. I prefer to analyze market research ethos mainly under three dimensions: 1) All daily practices and relations of market research sector's subjects; 2) How a market research project is designed and conduct; 3) The factors that affect the reliability of the researches.

In the second chapter of this study, I will try to discuss the condition of knowledge and the scientific field in today's industrial society. I aim to investigate how scientific field and order determine the ethos of science, and in connection with that, how the approaches to knowledge and science in the scientific field have been transformed. Then I will examine the contemporary condition of academia by suggesting that not only the particular subjects but also the academic structure as a whole have gradually been determined by the market logic. Finally, I will make a discussion on where, in these conditions, the market research sector can be positioned. By revealing the connections between market research sector and scientific field, I will attempt to explore what I call market research ethos.

In chapter three, I will begin to disclose the market research ethos by discussing the everyday practices and working experience of market researchers. I want to show the conditions of researchers in the sector in order to provide a general picture of the market research companies. By denoting the practices and opinions of the researchers regarding the companies and the sector in general, I aim to explore in what conditions market researchers do their essential jobs, that is, conducting a market research. In order to do that, I will investigate the hierarchy, waging system, workload, mobbing in the company and the impact of those aspects on the motivations of the researchers. At the end of the chapter, I will discuss how the subjects of market research sector perceive their jobs and the business, and how they deal with the hardships of the work.

In chapter four, my main aim is to discuss the market research projects in all their aspects. Any market research project has some certain steps starting from receiving the "brief" from the client to make the presentation of the results. Analyzing all these steps will be a good indicator to unravel the character of market research ethos. In this chapter I will particularly focus on the qualitative market researches as I performed as an active participant in such a company. Furthermore, I will try to show how the methodology and theoretical knowledge of social sciences commodified and commercialized in the market research projects. All market research projects strictly depend on the clients' demands as being the funder of the researches. Therefore, it is crucial to discuss the relations of market research companies with their clients. I aim to examine how requests of the clients and the negotiations with them determine the scope and the results of the research. In so doing, I will try to make a comparison between academic and market research.

In chapter five, I aim to discuss the question of reliability in the projects and the scientific value of the findings of these market research projects. Instead of focusing on to what extend market research projects are reliable, I essentially want to show how clients and market research companies approach the reliability issue and whether they pay any attention to reliability, and what are the implications of this perception. I will also investigate the factors that affect the reliability of the researches. Moreover, I want to discuss, if any, the scientific value and scientificity of market research projects. I want to show the impact of the issues such as the clients' expectations on manipulations and data collection processes on the discussion.

CHAPTER 2

Positioning the Market Research: Science, Value and Commodification of Knowledge

1. Introduction:

In the previous chapter, I expressed my main motivation to study the market research companies as the "scratching of a feeling". During my experience in market research sector, as I was mentioned earlier, I had a certain dilemma that, on the one hand, I was feeling that my scholarly skills and knowledge had become something useful and, in a sense, valuable. On the other hand, there was something discomforting me while doing my job, but it was difficult to name and define this uneasiness. Of course, I was aware that I was working for a "company" in the market and this new experience was (should be) different from what I was doing at the university. However, it was quite challenging to find out the peculiarities of these two fields and in what ways they differ from or overlap with each other.

Apart from the fieldwork experience, in this chapter, I will try to draw a map to show how we may approach the relationship between academic (scientific) field[9]

[9] Here, I am intentionally using the concepts *academic* and *scientific* interchangeably, although I do not defend the assumptions that, 1) the academy (universities) are *the only* places where scientific practice take place, and 2) the outcomes of academic works are always *scientific*. However, in

and market research field. As it was stated, although market research companies do not claim that they are performing "scientific" work, they use scientific methods in certain ways to conduct their research. Also, the workers of the companies using these techniques are mostly social science graduates of the universities. So, at first glance, we may observe that both fields share a common ground. Yet, the question still remains; what does make it possible for us to think these fields together? Or, to put it another way, are using scientific methods and recruiting social scientists in the market research sector, enough to deal with differences that set those two fields apart and establishing connections between them? What is it that would make possible these two different perceptions of the respective fields while we are trying to approach the issue and discuss its implications? In order to give some (at least, partial) answers to these questions under this section, I would like to discuss first the current situation of the scientific field (or academic ethos). And then, I will try to show the connections and relations of the fields.

2. "Knowledge for the Sake of ....": Scientific Experience, Field and Order

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, according to Marietta L. Baba (1988), the major difference between university and industrial research originates from their different "goals". While the goal of the researches conduct at the universities is

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modern times, in practical levels these two fields have gradually fused and integrated with each other so much so that they cannot be thought separately.

basically "the creation of new knowledge for its own sake", the researches for the industry seek for the solutions for "specific problems related to business objectives". At the first sight, we may observe in this goal-oriented approach that in the former, the goal appears as something "creation of knowledge" (for its own sake), in the latter it turns out to be "solving specific problems" (for the sake of market). I prefer to begin with Baba's approach as it clearly demonstrates the common perception which draws strict lines between those fields and gives us the opportunity to ask some crucial questions before we go any further.

The first part of the assumption equates the academic work with knowledge production and understands it as a process engaged with for the sake of knowledge alone. Gadamer would call this "basic research" in a sharp contrast with the "applied research" (1992, p. 49). Hence, according to Gadamer: "(…) there can be no other research except basic research. That means there is no other type of research which *in its own activity* is not concerned about practical and pragmatic purposes which may be related to it" (emphasis mine). By saying this, Gadamer takes, what he calls *basic research*, within the walls of the university and differentiates it from applied research which he sees as something mainly benefited by the industry. By referring to Humboldt's idea(l) "living with ideas", Gadamer explicitly asserts that science should distance itself "from everything profitable and useful". Although he does not deny the fact that all professions are dependent upon the research and teaching, he argues that while modern society seeks for a "balance" between the preparations of the students for a profession and to educate them "in the essence and the activity of research, it also must think through the opposition between the educational task of the university and the practical utility (1992, p. 49). This very opposition gives the university the task to continue basic research, which pursues knowledge for its own sake.

We may assert that Gadamer himself is not interested in the creation or the production of the knowledge *per se*; rather, in my opinion, he suggests that the main purpose of the scientific activity must be *to dwell* in the knowledge; such an activity which should not need to aim to create new knowledge. So, if we change the phrase a little bit, the basic research, in Gadamer's view, with its strong ties with education (Bildung), should *act in the knowledge for the sake of knowledge*. By saying so, basic research becomes the sole ground of the production of the knowledge. Despite the fact that he does not neglect to attribute a certain kind to importance of the industry for social life, he clearly separates applied and basic researches by saying "there can be no other research except basic research". Therefore, in his view, scientific ethos in its purest sense has nothing to do with any goal-oriented perception and differs from the definition of Marietta L. Baba. This scientific ethos and research must be free from the expectations of society, industry, the state or the scientific progress itself, even if the productions (books, articles, discoveries etc.) of this "dwelling" can be used for their purposes.

Indeed, we may assert that a scientific inquiry can pursue the goal of solving a particular problem as well; and this goal would not make it "less scientific". One of the most magnificent examples of that is the story of British mathematician Prof. Andrew Wiles who solved a three-hundred-years mathematical problem in 1994, known as *Fermat's Last Theorem*, which set by a 17th century mathematician Pierre de Fermat. In a BBC documentary[10], which is about the process of how he

[10] See, *Fermat's Last Theorem*, (1996), http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/fermats-last-theorem/. I am so grateful to my beloved professor, Hasan Ünal Nalbantoğlu, who showed this documentary in the last session of his last course, in 2010. It was a time Nalbantoğlu had severe health issues. Yet, although he was having problems even in speaking in the classroom, he came to the class that day with full preparation. He gave his three-hours lecture in hoarse voice with a powerful excitement. The reason why he let us to watch that documentary was to show us Andrew Wiles' passion to solve a single problem for years, which was a neglected and seemed "out dated" topic in academic circles. I hope Nalbantoğlu knw that day that we, his students, saw that passion and wonder for science and knowledge in his entire classes more than we saw in the experience of Wiles.

solved the theorem, Andrew Wiles describes his experience as a mathematician in these terms:

> (…) entering a dark mansion. One goes into the first room and it's dark, completely dark. One stumbles around bumping into the furniture. Then gradually you learn where the furniture is, and finally, after six months or so, you find the light switch. You turn it on and suddenly it's all illuminated. You can see exactly where you were.

Andrew Wiles worked in a complete secrecy and isolation to prove Fermat's theorem for seven years. Even his advisor in Cambridge University suggested him to study on more "mainstream" and "serious" topics. However, as he tells since he was a 10-year-old boy, his passion was to solve that particular problem, and for that purpose, he abandoned all his other works and spent his career for this achievement: "It was a challenge, a beautiful problem" he says. In 1993, while he believed that he proved the theorem and announced that to his colleagues, he realized that he made major mistakes in his proof and continued his studies. In 1994, he finally proved the theorem. He describes the moment that he realized that he succeeded in solution the problem as follows:

> I was sitting here at this desk. It was Monday morning, September 19th. And I was trying… convincing myself that it didn't work, just seeing exactly what the problem was [in his proof], when *suddenly, totally unexpectedly*, I had this *incredible revelation*. I realized what was holding me up was exactly what would resolve the problem I'd had in my Iwasawa theory attempt three years earlier. It was the most… [he pauses and gulps], the most important moment of my working life [pausing again and about to weep]. Nothing I ever do again… I'm sorry [he stops the conversation and tears come down from his eyes]. *It was so indescribably beautiful. It was so simple and so elegant.* And… I just… stared in disbelief for… twenty minutes (emphasis mine).

What makes Wiles' study a "scientific experience" was not his significant achievement (outcome) or the awards he got, but the whole process itself even if he aimed to solve a "single problem" at the first place; and that is why, he says: "I loved every minute of it. However hard it had been, (…) it was a kind of private and very personal battle I was engaged in". Wiles' experience and his passion for the proof are the clear examples of what Gadamer calls *basic research*; a dedication for which it is worth to spend years of one's life while refusing to study "fashionable" topics in academia. At the end of his journey, Wiles also contributed a lot to mathematical knowledge, not only by proving the theorem but also by invalidating some others.

2.1. Merton's Scientific Field

I have no information if his proof has paved way to some technological discoveries or innovations (surplus value), which could be used for the industry (like the production of new war machines which would kill the next Andrew Wiles in some other country) and for the market (like a new mathematical model used in the finance sector to create more money from money); but we may guess that he did not aim that kind of "progress" when he began. Robert K. Merton was feeling uneasy regarding this progress of science. He argues that, scientists must hold a certain kind of *sentiment*, "which is assimilated by the scientist from the very outset of his training" to protect themselves from the explicit or implicit interventions of other institutions, such as economy, religion or the state. He explains the function of this sentiment as:

> (…) to preserve the autonomy of science. For if such extrascientific criteria of the value of science as presumable consonance with religious doctrines or economic utility or political appropriateness are adopted, science becomes acceptable only insofar as it meets these criteria (1973a, p. 260).

Merton believes that this sentiment protects the "purity" of the science and if it is eliminated by any power, science becomes open to any kind of influence of those institutions and comes to be "subject to direct control of other institutional agencies" (ibid., p. 260). This control, according to Merton, makes the place of science in society "uncertain" in terms of its "real purpose". To explain this "real purpose", he gives the example of the scientists in Cambridge University; Merton says, they make toast at dinners and say: "To pure mathematics, and may it never be of any use to anybody!" (ibid., p. 260). In this sense, the pure scientific activity emerges as something detached from all its ties from other fields and institutions and the scientific field should ignore all kinds of practical purposes whether it would be benefit of society or market and it should pursue the "advance[ment] of knowledge" (p. 261).

Merton's another concern - in addition to the influences of other institutions - is "the revolt against the science" in terms of the unintended consequences of the development of scientific progress. He argues that, the scientist, who does not have any control on the application of his/her discoveries, can face violent reactions. He says that: "The antipathy toward the technological products is projected toward science itself. Thus, when newly discovered gases or explosives are applied as military instruments, chemistry as a whole is censured by those whose humanitarian sentiments are outraged" (p. 261). Thus, according to Merton, whereas the discoveries of the scientist can be useful for market or the state, it also may get some reactions from the society and this reaction may target science itself. This may jeopardize the position of science and scientists in the society. Therefore, Merton is trying to suggest assuming a protective position for the scientific field.

At this point, we should ask about the determinants of what we call *scientific field* in order to enhance our understanding of how things do operate there. How can we define such a field and what are its characteristics? In his article, "The

Normative Structure of Science" (1942), Merton is concerned with the above mentioned questions and trying the draw the border lines of scientific ethos. He basically gives answers regarding the relationship between political and cultural values that affect the scientific ethos and tries to develop possible response to certain forms of *anti-intellectualism* from within the scientific structure (Merton, 1973b, p. 267). He observes that there is an attack to the "integrity of science" by institutional minds. In order to stand against those attacks, according to him, science should "reexamine its foundations" and rethink itself. In this endeavor, it should clearly define its major characteristics and cultural values. He thinks that: "Science is a deceptively inclusive word which refers to a variety of distinct though interrelated items" (1973b, p. 268) and suggests four definitive characteristics that give science its value.

> (1) a set of characteristic methods by means of which knowledge is certified; (2) a stock of accumulated knowledge stemming from the application of these methods; (3) a set of cultural values and mores governing the activities termed scientific; or (4) any combination of the foregoing. (p. 268)

The striking thing with these definitive features is that Merton seems to make a slight shift from his previous position in his later article entitled "Science and The Social Order" (1938), concerning the "purity" and the autonomy of science. While he was defending a vague "knowledge for the sake of knowledge" position, now he highlights the necessity of "certified knowledge", and, in connection with that, he mentions the "accumulation of knowledge" as another determinant. In my opinion, the attacks that undermine the value of science led him to take a new position on behalf of a "certified" knowledge which implies a sort of approval by the scientific community. He argues that: "The institutional goal of science is the extension of certified knowledge. The technical methods employed toward this end provide the relevant definition of knowledge: empirically confirmed and logically consistent statements of regularities" (p. 270). Despite the fact that for contemporary approaches to the science it is not an unusual positioning to anticipate "empirically confirmed" and "logically consistent" knowledge within the limits of the question of methods, the interesting thing is that Merton's shift which directs science to a certain goal and his intention to define the (scientific) knowledge. In this new position, without any approval or recognition, the scientific knowledge becomes open to any attack, as it appears something uncontrolled. Therefore, throughout his article he intends to specify the clear-cut limits of scientific ethos. The last sentence in the quotation below supports the assertion that Merton's main effort is to "codify" the rules and specify the borders of scientific field[11]. He says that:

> The ethos of science is that affectively toned complex of values and norms which is held to be binding on the man of science. The norms are expressed in the form of prescriptions, proscriptions, preferences, and permissions. They are legitimatized in terms of institutional values. These imperatives, transmitted by precept and example and reenforced by sanctions are in varying degrees internalized by the scientist, thus fashioning his scientific conscience or, if one prefers the latter-day phrase, his superego. *Although the ethos of science has not been codified, it can be inferred from the moral consensus of scientists.* (pp. 268-269) (emphasis mine)

2.2. Scientific Order and "Invisible Hand"

Michael Polanyi, in his "Republic of Science" (1962), deals with a similar question and he takes the science in its political and economic institutional basis. Although

[11] In my opinion, although he uses the term *ethos*, we should switch it to the *field*. The concept of *ethos* deriving from Ancient Greek means "habits", "practices" and "character"; and, in that sense, it does not necessarily refer to the rules (codified or not) of an institutional or social structure. Even though the meanings of *ethos* imply established features, we should keep in mind that all those peculiarities can change in time and place. Ethos, denoting all practices of the structure, it is hard to define the rules of the structure. If we need to use a concept which means rules and principals, it should be *nomos* (law, in Ancient Greek). Therefore, we should separate the scientific field and scientific ethos here. In the following pages I will be back to *scientific ethos* in order to show basically what is going on today's academic circles.

he is not very interested in drawing the definitive lines of the playground of scientific field as Merton does, he wants to propose an organizational model for scientific community. He makes an analogy between a jigsaw puzzle and this model which he thinks that all scientists have pieces of this puzzle and put them together within a coordination to speed the things up (Polanyi, 1962, p. 55). On the one hand, he seems to accept the vitality of using scientists' own judgment to pose their own questions in scientific issues; on the other hand, he suggests that there must be a sort of mutual coordination which would help to expose the shape of this jigsaw puzzle. What makes possible this coordination, according to Polanyi, is not a single authority which could reduce the effectiveness of scientists and "eliminate their independent initiatives" (1962, p. 56). Rather he believes that "an invisible hand" is going to guide this coordination. It can be clearly seen that his chose of words is an explicit reference to capitalist market and it is definitely not a simple coincidence. By continuously making analogies between capitalist market and scientific structure throughout his article, Polanyi suggests that scientific cooperation and structure can be regulated like market structure. He argues that:

> It was, indeed, with this in mind that I spoke of 'the invisible hand' guiding the coordination of independent initiatives to a maximum advancement of science, just as Adam Smith invoked 'the invisible hand' to describe the achievement of greatest joint material satisfaction when independent producers and consumers are guided by the prices of goods in a market. (ibid., p. 56)

According to him, whereas in the market the price signals allow the economists to create the mutual adjustments, in the scientific community the publication system operates in the same way. So, even though he is not in favor of a sort of "privatized scientific activity", this analogy between capitalist market and scientific structure, in my opinion, opens a path that makes it possible to consider the scientific field as already operating within the logic of capitalist market. He continues his analysis by stating that the particularity of "scientific merit" (professional standards), is to allow scientists to "produce the highest possible result by the use of a limited stock of intellectual and material resource" (p. 56). The criterions of scientific merit, according to Polanyi, can be enumerated as plausibility[12], (scientific) value and originality.

These scientific standards and merits are important for Polanyi as he argues that they are the real criteria of the distribution of the "subsidies". Since there are limited sources that can be allocated for scientific researches, it is crucial to decide how to distribute these subsidies in accordance with the scientific merit. At this point, Polanyi does not seem to be concerned whether these subsidies come from public or private sources (p. 61). Thus, the problem he poses is not whether the research would be influenced by private sector with its specific expectations from the research. Rather, he questions if scientific authority and standards it poses can function in a fair manner for determining the distribution of the money. To put it differently, in Polanyi's view, scientific research must be conducted for its own purposes (for the sake of itself); and "any attempt at guiding scientific research towards a purpose other than its own is an attempt to deflect it from the advancement of science" (p. 62). Therefore, he seems to be confident that no institution would act contrary to this "ideal" which may possibly lead to a

[12] Polanyi especially concentrates on the plausibility of scientific merit. According to him, "scientific publications are continuously beset by cranks, frauds and bunglers" and therefore he suggests that such contributions must be rejected and even "censored" by the authority of scientific community. Although he rejects a single authority, here, he seems to indicate a group of people with the ability to function as the authority of censorship. He holds an ambivalent position which, one the one had, gives a specific authority to "some distinguished members" of the scientific community; and on the other hand, he argues that every member of scientific community to exercise this authority "over each other". (Polanyi, 1962, p. 60)

deviation in the pursuit of science. Even the private enterprises would apply a certain kind of *laissez fair* policy in their relation with science.

However, he adds a critical point and refers to his another article in a footnote. He says that: “In saying this, I have *not* forgotten, but merely set aside, the vast amount not of scientific work currently conducted in industrial and governmental laboratories” (p. 63) (emphasis in original). He adds that he discusses the relationship between “academic and industrial science” in his article “Science: Academic and Industrial” (1947). In this rather short article, he briefly gives his view on differentiation of academic research from the research carried on for industrial (technological) purposes. Since this article deals with the issue of scientific research conducted in market logic as early as 1947, it is quite important as an early formulation of the contemporary discussions regarding the problematic market-university relations. So it is a good starting point before we discuss this relation and its implications in terms of the differences between market research and academic research.

He argues that, “Where a difference exists between science and technology, it arises from the fact that science is always systematic while technology is only systematic in patches” (Polanyi, 1947, p. 71). According to Polanyi, even though scientific method and research may deal with practical problems, this can only be “up to a point”. But, a factory manager’s only goal is to find out practical solutions to practical problems, not to deal with the new theoretical questions arising out of new innovations.

> The university professor entering his laboratory in the morning is faced with problems of a different kind from those facing the factory manager when starting his day’s work. The professor looks forward to a crop of observations, ideas and calculations, which may result in a modification of the existing system of accepted knowledge. The manager may also want to find out new things, namely new ways and means to produce more

> efficiently and to this purpose he may apply the systematic and critical methods of science, but his aim lies beyond that, in the satisfaction of human needs. Consequently, he will not pursue science as the professor does. *He will not carry scientific research beyond the point of visible (or at least very probable) usefulness*. (1947, p. 71) (emphasis mine)

In Polanyi's view, scientific research is not intrinsic to university professors; yet, he tacitly tries to separate these two fields. Since the researches for technological innovations in industry serve for practical needs of society, there emerges a tension between the purposes of university research and industry. The credo of market is to produce useful things and sell them. Polanyi does not say much about the marketing process of the goods; his intention is to point out the difference of logics and, in a sense, find out a middle-way between them while protecting the realm of university research. He argues that professors do not have the responsibility to teach practical issues and they even cannot teach them as they do not have the practical training background.

> Sometimes universities are reproached for neglecting the teaching of technology and for conducting their research on lines devoid of visible practical interest. They are asked to teach more industrial chemistry and it has been suggested that research students at universities should be regularly given industrial problems to work on. *Such demands are unreasonable.* University teachers cannot be masters of the technical arts which they do not themselves practice (ibid., p. 72) (emphasis mine)

However, he is aware that not all the graduates may find a job in academia. Hence, many of them after graduation has to work in industry by "leav[ing] their hearts behind in academic research" (p. 73). The new graduates who will find a job from industrial sector "must transfer his emotions from the academic to the industrial" (p.73). Therefore, even though universities must protect their autonomy in terms of conducting scientific research, he suggests a middle-way in order to reconcile both parties. He argues that universities must figure out new ways such as to "arrange suitable courses and conferences" to help the graduates to get accustomed to their new jobs. So, Polanyi explicitly suggests establishing relations between academy and industry. Polanyi's approach can be seen a hesitant shift from Merton's ideal of "pure science". He is aware that, in practice, the industry gradually increases its power in economic and societal levels and getting its productive force from university graduates in a considerable extend who have the theoretical knowledge of production. The only task is to give those students the practical knowledge of the process (which Polanyi calls "the transfer of love for science"). This article, therefore, clearly shows that the discussions and tensions between university and industry can be dated back to the post-war era. Although Polanyi believes that academia can (and must) protect its autonomy and endeavor for pure scientific purposes, we will see in the following pages that this becomes one of the biggest concerns of the university today.

2.3. Scientific Norms and Scientific Field: Bourdieu's Intervention

As I try to discuss above, Merton's and Polanyi's attitude towards scientific field is more positive, whereas Pierre Bourdieu follows a more critical approach. Before I turn my attention to Bourdieu's approach I would like briefly to discuss Merton's "norms" in scientific ethos; particularly the requirements of "disinterestedness" and "communism" (communality). According to Merton, disinterestedness is one of the most important norms of the scientific field. Yet, Merton argues that disinterestedness is often confused with a sort of altruistic attitude attributed to the scientists. So, for Merton, it would be misleading to think that scientists are the people who dedicate themselves entirely for the benefit of the society. For Merton it is wrong to consider scientific ethos from the perspective of the personal ethical and moral attitudes of scientists. Furthermore, Merton asserts that scientists do not act in accordance with "idle curiosity" either. According to Merton, who accepts the fact that even the scientists can act by their personal interests like any other human being working in other jobs, scientific field, in that sense, is not different than any other field. But he implicitly suggests that scientific field has some other differences and superiority. This superiority depends on the control of works of the scientists by each other. Scientific authority can only be established on such a self-policing. It may be argued that Merton has an extra-optimistic feeling in terms of the possibility of reducing fraud in scientific field. He believes that scientists are much more successful to separate the bad scientific products from the good ones in comparison with the professionals in other fields. In this sense, disinterestedness stems from the control and even censorship over each other. So, what makes disinterestedness possible is the inner control of scientific institutions, not the personal qualities of the scientists.

Communism, on the other hand, beyond its political connotations, refers to common ownership of goods, specifically of intellectual property. According to Merton, scientific findings should be considered as common assets of the scientific community. They are also the "common heritage" of the scientific field and therefore, they must be seen as the communal property of the whole structure. Scientists may have their own individual "property rights", but this ownership must be limited. It is possible to recognize the validity of the idea of "intellectual property" in science, yet, we should always remember that these findings and scientific knowledge in general essentially belong to the common property of scientific field. In this sense, scientists may compete with each other in scientific issues but they have the obligation to share their findings within the scientific community. This obligation poses itself as a moral expectation. Thus, for Merton: "The communism of the scientific ethos is incompatible with the definition of technology as "private property" in a capitalistic economy." (1973b, p. 275). At this point, Merton thinks that the logic of scientific production process does not coincide with the capitalist logic. So, even though he agrees that scientists cannot be considered indifferent to personal interest, he suggests that they should carry out their activities beyond the expectation of personal gain. In this manner, we may argue, Merton seems to oppose the process of commodification of scientific knowledge. Merton's perception of scientific knowledge contradicts with the fact that today's scientific activities are already commercialized and the products of scientific activities have already acquired the character of commodity (such as patents, or even published articles). It would not be inaccurate to say that this phenomenon becomes intrinsic in the contemporary university circles and scientific field is increasingly distancing itself from Merton's ideals.

Pierre Bourdieu, in his article, "The Specificity of the Scientific Field" (1975), develops a critic of these two Mertonian imperatives. Contrary to Merton and Polanyi, Bourdieu tries to show that these ideals cannot be the founding principles of scientific ethos. Even though Bourdieu's criticisms can be seen as pessimism towards the scientific field, his intention is rather to develop a serious and realistic assessment of the actual situation. However, his criticisms represent an epistemological break with Merton's and Polanyi's path.

Bourdieu, at the beginning of his article, introduces his position by establishing a certain distance against what is called "pure science". Science, according to Bourdieu, even in its "purest" sense is a social field like any other, and by its distribution of power, struggles, interests and profits it gets a specific form (Bourdieu, 1975, p. 19). It seems to me that, by distancing himself from a conceptualization of "pure science", Bourdieu is reckoning with Merton's approach to scientific field.

The *field* in Bourdiean conceptualization mainly refers to all sorts of relations and positionings between agents. He says that:

> These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 97)

The field appears as a social world which is hierarchically structured and where power and different sorts of capital are unevenly distributed among the agents. Bourdieu characterized four types of capital: economic (material possessions), cultural (information, knowledge, education, skills, mannerisms), social (social connections, group memberships, networks), and symbolic (honor, prestige, recognition) (Mendoza et.al., 2012, p. 560).

Bourdieu further differentiates three kinds of symbolic capital among the academics: academic, scientific, and intellectual. Academic capital refers to the power of control over academic resources. Scientific capital refers to research reputation and prestige based on scholarly publications. Intellectual capital refers to the ability to influence public opinion and it is likely to be a product of scientific capital (Mendoza et al., 2012, p. 562).

The scientific field, in Bourdieu's view, is the "locus of a competitive struggle in which the *specific* issue is the monopoly of scientific authority" (ibid). At this point Bourdieu, instead of putting simply a distance between his position and the idea that scientific field is a "sacred" field, he argues that this field "produces and presupposes a specific form of interest". This approach may be seen as a direct critique of Merton's ideas. Even though Merton does not consider that scientists are those who act by their altruistic motivations on behalf of the society per se, Bourdieu argues that scientific field necessarily comprises this very interestedness in a specific form. In this sense, Bourdieu is rejecting Merton's idea that scientific field would create a disinterested ground by censorship of scientific authority and separating bad and good scientific products. According to Bourdieu:

> References to scientific interest and scientific authority (or competence) is intended to eliminate from the outset certain distinctions which, in the implicit state, pervade discussions of science: thus, to attempt to distinguish those aspects of scientific competence (or authority) which are regarded as pure social representation, symbolic power, marked by elaborate apparatus of emblems and signs, from what is regarded as pure technical competence, is to fall into the trap which is constitutive of all competence, a *social authority* which legitimates itself by presenting itself as pure technical reason for (1975, p. 20) (emphasis in original)

For Bourdieu, a researcher or even a student have a certain knowledge regarding the possible positions in the future that s/he can occupy in the hierarchy of university at the very beginning of his/her career and, in that manner, s/he is well aware that graduating from a top-ranking university and having a high grade point average would be very helpful to get a position. Saying this, Bourdieu implies that, the scientific authority cannot function in a "pure technical reason" as Merton suggests. According to Bourdieu, scientific authority is the field where hierarchies and power relations are established and operationalized. So, scientific field is not an *apolitical* and/or *purely intellectual* field as Merton suggests. In this sense, "all scientific practices are directed towards the acquisition of scientific authority" (1975, p. 21).

So, where does scientists pursuit of position in scientific field, or more clearly, in scientific authority stem from? Bourdieu asserts that, at this point, "symbolic profits" such as prestige, recognition and fame must be taken into consideration here (1975, p. 22). He argues that there is a sort of "prestige economy" within the scientific field and it functions as its very driving motivation. He quotes from Frederick Reif's (1961, p. 1959) "The Competitive World of Pure Scientist":

> A scientist strives to do research which he considers important. But intrinsic satisfaction and interest are not his only reasons. This becomes apparent when one observes what happens if the scientist discovers that someone else has just published a conclusion which he was about to reach as a result of his own research. Almost invariably he feels upset by this occurrence, although the intrinsic interest of his work has certainly not been affected. The scientist wants his work to be not only interesting to himself but also important to others.

He underlines that there is this prestige and reputation economy beneath our decisions, from the topic we choose for conducting research to methodology that we will use and even the journal we pick to publish[13]. According to him, such decisions emerge as *political investment strategies*[14]. Bourdieu argues that these

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[13] It is no longer something original to say that in today's publishing market the topic that you choose and the method that you adopt are vital. The author of this dissertation is well aware that the possibility of publishing an article in his topic (market research ethnography) is less than those who work on certain topics such as gender and migration. However, he also knows that, he has more chance than those who study "pure theory", by conducting an ethnographic fieldwork research and providing "the knowledge of local issues". As Bourdieu suggests:

> (…) the established scientific order also includes the instruments of circulation, in particular the scientific journals which, by selecting their articles in of the dominant criteria, terms productions faithful the principles of official science, thereby consecrate to continuously holding the example of what deserves the of science, out name and exercise *de facto* censorship of heretical productions, either by rejecting them outright by simply discouraging the intention of trying to or even publish them by of the definition of the publishable which they set means forward (1975, p. 30) (emphasis in original)

[14] Here, it would be useful to remind one more point. There are some other "unwritten rules" in publishing market that one must take into consideration. As Ali Ergur argues, "[one] must take into consideration the specific requirements of the journal in which one intends to publish. (...) An author, who does not know the theoretical, scientific, methodological tendencies, in other words, the unwritten codes of the journal, which s/he wishes to publish his/her article (i.e., a Third World born scientist) in such a childish naiveté, would just hit onto a transparent wall, if s/he does not adopt the accurate strategy and make the fine adjustments in the article. This, instead of being an

efforts to hold a position in scientific authority are the indicator of a particular kind of social capital and it creates a constitutive power in scientific field. Furthermore, this social capital can be accumulated and converted to other sorts of capitals (i.e., to a better paid position or to a "chair" in politics). But the thing is, Bourdieu insistently underlines that, the scientist has to struggle to get a dominant position within this structure in order to survive in academic circles.

Bourdieu argues that scientific authority imposes the issue of "originality" in publications and researches. He thinks that if some other scientist publishes an article on the topic that you study on for years before you do, your study becomes a "worthless duplication of work already recognised" in the scientific field (ibid., p. 26). Since this obsession on the originality causes pressure for rush, the publications gradually turns out to be superficial and prosaic[15]. And finally, Bourdieu reminds us that the "pattern of name ordering" in publications has also a huge impact on the recognition within the field. The person, whose name written at the top, gets the bigger slice of prestige.

According to Bourdieu, under this scientific order which academic structure enforces all the subjects to comply with, the "new entrants" of the academia may follow two basic strategies. The first strategy, what Bourdieu calls *succession strategies*, offers a predictable career and almost guarantees a position in academia. Those who follow this strategy establish their careers by focusing on

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issue of the scientificity, originality and the powerfulness of analysis in the article, is a matter of mobilization of appropriate political means" (Ergur, 2016, p. 162) (translation is mine).

[15] As I will discuss in the following chapters this rush to complete the research and present the results is something "ordinary" in the market research ethos. Market research has to be conducted in a very short time period (days, maybe weeks, but certainly not months) and presented to the client. We may say that the prevalent scientific ethos and market research ethos gradually resemble each other.

the popular topics in academia and succeed in an easier way by acting upon the expectations of scientific authority. Even they, who follow this path, pose their research question within the limits of scientific order decide. As Bourdieu suggests (1975, p. 31): “It only solves the problems it can raise and only raises the problems it can solve”. For those who follow what he calls as *subversion strategies, on the other hand,* the path to academic success could be much harder and risky. Bourdieu points out that, if they cannot reach a success in gaining some power of redefining the scientific domination, they will never get the profit that they expect. This second group of people, rather pursuing to realize the expectations of an already established academic order, will try to survive by challenging the old scientific order. Bourdieu calls this endeavor as “heretical invention”.

3. The Condition of Knowledge in a New Age

Up until now, I have tried to give a general account of some thinkers’ ideas about how they define science; how they regard scientific ethos and scientific field; and finally how the inner power relations of actors in the field operates at the theoretical level. Before I begin to analyze the meaning and consequences of these definitions and relations, I would like briefly to discuss the contemporary condition of scientific knowledge. This discussion, I believe, will lead us to acquire a possible understanding of the relation between scientific field in Bourdieusian sense and market research ethos.

The general idea within intellectual circles that the world has entered a new age what is called a “new industrial age” (or in Daniel Bell’s conceptualization, *Post-Industrial Society*; see, Bell, 1999) by means of the technological developments and discoveries by the beginning of 1950's roughly until 1980's. The phase of capitalist mode of production in this age has transformed into a mass production which goes hand in hand with a mass consumption. We may argue that what characterizes this "new industrial age" is the logic of production, which produces the goods not – in a Marxian sense - for the actual needs of the society, but far beyond that, to consume for the sake of consumption. So, in this new industrial age, the production cannot be considered per se without technology, marketing and advertisement.

By the 1980's, this transformation has taken a new face which is generally called as "information society". I propose that this new face is not a rupture from the conceptualization of "new industrial age" but a certain boosting of it. Due to the developments in information and communication technologies and their impact on industrial production, the capitalist market has realized the importance of knowledge; its production and dissemination. Manuel Castells (2010, p. 77) argues that there is emerging a new kind of economy which he calls "informational", since "the productivity and competitiveness of units or agents in this economy (be it firms, regions, or nations) fundamentally depend upon their capacity to generate, process, and apply efficiently knowledge-based information". Therefore, it may be proposed that what creates value in this new era is the knowledge itself. This means that the new economy (needless to say, we may also call it neoliberal economy) is primarily based on the knowledge in order to increase profits and generate wealth without considering the question of distribution. Dunning (2000, p. 8) also calls this new economy as *knowledge economy* as he argues that,

> (…) the main source of wealth in market economies has switched from natural assets (notably land and relatively unskilled labour), through tangible created assets (notably buildings, machinery and equipment, and finance), to intangible created assets (notably knowledge and information of all kinds) which may be embodied in human beings, in organizations, or in physical assets

However, now what we are faced with is a certain kind of knowledge capable of generating innovative results. This does not mean that there is a change in the knowledge itself, but that there is a shift in the way we position and operationalize knowledge. In this sense, every sort of information would be useful for that economy as long as it generates wealth in the market. So, even though there is a hierarchy between knowledge(s), this does not stem from its specific features but its power of wealth creation[16].

David Harvey, in his *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1992), prefers to read this shift in the context of a flexible accumulation process in capitalism. He proposes that although the endeavor for know-how (scientific and technical) has always been a major issue for the capitalist market, the emphasis in this struggle has changed. According to him (Harvey, 1992, p. 159): "in a world of quick changing tastes and needs and flexible production systems (…), access to the latest technique, the latest product, the latest scientific discovery implies the possibility of seizing an important competitive advantage". Therefore, he asserts that, the knowledge has become the "key commodity" which produces wealth and value on its own right. This "organized knowledge production" gives new market regime its character.

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[16] In this sense, it would not be accurate to differentiate knowledge as "theoretical" and "practical. As I will discuss in the following chapters, during my fieldwork we were using all kinds of "theoretical" knowledge in our client presentations. For instance, especially in our projects conducted for automobile industry we always mentioned Marxian concepts "use-value", "exchange-value" and Baudrillard's "symbolic value" in order to show the various perceptions of cars by users. For some our interviewees, their cars were just "a piece of metal" which was a helpful tool for transportation, whereas for some others it meant "another member of the family" or something that provided prestige. So, we, in a sense, transformed the Marxian theory into a market value; and I have to admit that, such theoretical knowledge always made a positive impact on our clients!

In this transformation, knowledge itself has transformed into a commodity and has become the subject of exchange and value. As Lyotard suggests (1984, pp. 32), knowledge looses its “use-value” in the post-industrial age and it cannot survive without its exchange value. So, the value is no longer something intrinsic to knowledge. “Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange" (p. 31). This will inevitably affect our approach to the relation between knowledge and truth. While the sole purpose of knowledge was making the truth appear in the classical approach (knowledge for the sake of knowledge), now what is expected from knowledge is efficacy and usefulness.

Lyotard also discusses the impact of commercialization of knowledge on the scientific researches. According to him, capitalist market deals with research, which produces scientific knowledge for innovation, mainly in two ways. It is either by directly financing research departments of private companies which directly pursue technological innovations or by indirectly constituting private, state or mixed-sector research foundations through funding universities, research groups or laboratories “with no expectation of an immediate return on the results of the work” (ibid., p. 45)[17]. In this order, according to Lyotard, there is no room for “idealist and humanist narratives” which aim to promote pure scientific researches. The task of science can no longer be finding the *truth*. The new and the only goal of the capitalist market (and the science which is in the service of this order) is power. As it may be observed from the discussion of Lyotard, under this new order the relationship between science and knowledge has drastically changed for the benefit of the capitalist market. Science, increasingly directed

[17] It is not difficult to assume that beneath this lower expectation for immediate results there lies a “throwing a sprat to catch a mackerel” situation. As Lyotard says: “Centers dedicated to "pure" research suffer from this less, but also receive less funding” (1984, p. 46).

toward technology, becomes the main tool to produce knowledge which finds its value in the market. However, the striking thing is that what we call market is no longer merely the private enterprises. The market logic is penetrating into the public institutions and they adopt themselves to this transformation. We can trace the implications of this transformation and marketization of public institutions in terms of the relation between science and knowledge within the ethos of today's universities.

4. Academic Market Place: Commodification of Knowledge in Academia

Gadamer was warning us about the impact of the above mentioned transformation in science and universities by stating that it was a "critical situation" (1992, p. 49). Throughout his article, one may feel his uneasiness regarding the changing character of the scientific ideal in universities. He argues that, we live in a time that can be defined as "industrial society" and this new economic and social era has a direct impact on the universities. Research in universities, according to him, is becoming more and more difficult to conduct due to the increasing necessary costs. We may argue that this situation provokes two things; first is that research is increasingly conducted by private research centers funded by industry, and second, universities has began to collaborate with the private sector to be subsidized for research in order to keep their positions.

This second development inevitably creates a sort of "academic market place" and as it occurs in the market; it commodifies academic research and products within certain power relations. Bourdieu defines this process as *academic capitalism*. As

Münch argues (2016, p. 1), academic capitalism is a unique hybrid that unites the scientific search for truth and the economic drive for profit maximization. It turns universities into enterprises competing for capital in the “businesses” of knowledge production looking for new findings that can be turned into patents and profitable commodities.

Bourdieu makes a quite striking point regarding the relation between ethical concerns and academic market. He says that, “The market in scientific goods has its laws, and they have nothing to do with ethics” (1975, p. 26). The “laws” Bourdieu discusses are the main principles of functioning of the scientific field constituted by the agents of academia. Bourdieu, while he argues that this field cannot be considered in an ethical position, is elaborating on Polanyi’s perception of the “invisible hand” emerging in scientific field. He also criticizes how this structure operating. Whereas Polanyi seems to affirm the “invisible hand” in scientific field due to its regulatory function, Bourdieu tries to show how this structure transforms science into market logic.

What is crucial here is that Bourdieu, instead of seeing the intervention of capitalist mode of production to scientific field as the only responsible factor for the transformation of science into market logic, is intentionally underlying the impact of the ongoing internal power relations in the scientific field itself. This explanation would not deny the impact of market on scientific sphere. As I will discuss later, especially after 1980s, various actors in the market has begun to dominate universities in several ways and give a new orientation to scientific research in accordance with the requirements of usefulness. However, what Bourdieu discusses and criticizes here is that the commodification of knowledge and science is the direct result of the specific power relations of scientific field itself. This is the fundamental point which has to be analyzed. He argues that:

> The structure of the scientific field at any given moment is defined by the state of the power distribution between the protagonists in the struggle (agents or institutions), i.e. by the structure of the distribution of the specific capital, (...) The structure of the distribution of scientific capital is the source of the transformations of the scientific field through the intermediary of the strategies for conservation or subversion of the structure which the structure itself produces (p. 27)

The actors in scientific field act on to keep their positions and increase their scientific capital by using various strategies. If we try to read this situation from within the commodification process, it can be asserted that this process emerged from the scientific field itself. So, what is this scientific capital? Every kind of knowledge produced by actors in scientific field gives the dominant character of scientific capital. Here, a question regarding the usefulness of this knowledge does not have a place in our discussion. What is important here is whether knowledge as commodity can find a buyer in the market in its various forms such as research projects, articles, and conferences etc., or not. While in capitalist market money appears as the representation of the exchange value of things, in scientific market - if we follow Bourdieu's argumentation – it is not just money but maybe more than that, prestige and reputation define the exchange value of the products.

Besides, as Bourdieu argues, this specific symbolic (i.e. scientific) capital can be converted to any other capital. For instance, we may assert that an academic, who pursues *succession strategies*, can transform his/her scientific research and publish articles carried out within the limits of scientific order's expectations into high budget research projects in the future. And those projects give the capability to achieve new positions and projects as well. In these forms scientific capital accumulates in the market logic. The idea of accumulating knowledge under the logic of "knowledge for the sake of knowledge" is eventually replaced by the accumulation of knowledge as commodity. Scientific field as a structure imposes its internal laws. In that sense, we face an inner commodification and valuation of knowledge processes reproducing by academic actors in addition to the external interventions of the state's or private enterprises.

Being a modern institution, university is relatively new and was born together with the rise in national aspirations and in connection with the development of nation-states in the nineteenth century and founded on the basis of the project written in 1808 by Wilhelm von Humboldt for the University of Berlin (Kwiek, 2000, p. 76). On this ground, the main motivation of the universities was to promote the modern values and produce knowledge for the sake of society (i.e., nation state). However, the university as a modern institution has always had close ties with capitalism. As Ergur states that:

> University has always been the irreplaceable foundation of, not only the modernity, in the sense of its values and aesthetics, but also capitalism's in which it has been historically shaped. Therefore, the image of university, which is fully independent, economically autonomous, ideologically side with science, is substantially part of an unrealistic discourse (2016, p. 150) (translation is mine)

Therefore, it would be mistaken (and a mystification) to think that universities are the institutions which make researches and produce knowledge for the public interest per se. This does not mean that the knowledge produced in the universities do not have any impact on the public good; yet, the main goal of the university as an institution has not always defined within the borders of the ideals of Humboldt. The logic of modern university cannot be understood without the functioning of capitalist market. Although the distinction between "public" and "private" universities implies an indifferent zone to market logic on behalf of the former, we may argue that especially after 1990s the contrast between them have gradually been lessen. In my opinion, it is more accurate to read this distinction as rather a slight transition from former to latter. As Erbaş argues (2016, p. 113):

> Consequently, approaching the process with regard to the relation between power and science, it can be argued that, instead of science produced for the public in the public universities, ''knowledge'' has started to be produced for the market in all universities regardless of whether public, private or foundation universities. In that sense, knowledge has generally turned into a commodity and started to be evaluated and promoted in terms of its value in the market. (translation is mine)

It may be argued that there is an articulation process of universities to private sector, not only in the sense of the internalization of the market logic but also via contracts between corporations and universities. One of the most striking examples of this “cooperation” between industry and universities has been set between UC Berkeley and the Swiss pharmaceutical corporation Novartis in the late 1990s. In exchange for offering funds worth $25 million, Novartis was guaranteed the right of first utilization of any finding originating from research at PMB in proportion to the external funding it provided. Furthermore, Novartis secured two seats out of five in the department's research council between 1998 and 2003. In this way, the company also had access to and a say in all research projects even those that were not funded directly by Novartis but by public money (Münch, 2016, p. 9-10). Although this cooperation was harshly criticized, UC Berkeley cut another deal with BP, the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champagne, establishing the joint Energy Biosciences Institute on the Berkeley campus in 2007 for a $500 million (ibid., p. 10). This example clearly shows that the link between the university and the capitalist logic has transformed into a direct influence of the corporations on to the universities. What is expected from universities is to work as if they are research and development departments of the corporations. This situation creates an ambiguous environment for the academics; it may be argued that they become the white-collar workers for private enterprises whose task is to produce marketable goods and train new workers for the market[18].

The entire system of universities and the relations among the subjects of them has to be changed due to this newly developing partnership. Today, universities are broadly dominated and shaped under a "corporate logic" which creates "entrepreneur academics" and "customer students"[19]. Fraser and Taylor (2016, p. 12) argues that the neoliberalization process in academia forces all the subjects of the universities to create new agendas which make decisions to what to publish, what is worth to fund, who will be hired and fired. They state that, the only measurement of the "success" has become the metrics, which authors call a "ranking regime". In publishing sector metric system appears to expect to publish as many as possible and – preferably – in the journals which have higher impact factors. According to them: "The endless round of seminars, workshops, and information sessions that we are expected to attend on 'managing metrics' or 'learning self-promotion' add to the time-consuming nature of this whole approach" (Fraser and Taylor, 2016, p. 11). In many countries as well as Turkey, the metric system appears as performance indicators and a scoring system for promotion. The scoring system in Turkey enforces academics to use all their

[18] Hasan Ünal Nalbantoğlu draws attention to this new "human-machine army" of newly trained professionals in universities and define them as "white-collar workers". He argues that what is expected from them is not a sort of independent thinking but to mobilize their limited talents in the service of the interests of national and international private enterprises. He also implies that it is an *illusion* to think that they are still workers of the universities; they are indirectly working for corporations funding their universities (Nalbantoğlu, 2009, p. 60).

[19] For various discussions on those conceptualizations regarding the subjects of the university, see: Mendoza, Kuntz, & Berger, 2012; Münch, 2016; O'Sullivan, 2016; Watts, 2017; Fraser & Taylor, 2016; Ergül & Coşar, 2017; Arvanitakis & Hornsby, 2016; Nalbantoğlu, 2017.

“talents” since it is not enough only to publish articles any more. One must also, conduct researches, make presentations and to be cited for his/her articles/books.

Also there is the pressure on academics to enhance their “profile” in social media and tend to study marketable topics in order to get more funding from corporations and private funds for the researches. According to them, the perception of academics has been changed due to the new expectations of the academic market:

> Academics are no longer esteemed for being public intellectuals committed to generating public discourse on crucial issues and/or collaborating with community partners. Instead, we are constituted as commercial agents expected to pursue commercially viable projects, sometimes with the help of specially designated business intermediaries (Fraser and Taylor, 2016, pp. 10–11).

This influence of corporate logic to academic life has also its impact on the students. First of all, it is well known that in many of the capitalist societies the students have to pay huge amounts of money (for both tuition fees and living expenses) to get university education. A small part of them, who most probably graduated from private high schools and because of that, has a social capital in Bourdiean sense, may get funds from universities. But it is not a secret that university education is still a privilege for the many. The logic behind this education is broadly to prepare the students for the market competition. If one has the chance of graduating from a top ranking university one increases one’s chances in finding a better-paid job and position. In this environment, the relation between academics and students assumes new forms. Fraser and Taylor (2016, p. 14) point out their disappointing experience in this new system as follows:

> It is, after all, awfully difficult to encourage students to be interested in knowledge ‘for the sake of it’ when that very idea is constantly undermined by the message that unless it leads to profit of some kind it is futile and a waste of money and time. It is also difficult

> when the ethos of the institution that we are trying to spread this message within is itself fully on board with the message that unless it's vocational it doesn't matter.

In addition to that, the ones who wish to continue in academia and apply for the post-graduate schools now (or eventually will be) aware that they must seek the "profitable" topics to study in order to hold in the academic circles. The doctoral students and teaching assistants have been facing even more publishing pressure to get tenure-track positions after their graduations. Hence, most of them have to work as adjunct faculty members which is an unsecured and low-paid position. The statistics show that there is a huge shift in the trends of faculty employment statuses. Although at the end of 1960s the rates of tenure and tenure-track positions was almost 80% in the US universities, by 2009 it declined to 33%[20]. Çetinkaya (2017) argues that the academic atmosphere in Turkish universities has been surrounded by a sort of despair due to the performance indicators and publishing pressure in top-tier journals. She suggests that as a consequence of the decline in "idealist" attitude among both older and younger academics, the scientific production is organized in accordance with a career-oriented system, and within this system, academic existence has been attached to the motivation of "for the sake of success" which is defined in accordance with the neoliberal criteria and values (ibid, p. 83).

The condition of social sciences and humanities faculties are even worse in all over the world. By its very nature, for the engineering faculties it is relatively easier to adopt themselves to the industrial expectations. However, for social sciences and humanities the case is harder due to their scientific approaches and subjects of study. It is evident that social sciences have been "serving" to the states

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[20] See, Tyler Kingkade, 11/11/2013, "9 Reasons Why Being An Adjunct Faculty Member Is Terrible", http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/11/adjunct-faculty_n_4255139.html

for political purposes ranging from colonial goals to policy-making counseling from the very beginning of their establishment. Indeed, the purpose of the most of the founding fathers of social sciences is to foresee the future of the society and to find out the laws of keeping it in order. Therefore, social sciences could be able to manage to keep their positions in universities for a long time while universities were flourishing under the protective umbrella of the nation-state.

However, although social sciences and humanities programs are still trying to survive, the governments take decisions to wipe them out from universities. Two years ago, the Council of Higher Education in Turkey (YÖK), which is the highest institution responsible for the organization of universities, announced that they would not provide quota anymore to liberal art faculties, as the interest in them was getting lower by the students[21]. Practically this decision means that liberal art faculties will be closed in a few years. Another example from Japan is much more striking. In 2015, The Ministry of Education in Japan sent a letter to 86 universities in all over the country and ordered to "take active steps to abolish [social science and humanities] organizations or to convert them to serve areas that better meet society's needs"[22]. Twenty-six of the universities "have confirmed that they will either close or scale back their relevant faculties at the behest of

[21] Gamze Kolcu, 29.04.2015, "YÖK: Kapatıp güçlendireceğiz, Akademisyenler: Bilim biter", http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yok-kapatip-guclendirecegiz-akademisyenler-bilim-biter-28865916

[22] Jack Grove, 15.09.2015, "Social sciences and humanities faculties 'to close' in Japan after ministerial intervention", https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/social-sciences-and-humanities-faculties-close-japan-after-ministerial-intervention.

Japan's government"[23]. Only two universities, Tokyo and Kyoto, have declared that they will not comply with the order.

Both the content of the order and the reaction of the twenty-six universities are noteworthy for the future of social science faculties. Japanese Minister's perception of social sciences is not surprising; in almost every country social sciences are seen as useless and irritatingly critical and disturbing disciplines. As Bauman suggests for sociology, it: "(…) may appear as a meddlesome and irritating stranger. By examining that which is taken-for-granted, it has the potential to disturb the comfortable certitudes of life by asking questions no one can remember asking and those with vested interests resent even being asked" (Bauman & May, 2001, p. 10). It is a commonsensical knowledge for those who spend some time in social sciences faculties as a student that they hear a particular question all the time: "What is your department use for?". Therefore, social scientists strive to prove that they are doing something serious and useful by conducting researches on the topics, which are defined "social problems" by the state institutions. Obviously I do not imply that the only function of these researches is to prove social sciences as something useful for the state or society. However, it is not deniable that a study, for example, in the field of "sociology of knowledge" will not be accepted as an endeavor to "meet society's needs". Thus, it is not surprising that in a highly industrialized country like Japan, social sciences faculties are seen as waste of money and time.

[23] See also, 14.09.2015, "Social sciences and humanities faculties to close in Japan after ministerial decree", http://www.cha-shc.ca/english/news/social-sciences-and-humanities-faculties-to-close-in-japan-after-ministerial-decree.htm#sthash.lThfAOP7.dpbs

These processes exemplified by Turkish and Japanese cases denote that the future of social sciences graduates in academic market is getting more and more critical. The striking thing is that we no longer discuss, for instance, the quality of education, the possibility of producing knowledge "for the sake of knowledge" or from what source funding for a social scientific research should be provided; but concentrate on the question whether social sciences and humanities faculties will survive in academia. As George Morgan states, the labor markets in the humanities and social sciences departments has always been tighter than that of vocational disciplines:

> (…) it is easier for accountants and engineers to find non-academic work than for philosophers and sociologists. This is why those in the humanities and social sciences can be *enslaved* to years of casual labour, while those who can find work outside academia will be more inclined to walk away if they are unable to obtain secure work (Morgan, 2016, p. 159) (emphasis mine).

In addition to the growing enslavement by the exploitation of corporate logic in universities, social sciences graduates face the danger of unemployment in near future. Therefore, the students who hold a masters or PhD degrees from social sciences programs are encouraged to become *experts* in private sector, such as in NGOs at best and market research companies at most to *create value* for the capitalist market.

5. Where Does Market Research Reside?: A Symptomatic Reading

The discussion above shows us the two pillars of the ground upon which market research resides. The first pillar is related with knowledge. Today, the social structure that we call "knowledge society" points out to a reality where the knowledge itself has become a commodity that can be bought and sold. The use value of knowledge has gradually been losing its ground in social and political area, whereas its exchange value emerges as the main determinant. Knowledge as commodity gets its value in accordance with the role it plays in generating further capital in capitalist market. In that sense, knowledge economy appears as the essential ground that gives knowledge's value. It may be asserted that knowledge has lost its "for-itself" existence in this capitalist market at first, and then its character which associated with the benefit of society in the Humbolt's ideals. Knowledge is now both a tool which creates surplus value in capitalist mode of production and the product itself that finds its value in the same market. In this sense, while it is getting harder to talk about truth revealing or making character of the science, we now may refer to its profit-making character.

In this respect, the "actionable insight" that market research companies try to produce for their clients is located at the locus of this commodification process. For market research sector what is important is to reach necessary knowledge for their clients whenever they demand, by conducting projects by the means of required mixture of methods and approach. Therefore, it can be proposed that market research sector does not seek for the "truth". During my active participant observation I realized that the clients, instead of asking for the true situation of their company, they focus on the possible solutions to handle their specific problems. For instance, it was almost a taboo to criticize the client's "brand sense" harshly in front of the senior executives; but rather we always preferred offering suggestions on how to improve their brand sense with a very careful language. Once I am told by one of the co-founders of K. Research that during a project presentation before I joined the company, the owner of the client company got upset after what he heard about his business and left the room before the presentation finished. However, I cannot deny the fact that some clients could be more open to the "undeniable truth" of their situation as they seek for a long-term transformation for their business. But what is important at this point is the truth that is sought by the client companies must always be an answer to their needs even if the research project conducted in such a manner that looking for a general situation. Therefore, at the end of each project presentation the executives ask the very same question: "So, what do you suggest us to do?".

The most of the market research projects are carried out in accordance with the social scientific research methods. There are also some relatively new methods such as eye tracking and brain scanning in neuromarketing projects. The statistical data provided by quantitative methods are still widely in demand in market research. Yet, qualitative or mixed-method researches are on the rise in the sector. The method used in the project is a very crucial criterion, which determines the market value of the research under question. So in market research sector not any theoretical approach but the method is commercialized by the market research companies. Especially the qualitative researches are more expensive projects, as they demand more time and labor power and provide insights. Furthermore, since there are limited number of researchers who have skills on the part of the field researcher to conduct in-depth interviews and participant observations properly in the field, the qualitative researches are seen much valuable in the sector.

However, there are some reasons why senior executives of client companies demand statistical data more. Firstly, as I have mentioned above, for them, the statistical data gives a clearer picture for their problem areas. Secondly, due to the developments in technology, quantitative research is carried out much faster. Especially the global and big size market research companies can conduct quantitative research and present it within a week, whereas a qualitative research takes at least a couple of weeks. That is why, the quantitative research has the advantage of time-saving as compared to the qualitative ones. And thirdly, the results of qualitative research are by their nature seen as vague and ambiguous by the companies. Many of the senior executives of the client companies do not know what sort of knowledge qualitative research can provide for their business. Since they are expecting more concrete and precise, clean-cut results, the insights acquired by qualitative research seem deficient at best, or redundant. But it is also an undeniable fact that the insights and particularly the direct quotations from interviewees can sometimes be very effective to show what people think and feel about the brand in the presentations. As a result, every method has its own market value in the sector and the market research companies commodify them.

All these aspects of market research sector can be seen as the conversion of academic knowledge and skills to the market. In that sense, social sciences graduates are becoming the *experts* of market research sector due to their methodological skills. What brings success to market research companies is to reach reliable data and provide practical and useful solutions for their clients.

The second pillar of the ground upon which market research sector resides is the practical problems of the graduates of social sciences departments emerging from the transformation of universities in this neoliberal era. As I have tried to discuss before, universities are gradually dominated by what we call academic capitalism. Therefore, it is getting even harder for the social scientists to find a secure position in the academic circles. For this reason, the graduates of these faculties turn their attention to the private sector. In addition to the advertisement companies and human resources departments, market research sector has become one of the major choices for the graduates. What market research sector provides them is to get a job which allows them to bring together their theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills which they acquired during their education. The erosion of the idealist relationship between academia and knowledge under the order of academic capitalism, and practical hardships in finding a job, push social sciences graduates to market research sector. Their ties with universities are weakening since they feel and actually see that their efforts, time and money are wasted in the struggle to hold a position in the university structure. Most of them can only reach to an unsecure and a low-paid adjunct position even after they fulfill the demands of the scientific order. On the other hand, market research sector recruit newly graduated students in the companies and - at least - promise them to rise on the ladders of company hierarchy in a few years, regardless of to what extend this promise fulfilled in *de facto* situations.

What I like to assert here is that the very existence of the market research sector depends on these two problematic grounds. If we try to make a symptomatic reading, it may be argued that market research sector is both a *response to* the commodification of knowledge, and a *symptom of* the crisis of universities and social sciences in particular. Market research as a capitalist sector, as I argued above, meets the demands of corporations by supplying a sort of necessary knowledge, such as the knowledge of how to reach the accurate mass of customers to sell a product or how to reorganize the work and workers. So that market research responses the needs of other corporations to increase their impact in the market. In this sense, there is no difference between market research sector and any other private enterprise.

However, the never-ending discussion over the market research sector in terms of its relation with scientific ethos stem from its direct link with scientific field. The common opinion regarding market research sector is shaped around this link and its implications for knowledge production. It is argued that, first of all, the market research sector is the crystallization of the marketization of academy and scientific knowledge, and secondly, the methods used by market research companies in their research are intentionally distorted and thus not reliable at all. I will put aside this second argument for now to discuss it in the following chapters. The first argument, on the other hand, tend to assume that while scientific field and academia claims to produce knowledge for the sake of knowledge, market research commodifies this knowledge and transforms it to a valuable asset in the market. In doing so, while scientific field still strives to stay in the ethical domain, the market research sector is already embedded into the opposite side. However, the whole discussion that we did in this section regarding the scientific field and the academic ethos clearly shows that knowledge production in those fields has nothing to do with ethics. In fact, academic field gradually internalizes the capitalist mode of production in scientific field as well. In that sense, if we adapt Adorno's analogical comparison between ethics and morality to our topic, we may say that, market research is the uncomfortable conscience of academia[24].

Market research sector has close connections with the academic field. As I mentioned above, most of the workers of market research are the graduates of social sciences faculties. During my in-depth interviews, I asked my interviewees, who have job experience both in the academia and the market research, that how they see the similarities and differences between the fields. One of my interviewees was Cemal (32)[25], who worked two years in a market research company as a fieldworker and a project director. He graduated from an

[24] Adorno says, ethics is the uncomfortable conscience of morality. For a discussion on that, see, Nalbantoğlu, 2017, p. 221.

[25] Throughout this study, all the names of the interviewees will be replaced with nicknames.

anthropology department from a university in Istanbul, but as he says, he never wanted to work as a fieldworker. Therefore, he applied to a master's program in a humanities department. While he was doing his master's he needed money for his living expenses. He says that one day one of his professors from undergraduate years called him and invited him to a market research company where he works: "He told me that if I wanted to earn some money, I would send a CV to him. Then all of a sudden I found myself in the field!". After two-years of experience in market research he quit the job and became a research assistant in his own university. Now he is a PhD student at the same humanities department.

I asked him to make to compare these two fields. He, first, questioned and complained about his position in the academy as a doctoral student and research assistant. According to him, the time that doctoral students spend in universities is "unproductive" since they do nothing but writing thesis and do some secretary services. Thus, he thought that he did nothing really academic at all. He defined his research assistantship as a case of "information and document management":

> I can't say I'm productive in the academy at the moment. I'm a PhD student, I'm not teaching and professors do not let us in their courses too. So I can't say that it's productive, but maybe what they call 'unproductive labor'. Manipulating some information, maintaining the communication in certain channels, something like information and document management. Previously, I was in a foundation university, I was doing the same work there. The works they give us before we have our PhD degree are not of academic nature. I don't have a conception like academy vs. real life anyway. (Interview with Cemal)

Cemal, although he had some bad experiences in market research sector, says that he never regret to work there. He says that he does not want to turn back to market research companies again and he wishes to continue in academia but he also feels uncomfortable in the university. According to him, university cannot be considered apart from the social and economic order of the society and he underlines the prevalence of "exploitation" in academic field.

> The academy too is a part of the social and economic order we live in. There is exploitation in the academy as well. As the assistants, we should actually be dealing with more academic stuff. It would be better if we gave lectures, did something concerning our research. It takes a lot of time for us to get to that phase. PhD is finished, you are denied tenure, they say "you should write articles, do postdoc" again. Whereas this process can be more productive. This process may be different in other parts of the world but everything is set back here. Then again, I don't think that we're working in the academy and producing sacred knowledge. *In this sense, I don't conceive a hierarchical relationship between working in a firm or I don't know, being a research consultant or something in a firm and staying in the academy*. The reason I'm in the university is because I'm interested in literature. Otherwise I often question the academy actually. After all you get exhausted and worn out there too. I haven't experienced much mobbing in the academy so far. But I don't feel secure either. I don't feel like a part of this institution because each year they make us sign forms to extend our working there for another year. The state doesn't want you to feel free and secure anyway. And you don't make much money in the academy, all in all you feel disadvantaged again. Since some professors come from the upper classes along with a certain capital, you're able to feel different anyhow. (Interview with Cemal)

Following his comments, I told him my personal experience in market research sector when I began my fieldwork. I was feeling at the beginning that we were commercializing our scientific knowledge and particularly our "departments" such as sociology and anthropology and that was an uneasy feeling for me. He told me that this fact is not different in academia or in our personal experiences either. He uses Bourdieu's concept of "cultural capital" in order to explain how this marketization operates in academia:

> We're also marketing ourselves in personal terms anyway, after all this is a cultural capital as well. For instance, you start calling yourself an anthropologist. That's because you see that it means something in the market. For instance you get a title when your PhD is completed. You're taken more seriously when you write an article with that title and *your market value in the academy increases actually*. The entire system is based on this anyway. You're constantly struggling to be employable. It's a wearing process too because there's no end to it, the standards are constantly raised. And that's because new

> academic workers keep coming. (Interview with Cemal)

Cemal underlines that we as social scientists use our titles as a cultural capitals in market research and academia since they have a market value. Our skills acquired during our university education have an impact on the company owners who are mostly the graduates of the same programs. But he also argues that the title will not be enough in the near future to keep our positions since there is other "academic workers" who are waiting behind us. During my participant observation I realized that even being an "experienced male fieldworker" in the market is more valuable than being a female worker.

Erdem (37) has been working in market research sector for four years. He had anthropology major and he gave lectures at a university on computing in the past. Since he is working together with some of his students, he is called "hoca" (professor) in the company. I also asked him to make a comparison between academia and market research sector:

> There was no difference [between university and market research sector in this sense]. I can't say that one makes a better job, a more meaningful job than the other. I don't think of academic work as a very respectable job either. I mean we claim to understand life but we understand so little and most of what we understand is wrong. Academy has a fashion of its own. How to approach an issue is already known, which authors to be read, what theses to be written are all already known. Those theses are written in such a learnt manner that chapters are disconnected. It's like written by rote, like "OK, this chapter is supposed to be written like this". Once you learn how something's done, it's written by rote. (Interview with Erdem)

> I don't see an openness in the university. It's all based on memorization. There is no questioning, no genuine endeavor to understand in theses. Theses end up being mass-produced without linking issues to each other, without embarking on any intellectual struggles. Gender issue for instance. It's so addressed by rote that you feel like you're reading the same thesis over and over again. The bibliography is given, you just distribute the references where they need to go. You already know where it's going in such a thesis, I find it boring. I see that the university resists what's new. (Interview with Erdem)

Cemal, in addition to his opinions regarding academia, draws attention to a certain transformation in the academic circles. He argues that the subjects in universities (undergrad students, PhDs and professors) are becoming more and more individualistic and stingy when it comes to sharing knowledge. And all the parties in the field approve this attitude.

> I'm not sure if this is individualization or commodification of knowledge but I think it wasn't quite like this in the past. I feel that people didn't use to avoid saying the books they read or the subjects they studied. Nowadays no one ever shares that kind of stuff and this causes me to take a dislike to the academy. I think we shouldn't be that individualistic. Even what they call academic discussion, seminars and conferences have all ended up being a sort of tourism. I can't remember the last time I sat down with five people and discussed something. Students sit down on the grass and everything but there's no academic sharing. "My career, my masters, my thesis…" In short, I believe that people avoid sharing knowledge more and more. One takes a book from the library and doesn't say that s/he's got it. And this is the more acceptable behavior now. "Do your best" is the acceptable attitude. (Interview with Cemal)

He also thinks that academics' and market researchers' approaches to their works are similar. They both share similar working practices and that makes them "slaves" who do not realize their enslavement in the system.

> We're in no way different than blue-collar actually. I think researchers and academics do not look at their own situations much. I thinks it's like the case of slaves who are unaware that they are slaves. For instance, there is a thing like "the dynamic professor", "the industrious professor" in the academy. In the companies they have the "dynamic researcher" version of this: "I take my vitamins, burn the midnight oil, I'm very energetic" etc. This gives me the impression of a slave who's got integrated into the system. For instance, research companies create an atmosphere like the only way to dig up information is by being industrious. We also have it in the academy. (Interview with Cemal)

As I will try to show in the following chapters that in various questions all my interviewees express similar feelings and thoughts about the comparison between academia and market research sector. Although every one of them has a different job-seeking story, I observed that almost every one of them had considered finding a position in the academia first. I heard many examples from my interviewees about their friends who quit his/her job in the market research sector and try to find out ways to turn back to university. This is a clear indicator regarding the transition between two fields. However, I argue that, the resemblances between the fields are more than a simple turn over situation. It is also crystalized in showing how two fields approach and carry out research and how they perceive knowledge that they produce. Revealing the market research ethos will help us to see these resemblances and also differences between two fields.

CHAPTER 3

The Subjects of Market Research Sector: The Working Experience of Market Researchers

1. Introduction:

What would we see if we take a picture of a market research company's daily routine and practice? It would certainly not represent the totality of all companies since there are various business types within the sector. These business types differ due to a couple of factors such as what kind of services companies provide for their clients, which methods they employ in their projects, how they manage the application of certain strategies and finally, whether the company is a global or a local one. All these factors give their character to a market research company and help to determine its ethos. In that sense, it would be more accurate to say that the variety of market research companies makes it harder to depict a single picture of the market research ethos in Turkey.

Despite all the differences, it is also possible to draw a general sketch of this ethos by looking into the daily practices and systematize the experiences of the workers of the companies. Our task must be to take a closer look at what resides beyond the visible in order to pinpoint what we call market research ethos. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to how the practitioners of the market research field are doing their jobs, how they feel about their profession, what sorts of difficulties they face while practicing their jobs, what they think regarding the working conditions of the companies and the market research sector in general. I propose that, despite the differences and variations in the management of the businesses, in the working conditions and in the methods using in the projects, we can designate a common ground concerning the market research sector in Turkey. This ground is shaped from within the all the practices and relations of market researchers and what they actually do in their works. To understand how they exercise their work and how they perceive those practices reflexively will help us to sketch this ethos.

In this chapter, I will examine the first dimension in three different aspects. In the first section, I will try to denote the researchers' perceptions regarding the market research sector before they got a job in a market research company. In that sense, the questions below will be asked: What were they thinking and how were they felling about market research sector before they find their jobs? How was it like searching for the proper job as being a newly graduate? How was their job interview; what kind of questions were they asked? What was their first impressions regarding the job and workplace environment? What was their job descriptions? What did they think about the relations and hierarchy in their workplace? Were they feeling pleased with their salaries and social rights?

In the second section, I will examine the workload of the researchers and their relations with their clients. How were they dealing with their workload? Did they have any difficulties concerning the intense working hours? Did they have any mobbing issue in the workplace? How were they handling the clients? Did they experience any dispute with their clients or face any improper manner by them? How those improper behaviors, disputes and mobbing did affect their performance and their perception to market research sector?

In the third section, my aim will be to show how market researchers is feeling about their jobs and the sector now. Is there any change in their feelings and ideas after they have worker a while? Do they like and embrace their jobs or they have opposite thoughts and perceptions? What are their future expectations and plans? What do they think about their university years and first days of the job retrospectively? In what ways, according to market researchers, university and market research differs or resembles?

In doing so, I will investigate the daily practices, ideas, feelings and performances of the one of the most fundamental subjects of market research sector. For that purpose, I will refer to my experience and observations come out of my active participant observation in K. Research and the experiences and thoughts of my interviewees.

2. A New Experience: Being Employed in Market Research Sector

2.1. After-Graduation Days and Job Interviews

Most of the interviewees I interviewed with in the market research sector are under their thirties. I believe that this is a general tendency in the sector. In K. Research, for instance, we were only three people who were above their thirties except the co-founders of the company. The ones, who are between thirties and forties among my interviewees, were being employed in the sector in an early stage of their graduations. Many of them told me that they had never considered to be employed in market research sector during their undergrad years. Some of them had never heard about these companies before.

After their graduations, they searched for a job since they deeply felt that they had new responsibilities and they could not get money from their parents any more. A couple of them told me that their first thought was unsurprisingly to find a position in the academia. Aylin (28), who has an economics major from a public university in Istanbul, told me that she first wished to find a job in finance sector in compliance with her department. By the impact of one of her professors who teaches marketing in the department, she got interested in the market research companies. She also says that she considered to stay in academia, but she abandoned her hopes due to the general environment in the university:

> I thought of it [staying in the academy] very briefly. Then I gave up the idea because I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to make money. In fact I was prone to being an academic. I like conveying things to people. Another thing is that I studied in the ... University. It's a very dull environment, a disorderly structure, our professors look miserable and unhappy. This too has played a role in my giving up the thought of being an academic. (Interview with Aylin)

Defne (29), who graduated from an anthropology department in a private university, had a weird personal experience with her professor in the university and that is why she never wanted to be a research assistant in the academia.

> Back then ... was the head of the department. S/he is a very sweet person but I had once dusted his/her books page by page. I was very frustrated, thinking "This isn't the academy". In other words, I had some agonizing days. My uncle is an academic, he had told me how he suffered as well. He had painted the walls of his head of department. In consideration of all this, I didn't want to stay in the academy. (Interview with Defne)

Burcu (27) is one of the few people who has intentionally and eagerly choosen the market research sector. The perspective and the general approach to sociology in her university orient her attention to the market research:

> To be honest, at first I didn't know that I could do market research. Towards the end of my undergraduate years in sociology, I was complaining about how academy was too academic and it was never put into practice. I preferred market research thinking that I would be more active and put some sociological perspective into it. So I can say that it was an informed choice. It wasn't like "I found a job here, so let me keep it" or anything. (Interview with Burcu)

Canan (32) got her major from a sociology department from prestigious public university and then she got accepted to master's program in the same department. She told me that everyone in her family were expecting her to finish a PhD program, but she decided not to continue her education for some reason and she felt the same pressure of earning money:

> Masters, PhD… Life goes on like this in the academy, you know. When I graduated, that scenario got interrupted, I felt unqualified. I felt like "OK, I got my master's degree from … but I've got nothing in my hand". I thought "How am I ever going to earn money?" I sat down by this very desk and racked my brain over it. What am I capable of doing? What assets do I have? What am I good for? How can I earn a living? (Interview with Canan)

Canan reflects a common after-graduation mood which almost every social sciences student feels in various measures. It is not simply a trauma stemming from an obligation to earn money for living expenses. For instance, in Canan's case, in those years her parents could (and actually did) easily help her for living expenses but we may sense from her words that this mood indicates something more than that. The real problem for Canan was not earning money or build a career in a private sector company, but a feeling that she had no skills in her after-graduation life. She thought that she was unqualified for a corporate work. Therefore, she deeply thought regarding her assets to feel an attachment with a job. The university and particularly her social science background apparently did not provide such a feeling to her. This feeling of being unqualified pushed her to seek for something appropriate.

So, she told me that she decided to check some other sector that might suit for her. She says that she came across with TÜAD's (Turkish Researcher's Association) in the web by coincidence. In the meantime, she heard that some of her friends were doing some project-based market research jobs. Although she had no clue what they were actually doing in the sector she decided to send her CV to some companies which she saw listed in TÜAD's webpage. After a couple of weeks later, one of those companies invited her for a job interview. She recalls the day that she went to the interview as below:

> My first job interview was with UniResearch. In that central business district with all the skyscrapers and everything. That day is engraved into my memory. As I was walking across the pedestrian overpass, my blow-dried hair waved amidst all that exhaust smoke. I was wearing an ugly, masculine heeled pair of shoes and a dress that I especially bought for that interview. I looked like a governess. I wore a stupid pearl necklace. I thought to myself "What the hell am I doing?". I didn't know how I was supposed to dress because I had concentrated on the academy so much. It's a totally different world, a different universe. I loathed the building where UniResearch was located. And I loathed entering there by using that electronic card. And I disliked that blonde HR employee who interviewed me. I went there to be hired but at the end of the interview I got out the room, saying "I don't want to work here". I told them this, I felt that I didn't belong there, that life. I ran away from the place. (Interview with Canan)

Her words perfectly denote the feeling of first job-interview experience of a social science graduate who has deeply attached to academia but suddenly find himself/herself in private sector. We may argue that any newly graduate from any other faculty can have a similar experience, but I believe that it is not deniable that social sciences students have much less idea about the unwritten rules of private sector than an economics or a business department graduate. If we, as social scientists, did not get any course particularly on this issue in the university years, we cannot manage even a job-interview properly. What Canan realized that market research sector, which seemed much closer to her education, was not exception. However, in her second job interview in another company, which was conducting mostly qualitative researches and also smaller in size compared to the first one, she felt much better than her first experience:

> Ethica was my second job interview yet. It was a beautiful office. I felt myself comfortable inside the place. The fact that the bosses and I were alumni of the same school caused me think that we'd be speaking the same language. And we did actually. And that's why they hired me too. After all we got the same education. So we kind of used a similar language. It was comfortable. So comfortable that I said "I feel like I'll be happy here" in the interview. Now that's something too sentimental to be said in an interview. But I felt that we got along well. And we really had. Of course I later realized that they hadn't been so honest about working conditions. (Interview with Canan)

The huge difference in Canan's feelings and thoughts in her second job-interview emanates from a couple of parameters. First of all, as she indicated in the quotation that even the building is an important determinant in her decision. But more than that, she thought that she can speak a similar language with the employers simply because they graduated from the same university as she did. Furthermore, one of her employers was a social sciences graduate and as she told me that his approach to research was also similar to hers. However, what is the most important parameter is that this second company conducts mostly qualitative market research which is more suitable for Canan's skills. She felt that she was qualified for the job and that is why she could see herself in the market research picture for the first time.

In that sense, what I am trying to denote here is not basically Canan's personal experience, but differences in two types of market research companies which I will also mention in the following chapters. I was told by some of my interviewees that in the global or big-sized market research companies hiring process might be can be different than small-sized local companies. Especially if the candidate applied for quantitative research department of the companies, the human resources departments may push the candidate so hard. Banu (34), who is working in a market research company for ten years, told about her pretty harsh job-interview story:

> They despised me in the interview, they said they had never seen an emptier operation engineer CV. They are operation engineers too by the way. They asked me whether I really hadn't done anything and I even told them that my internship was fake. Then there was a second interview, I forced myself to go to that. They asked me if I was sure about this, whether I had something against myself. Frankly, I was surprised, after all I would be working with them in the same environment. They really cornered me there. Before the interview, they made me take an exam to assess my level of knowledge. The exam included questions designed to measure your command of marketing, math, planning skills, English etc. In fact your salary depends on your score in this exam in our company. Because we believe in justice rather than equality. Back then I got all the math questions right. They were surprised because I don't look like a very bright person. I faltered in the interview too. The score of this exam comes during the interview. When my score arrived, they were shocked of course but they told me that I had scored poorly, in other words they tricked me. They don't throw everybody a curve like this in interviews, this was just me. We still remember and laugh about it. (Interview with Banu)

However, in some other cases, as global companies need a researcher immediately due to the turnover rates in the sector. Although I do not have the exact numbers, I have always heard that the turnover rates in market research sector are too high. Therefore, it is quite common to see new job postings in the companies' websites. Contrary to Banu's interview story, Aylin had a very easy and quick interview due to an emergency.

> I was hired after a single interview. Usually my friends used to be hired after being interviewed by different people. Anyway, the human resources department asked me which department I wanted to work in and I said that I wanted FMCG [Fast Moving Consumer Goods]. They talked to the director of that department on my behalf and I

> started work at once. I guess they terribly needed an employee back then. Plus they thought "We're hiring a junior anyway, we'll fire her at worst." (Interview with Aylin)

Burcu (27) made exactly the same comment on her interview and hiring process in a global market research company: "Tamamen formalite sorular sordular. Bu kadar basit miymiş ya görüşmeler diye düşünmüştüm çıktığımda. Bence o dönem bir elemana acil ihtiyaçları vardı, beni de o şekilde aldılar". Global and/or big-sized companies conduct and present almost a hundred research projects in a month. Thus, they always need new researchers to employ. When we also consider the turnover rates in the sector they may rush to hire new people without serious evaluations.

In small-sized companies, which mostly conduct qualitative methods, hiring process is shaped in accordance with the characteristics of the work. Questions during the job interview are mainly asked in order to understand both theoretical and practical capabilities of the candidate since they are expected to carry out the whole process of a research project. In those companies it is important to have mastery and awareness in basic theoretical discussions, and the fieldwork experience as qualitative market research depends on both. The latter is not a must since you may learn how to conduct a field research from more experienced researchers. But a candidate should have the skill to make connections between the problem posing by the client and the social and political discussions. Cemal's job interview was based on such questions:

> Yes, there was an interview. The social sciences graduate boss asked a question like "Let's say you're going to do a fieldwork concerning drinking patterns of people, where would you go?". We chat about our acquaintances we had in common. They also asked me biographical and methodological questions. They were pleased. I was very enthusiastic when I first started too, I really cared. My interest in writing was also probably important for them. Because they always told us "Write more, we'll pick the useful ones out of that abundance of ethnographic literature". (Interview with Cemal)

Nilay had a very similar and long job interview. Although she thinks that these detailed questions are understandable in a sense in those hiring processes, I could observe her uneasiness about the questions asked by employers regarding her “identity”:

> The interview lasted about one and a half hours. I was so inexperienced back then that I thought we were just chatting but they had got all the details about me. We talked about everything, from the traditions at my home to the sort of life I lead. This seemed like sincerity back then. So there was this process in the interview where my identity was seriously revealed. Somewhat for good reason they investigate the person they’re going to hire, how s/he writes. For instance if you have a blog, they definitely read it before you go to the interview. If you got something published, they definitely read it. Some calls are made and information is collected. (Interview with Nilay)

2.2. Company Hierarchy, Waging System and Relations in the Company

During my interviews I also asked my interviewees about the company hierarchy and their positin in this structure. Frankly, this question was formulized to prepare my interviwees for “bigger” questions. Therefore, I did not think that I would open a new section on this “smaller” issue in this thesis. However, the answers I got oriented me to think on the complex relations among hierarcy, wage system, and their impact on the researchers’ attitude towards their profession and the organization of the work. In this sense, I realized that the “title” before your name is not just something indicates your position in the company, but it also determines the characteristic of your work. Since the titles differ in all companies, we should focus not the title itself, but to what is means in particular business circles.

K. Research Company has a horizontal organizational structure and - except the co-founders – everyone, who works fulltime, has the same title: Project Director.

So, there is no visible hierarchy within the company among the researchers. In that sense, the responsibilities of the project directors are the same. A project director is responsible for the whole process of a research project from the writing a proposal to the client to present the outcomes at the end of the research. S/he has to organize his/her team in cooperation with the employers, design the fieldwork, write the fieldguide, conduct the research, deal with the clients and prepare the presentation. But project directors can also work as a fieldworker or an assistant director in another ongoing project under the responsibility of another project director. So almost everyone in the company is both leader or worker in the office. This horizontal structure brings some advantages for small-sized market research companies. It provides a closer relationship between all the researchers. Since they all know how to carry out a resarch, they can give practical advices to each other during the project. Although the project director is the responsible for the project, the other researchers are able to cover for the director. In K. Research there are 10-15 fulltime researchers in total and almost all of them know about projects other than their own. Any researcher could join the meeting of a project and give suggestions. So, the cooperation between the researchers are quite high in the company.

The only concrete hierarchy in the company is between the fulltime and project-based (parttime) workers. Since the project-based researchers are employed for particular projects in a limited period, they cannot be a project director. It is also important for the relations with the clients. Client companies would like to meet the project director from the very beginning of the project as they need to know the responsible person for the project. Besides, I observed that there is an undeniable invisible hierarchy between "newcomers" and "experienced" researchers. This hierarchy does never cause a sort of "chain of command" among the researchers but it cyrstilized during the inner company meetings. Of course anyone would give suggestions regarding the organization of the company or the projects, yet, I sensed that at the end of the day the experienced researchers' ideas are more welcomed than others.

Defne also worked in a small-sized market research company and she had a similar experience in her company. Even though her "title" had changed several times, the quality of her job did not change:

> We didn't really have a superior-subordinate relationship. It was only something to be printed on the business card. Since I was the one who worked there longest, I was the one to tell the newcomers about the job. I started as assistant expert, then I became expert. The names of our positions constantly changed. Once it was project research expert, then project research manager and for a while it was only anthropologist. (Interview with Defne)

In big-sized market research companies the situation is quite different than the small ones. Due to the departmantalization in the company and the intensity of the workload, they have various titles and positions. The company hierarchy is more clear and solid. Everyone is responsible for a particular part of the project and there is a cooperation between the departments. Derya (33), who quit the market research sector a couple of years ago due to harsh workload, still remembers the hierarchy in the company.

> [My position in Trans Research] was research executive position. It embodies a field team, a coding and data team and a team which helps them with their analyses. I manage the field, the fieldwork is conducted, data is coded and I make them do an analysis if I want to. In other words, no one works under me, there are just different departments. I only did reporting and dealt with the client. Of course, there were times when I also did coding for we didn't trust the coding team, that's all. I had a manager above me in my department and s/he had a director above him/her. (Interview with Derya)

Banu points out that the increasing responsibilities by rising in the hierarchy of company:

> When I first started this job, my position was assistant research expert. It's the lowest rank for white collars after all. Then expert, senior expert, executive, director, head of group, assistant general manager. The hierarchical structure follows this path. I've reached the director's position. Responsibilities gradually increase, so I think that there's no need for me to be the head of group. (Interview with Banu)

Aylin underlines and criticizes the ambiguousness in the rising indicators by comparing her current and previous companies.

> In terms of hierarchy, we too have an order here [in Fortuna Research] like senior, senior expert, manager, associate director, director and bosses. The criteria for working your way up in this hierarchy is ambiguous. Whereas in Trans Research I knew what I had to do in order to work my way up. Here you have to push for it yourself. At first I thought that I wouldn't be treated unfairly, that I would get promoted even though I didn't say anything but well… It turns out that things do not work like that here. Considering my experience, I would have to be in a different position right now. So in this sense, there is no established corporate order here. (Interview with Aylin)

Almost all the interviewees complained about their salaries in the companies. A few of them, who could be able to stay in the sector for a couple of years, told me that they satisfy with their salaries. However, everyone agrees on the fact that the "junior" researchers get quite low wages at the beginning of their career. Like any other private sector, they are the ones who work for long ours but suffer from the wages. Therefore, many of them have to live with their parents or share a house with their friends to cover the living expenses. Burcu and Nilay underline this fact:

> Starting a market research job in İstanbul, it's impossible to get paid an adequate salary, no matter who you are. I mean I think it's out of question, moving in on your own or something. I started with a 1.500 TL salary and I was living with my parents. I had insurance but transport expenses were not covered. There was a cafeteria but they gave us a meal ticket worth 6 TL. It was a funny amount. Just inadequate. (Interview with Burcu)

> At the beginning, I worked without insurance and I worked part-time. I used to get paid 1.000 TL, the year is 2011. It's a very small amount. Let me put it this way: I was sharing an apartment with two people then and my share of the rent was 800 TL. (Interview

with Nilay)

To increase their salaries, they always have to work harder. But according to Derya being a hard working researcher is not enough to get a higher salary. She says that after a 1,5 year working for 1200 TL, she was about the quit the job because of her salary. When the executives realized her intention they doubled her salary to keep her. She also says that the conditions in company were not sufficient for a humanely living. The off-days are very limited and ranged between one and two weeks at most. Begüm (35), who is currently working as freelancer in the market research sector, says that: "My salary was low compared to the salaries paid in global companies. Whereas social rights tend to be ignored as you go from corporate companies to local firms. For instance, only religious holidays are vacation days in local firms".

Some workers try to compensate the insufficiency of the salary with some other allowances. These allowances may be very small things such as a concert ticket, a company activity or irregular extra money. But in some other companies, especially in the big-sized and global ones, there is a bonus system, which provides yearly bonuses to their workers in exchange for their hard work. Derya says that she could get such a yearly bonus in her previous company and therefore, she refused to work in another global company.

> I had started to work here in June and I got 6.000 TL bonus at the end of the year. I had come here for their good premium system in the first place. Otherwise, I would already have become a senior in Trans Research. That getting bonus from sales thing later changed in Johnson, I started to have a hard time earning money there. (Interview with Derya)

These bonus systems can take another shape in some other companies. Banu talks about the "performance system" in her company. In this system, every worker gets a yearly grade in accordance with his/her work and these grades determine who will get promotion and how much bonus will they get at the end of the year. Banu is very pleased with this system as she thinks that it brings the "justice" in the company.

> We have an advanced performance management system here. For instance, as a company we got an excellence award about it. That award directly points to your management skill. What everyone needs to abide by is very well defined. Each year I have a performance score. My promotion, my salary, the raise I'm going to get, everything's determined according to this core. Plus, the minimum score I need to get in order to be raised in rank is clearly written in the HR booklet. (Interview with Banu)

> Those who work hard and those who don't are can all be seen in the system. For instance, I hear from friends who work in other companies, there are people who don't work hard, just slack because they count on their network and always say "Sure sure, I'll take care of it" and then there are those who work really hard but can't get anywhere because they're nerds. We have no such thing. You can't get anywhere just because you have the gift of gab. You work hard and you get your reward in return. I'm at peace with the system. It's important for me that it's transparent. It makes you feel the justice. Someone who scores 50 in that system and someone who scores 70 are not treated equally. For instance, I remember having received a ten-salary bonus three or four years ago. Now who's to give that much bonus to whom anywhere? (Interview with Banu)

Kerem (37), who worked in a couple of different companies and founded his own very small-sized company some years ago, mentions to a similar system, named KPI (Key Performance Indicator) in his previous company. In this system, every worker knows what kind of work would help to keep him or her in the company. But he adds that the fundamental indicator for every worker is "winning" a good client:

> They used something called KPI there, key performance indicator. How many focus groups you moderated, how many reports you wrote, how many projects you sold etc. They used to take these things into consideration. No one could see no one else's performance score, only the directors could see everyone's score. Nevertheless everyone knew they would be fired if they didn't work, everyone was aware of that. So the system was transparent in a sense, you clearly knew what you had to do in order to stay and

> what could get you fired. And then there was this: If a client insists that you moderate the focus group, it was obvious that you had won the client over. And in that case no one would question you about how you're going to do the job. Once you win the client over, it's OK. And when you start failing to do that, start failing to be productive, it's time for you to leave. As long as the client didn't complain and the sale continued, there was no problem. Especially if your client is an FMCG company, there was no problem at all. Because those brands make research companies do a large number of projects and they bring in a lot of money. So key performance indicator was this actually. The real criterion was the amount of money you brought in for brands like Coca Cola. (Interview with Kerem)

In addition to the bonus systems, a few companies share its profit with the workers in accordance with their performance. Banu told me that her company has such a system and this make the workers feel like the partner of the company. In that way she earns a good amount of money. However, all my interviewees underline that there is no payment for overtime work in any company. Finally, some other researchers try to earn money from extra works such as Kerem (37), since they think that the bare salary is not enough for living:

> I started to work fulltime in a position called assistant expert. There was not a single problem with social rights, private insurance covered 80 percent of everything, a nice vacation every year, four Fridays a year off, work environment of the department was cool etc. And my salary was about 1.800 TL but I also used to do moderation and got an additional 700 TL per month from that as well. I also made extra money from in-depth interviews. The company knew it couldn't keep its employees on basic salary too. So that's how I tolerated although my salary was not very high and in general, I was pleased with the company. (Interview with Kerem)

The relations among the workers in the workplace is a crucial issue for our purposes. It is a simple truth that in any workplace there may be tensions or disputes. Therefore, it may seem that such problems emerged in market research companies no different than any other sector. However, the problems regarding the relations among workers in market research sector stem mostly from the intensity of the work. As I will mention in the following section, the intensity of the work can be unbearable in some companies. Therefore, it becomes hard to establish a healthy relationship with others. Kerem points out an interesting result of this situation:

> There was no friendship in the company. The employees didn't even have normal friendships outside work, let alone friendships within the company, because they had no social life. That's the reason why we have so many marriages taking place within the company. (Interview with Kerem)

Derya and Yasemin describe the impact of the intensity of the work on the friendships. They say that although the relationship in the workplace was fine, workers could not create time even for small conversations. Therefore, no one could help each other.

> We were in a four or five storied building. It was open office, so we were all side by side. Only directors and managers had rooms. Generally we the workers had a nice friendship. I think that's probably how we could work there for so many years. Although the environment was nice, there were times when I worked without going to the restroom, without talking to anybody. We didn't have a cooperative atmosphere, everyone focused on their own work. (Interview with Derya)

> I had no relationship whatsoever with the other employees. I knew who they were but I never socialized with them. I didn't have the time to chat. My life energy was just too low. For instance, if I managed to get off work at 6 p.m. I used to go running for 6 km's to boost my life energy. But only halfway through, I thought "God, I wish I was home working". (Interview with Yasemin)

Cemal draws attention to another aspect of the relations in the workplace. In our interview he told me that his relations with other workers were quite good. Yet, he told another story regarding the relations with the employers.

> Of course you analyze those relations of power as you do in every environment. Like "They're now playing good cop-bad cop with me" or you may think things like "They don't appreciate my work enough so I don't ask for a raise". (Interview with Cemal)

A few of my interviewees told me that their relations with their employers and managers were/are better. Banu says that she feels lucky to have very helpful managers:

> I was very luck in that sense. There was Ms …, the first executive I worked under. She was intelligent and motherly. It was her who taught every technicality. I worked with her for almost a year. Then I was lucky again, I started working under Ms …. She taught me a lot about communication and customer relations, she's a very giving person too. She used to explain to me every word she used as she wrote an e-mail. I've been working under her for the past 9 years. In sum, I've always had a supportive work environment. (Interview with Banu)

3. Social Sciences and Market Research: Theory/Practice and Being Creative

3.1. Comparison of Social Sciences and Market Research

Throughout my fieldwork, the relation between social sciences and market researches has been the fundamental question in my mind. Personally, I had been using qualitative, particularly ethnographic methods in my studies in university for years and I had conducted a couple of ethnographic research for different projects. I was not aware that I would use such methods and techniques in a much different context such as market research. So my first feelings regarding what K. Research Company do in its projects was oscillating between quite an enchantment and a deep suspicion.

I was really impressed with what I observed in the company since the methods I have been using in almost all my research projects were "working" in market researches. Until that day, I had been feeling that our methods could only be useful for the studies conducting for academic purposes, and in the best-case scenario the academic who carried out the study would publish a book out of it, regardless of how many people read it. The ethnographic method has always been a very exciting, useful and educatory technique to me. Therefore, my active participant observation in K. Research was such a challenge which I happily accepted as I would use ethnographic method apart from an academic purpose.

On the other hand, as I mentioned in previous chapters, what I was about to do gave me an uneasy feeling. The gap in my mind between academia and the market was quite distinct and I had never imagined myself working in a private sector company even if it is based on researches. I was feeling suspicious simply because I was believing that the way that academia, and particularly social sciences, following has nothing to do with the market and that I have no place in that sector. However, one of the co-founders of the K. Research, who gave its name to the company, was an anthropology professor in a university. So, she and her company were the living proofs of that anthropological knowledge could mobilize for the market research sector. But I cannot not say that I have totally solved the problematic areas in my mind even today. Therefore, I asked similar questions to my interviewees, not only to write them in this thesis, but also to ease my mind. I am not sure if I managed the latter, but I will try to do the former.

Cemal shared his view on the field works during our interview. Although he did not consider working in field studies at first, he gradually liked being in the field. Fieldwork, in his view, is something which has pros and cons:

> The research business is like… Well some people adapt more easily to working in the field and mingling in, they can instantly communicate with different people. I'm not like that, I don't easily adapt to the field. But on the other hand, it was fun being in the field.

> Especially in the beginning, it felt interesting. You start thinking that true knowledge, true wisdom is out on the streets. But then, after a while, you feel like the dialogues are just repeating themselves because this is a job. As people tell you about their problems in the field, you may get emotionally worn out. But of course it's interesting to enter the very homes of the families living in the periphery of the city. (Interview with Cemal)

Erdem, as an anthropology graduate describes his relation with anthropology. He says that, he is interested in the anthropology in terms of its meta-issues.

> I didn't like that state of doing anthropology. Our school emphasized fieldwork the most but I always thought that theory was the most important thing. I think what we saw in the field was actually theory, the material in our hand was theory. My undergrad dissertation opens with the sentence "I don't like anthropology itself, I rather like its problems". Discipline of anthropology is about the question "To what extent is it possible to understand people and tell about them?". In other words, my interest in anthropology was through its meta-questions. In line with my passion for philosophy. Ethnographies and other cultures never drew my interest. Whereas in our department, anthropologists were supposed to have muddy boots, so armchair anthropologists were criticized but I liked the armchair anthropology better. (Interview with Erdem)

Erdem, as he states, loves the questions of anthropology, not its way of conducting. During our conversation he told me that for him there is no real difference between sociology and anthropology anymore. He thinks that while anthropology is now dealing with the problems of sociology, sociology is using the methods of anthropology. Thus, we may expand his words to all social sciences in general. In his company, he rarely conducts field researches; rather, he prefers to discuss the theoretical issues, which can give the ground of the projects, during the meetings, and help the other project directors in the researches when they ask to. Furthermore, as he told me that he accepted the job offer with the condition that not to go field researches. Yet, he is one of the most irreplaceable researchers in the company. In the company meetings he likes to ask counter questions to anyone regarding the issues that taken for granted in the researches. So, in my opinion, he represents the theoretical side of the company who is distant to ethnographic method. Moreover, he argues that every attempt to get knowledge from the field produces a sort of "power relation":

> By the way, by power, I don't mean something that serves capitalism or a secret force or some intermediary. What I'm saying is that act of knowing itself embodies a will to power. After all, you go out in the field and establish a relationship with people. In that relationship, you are the knowing, the telling party, you are the party who writes its thesis and defends it against people. The state of becoming a party to something, now that is the state of becoming power. I consider that state of being the authority in the field as a deficiency because if you are the authority of something, it means you don't understand it. I'm not talking about writing a thesis about someone but really understanding him/her. The true part is where you ask yourself "How did I get here? What am I doing here? Was I looking for myself?". So in my opinion, what happens in the field and what we tell afterwards are not the same. That's why it doesn't excite me. I rather focus on how this guy understood it, how he tells me about it. (Interview with Erdem)

In my opinion, Erdem's critisizm can be posed to science itself. It opens up an old discussions regarding the positions of subject and object, will to know and where ethnography positioning itself, which I cannot examine within the limits of this study. However, I wanted to bring the issue on the relation between market research and social science during the interview. "So", I asked Erdem, "if, the act of knowing and being in the field establishes a power relation, and in connection with that, if it creates a deficiency on behalf of the researcher and his/her research, what are we doing in the market research sector? What kind of knowledge we produce and provide the client?". He says that:

> The question of what we are doing is a really interesting question. I was surprised when I first came here and I'm still surprised. That there is such a market, that there are departments such as these. I say to myself "I don't know about this job". The world outside is very weird. Some people make a lot of money and view it as an accomplishment. What they're capable of doing for success and the fact that they really do earn success by doing them surprise me. (Interview with Erdem)

Although he is amazed with (and confused about) the sector itself, he accepts the fact that both market research companies and their clients succeed something. They, thank to those researches, earn money. Erdem himself earns his life by the means of market researches. So, what is the secret of ethnographic market research? Cemal's opinions may be a hint for that question:

> Anthropology went through a branding process. I witnessed this in Ethica. We used to present ourselves as anthropologists. Saying that we were doing anthropology brought a sense of indisputability with it. And the clients were convinced since they thought we were doing something scientific. Because the market is full of companies; some of them just conducting surveys and some of them examine the subconscious, etc. So there was always this "always doing a new thing". And Ethica presented itself as such. Like "We're not doing surveys, we're scientific, we're using some other ethno-models" etc. There was always this fuss about producing new concepts and creating catchy things… It was our claim that we explored the culture and provided clients with schemas. There was this incessant effort to name and categorize things. Sexy words that are compatible with every client's language were picked. Presentations were designed to hook them. (Interview with Cemal)

Cemal's words are quite important as he points out that there is a close relationship between "branding process of anthropology" and market research. It is valid for whole social sciences field what Cemal says about anthropology. The thing that convinces the clients about the "value" of anthropology is its scientific structure and its promise for cracking the cultural codes of people, which potentially allow the clients to find out new ways to sell their products. If a market research company could convince the client that they doing something scientific, something gives a new kind of knowledge that enable them to "understand" the people better, that company would earn a great amount of money from the projects. But any company should follow this path to success by using a special language, as Cemal says, "catchy" and "sexy" words. By doing so, the anthropologists and sociologists commercialize and translate their language to the clients. And they have eventually realized that clients would really get impressed by what they do not know but sounds fascinating and more importantly works perfectly! I asked Defne if the clients were resisting to the outputs of the researches:

> No, on the contrary, they used to be fascinated like "Wow, is this really what happens?". We impressed them alright. We impressed them with data and with theory. They were impressed because they didn't know about any of them. (Interview with Defne)

Burcu explains why ethnography and some unconventional new methods are in rise in the market. According to her the conventional methods using in the market research sector such as "focus group" and "surveys" created a lack of confidence to the market research. She argues that:

> Back when the company was first established, a lack of trust regarding research had started. Perceiving focus groups as too much of a laboratory environment led to a growing interest in ethnographic research and I think it will grow even stronger. Fortuna Research then challenged that perception and offered a creative path. It said "OK there will be focus groups but there will also be this and that model". For instance the result you get from a focus group that that advertisement should not be made but then it gets madly popular, attracts a lot of attention. Then the clients lose their trust. (Interview with Burcu)

However, there is a similar danger for ethnographic market research that might potentially cause a lack of confidence due to its way of doing by the companies. For instance, Burcu and Begüm draw attention to the same problems in ethnographic market research. They argue that the market researches conducting under the name of "ethnographic", are in rudimentary forms.

> Ethnographic research takes 2-3 hours max here. Actually I don't think it's enough. That's why I think that a rather undeveloped version of ethnographic research is conducted in market research. (Interview with Burcu)

> I can say one thing about the differences between social research and market research. I think that most of the market research companies who claim to be doing ethnography

> are doing nothing of the sort. I think that you can't do ethnography with 1.5 hour long house visits or spending half a day in the field. A certain amount of time needs to be spent. I mean the academy is a place where you really contemplate some questions, where you thoroughly handle them and examine them through concepts whereas market research is where some things are just compacted. (Interview with Begüm)

Kerem suggests that the ethnographic method, if it can be used properly, could help to understand the true consumer habits. He thinks that questionnaires would not be sufficient for such an understanding.

> What I do in ethnography is that I say let's start the whole thing in depth. Let's get to know the participants. Let's not just look at whether s/he uses the product in question or not. Let's look at what else s/he uses, what brands s/he prefers. According to me, all consumption habits are intertwined and in harmony albeit partly. I mean we should address the consumption experience holistically. You actually move in this world with all this structure of yours. And if you insist on conducting survey with Samsung users alone in a research, you would screw it up. What do you know, maybe one of the participants is using that phone just because a relative gave it as a gift. In truth, his/her shoe is punctured but s/he uses smart phone. What I do is going more slowly, getting the life story of potential consumers in the long run rather than conducting a focus group meeting. (Interview with Kerem)

3.2. Fusion of Theory and Practice in Qualitative Market Research: The Experience of "Making a Contribution"

Market research sector's another feature, which gives a quite satisfaction to researchers, is the ability to combine the scientific theory with the practice in the field. Yet, we must make a separation here. This attempt to combine theory and practice is usually seen in qualitative market researches. Since quantitative researches more focus on the numbers, increase and decrease points and the statistical elements, the practitioners of quantitative market research do not interest much in the theoretical background of the issues. On the other hand, what feeds qualitative market research is its implementation of theory into the field research. This contributes a lot to their character in the sector and seen an advantage before the quantitative methods. And, as I have mentioned, although their working conditions might be harsh in the companies, researchers find their job satisfaction in this methodological approach.

Cemal describes their research projects carrying out in the company and how their approach fed them in academic sense:

> It was like "We also do a scientific job here. We're not advertisers, our approach is not aggressive with a market mindset, and we incorporate the academy". We approached it like this. So there was a research environment in the office. The sense of combining theory and practice really fueled us. In other words, the attitude in the beginning was an academic, high quality, serious one that did not puff things up for the purpose of marketing but relied on social sciences theories and methods. Things weren't like this anymore when I quit. (Interview with Cemal)

Even though I did not ask directly, many of my interviewees mentioned the combination of theory and practice theme. They perceive the qualitative market research projects as the ground of the fusion of the implementation of what they learn in the universities. The striking thing is how my interviewees have amazed with seeing the unification of theory and practice. Canan, for instance, describes her feeling as "pleasure".

> I don't give a shit about clients. It is the meeting of theory and practice that is amazing and it gave me, well… pleasure is the right word. I had never thought "What's it good for?" while in the academy. Imagine, you read Derrida and stuff, what's it good for? It was purely intellectual. I used to think about producing scientific knowledge, that I could write something theoretical. I had never looked at it from the utility perspective. But witnessing that it corresponded something in practice did impress me. (Interview with Canan)

Yasemin (32), who worked both in social and market researches, is supporting the idea that if theory and practice could be in the projects, they would become outstanding:

> Field and theory are very different from each other. Doing research doesn't improve someone theoretically. These two needs to be merged. I think that the most important thing a researcher can contribute to herself is to combine the slow pace and theoretical part in the university with that dynamism, fast pace and practical solutions in private corporations. I think the results are great when the two are combined. (Interview with Yasemin)

Burcu, on the other hand, though she works at the qualitative department in a company, complains that the theoretical side of the job missing in the market research. She also thinks that the practical side was also absent during her university education.

> For instance, as I studied sociology, I was unhappy with the fact that we were too much into theory, that we lost contact with life. I think that only professor … was able to establish a connection with practice. Now I'm in the middle of practice but the other side is missing. I suppose I'll never strike a balance between the two. (Interview with Burcu)

This combination of theory and practice in the market researches gives researchers the feeling of making a contribution to the field. This feeling is the major motivation for them in order to keep working in the sector as the companies cannot satisfy them with the salaries.

> Of course, in the office we used to go over what we obtained in the field. We used to make theoretical discussions. And that had felt creative in the beginning. (Interview with Cemal)

> I quit my job in the embassy and started working in this sector because I believed that I could contribute something, that I could produce something. I'm able to develop ideas, use my brain in full capacity, make creative analyses. Everything I come up with can be collectively analyzed and turned into something else. (Interview with Koray)

> Fortuna Research doesn't load more work on you as clients keep coming, instead they expand the team. After all, they started off as a creative research agency. So they know that people need to be a little relaxed in order to be creative. You are allowed make creative contributions to your reports. Whereas in Calypso, you could only enter the data in your hand, there was no time to be creative. (Interview with Gözde)

4. Workload, Mobbing in the Workplace and Their Impacts on Researchers

4.1. "When I didn't Sleep, I Worked!": The Workload in Market Research Companies

The client companies allocate a considerable amount of money for the market research projects every year. So, they expect, in return, to get tangible results to develop the company and increase the sales. As I tried to discuss above, this expectation can only be realized by creative suggestions which stem only from a carefully designed project and meticulously conducted researches. Market research companies, in this sense, expect from their workers to create actionable insights and analyses in order to provide solutions for the clients. What is asked to researchers that they should figure out new ways for satisfying the needs of client companies.

However, it is a fact that to find out those new ways and suggestions, researchers need to focus on that particular project. In ideal, any project must be evaluated and analyzed in its specific circumstances which are able to meet the needs of the client. Therefore, the researcher carrying out the project needs a sufficient time period to handle the project. But, it can be argued that the workload of the researchers does not allow them to give necessary attention to any project in market research sector. My all interviewees complained about their workload and its effects on their work and personal life.

I believe that the working conditions and the workload in K. Research Company were much better for a researcher in comparison with the stories that my interviewees told me about their experiences. But even in the case of K. Research, it was quite common to work on nights and weekends in order to finish the projects. That is an unsurprising consequence of the capitalist market itself. Like in other sectors, the essential purposes of market research companies are to survive in market conditions and to increase their profit. So, they have to accept any "reasonable" project that comes from the clients to continue their business. This means that, even in small-sized companies there can be numerous projects that should be handled simultaneously. However, the market is full of uncertainties due to the instability in the economy. Today a company may have dozens of projects but tomorrow it is not certain that they will have the same number. Therefore, the companies should take into account the fixed costs, such as salaries, social security and taxes. In doing so, they make a simple income and expense calculation and try to handle the maximum projects with minimum number of workers. In an order that survival and speed[26] are everything, the researches are forced to handle all the projects that are assigned to them in limited time periods.

In K. Research Company, the intensity of my duties, like any other researcher, was usually a little higher than moderate. However, it depended on the current number of projects. No researcher was only responsible from one or two projects.

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[26] I will discuss the "speed" in market research projects in the following chapters in detail.

We also had to write, for instance, new project proposals to clients, attend the client meetings and make literature review for the new researches. I cannot say that I got always too tired; actually, we had enough time for meals, for conversations and any other free time activities. I could get permission to work at home time to time. However, if there were the projects that we have to finish immediately, then we could bring some work to home or stay at the office till morning to prepare the presentation. I remember that some days I could spend the whole night in the office to finish a work and sleep a few of hours on the couch. The workload was distributed evenly among the researchers. Thus, no one was feeling that s/he was working more than the others. If the employers saw that someone had been working more than the others for some time, then they could compensate that extra time with an amount of bonus. Since the company was founded just four years ago, we had troubles with the organization of the work in the office. But those troubles could generally be solved by good intention and solidarity among the researchers.

However, as I said above, the case might be so different in some other companies. Especially in global, big-sized market research companies, due to the very high volume of the projects, researchers have to work long hours and days. However, due to the nature of the qualitative methods, the researches conducting with them could be very demanding in terms of time.

> We were already working overtime way too much. I guess it was my manager making me work even more overtime that's become the last straw. I've always worked my head off. I remember working in 20 projects at the same time. Sometimes, when I had the tough projects, other employees used to say "If you keep nailing such tough projects, they'll start coming to you all the time" and they turned out to be right. I had lots of tough projects assigned to me, I had too many projects [going on at the same time]. (Interview with Derya)

> I remember being responsible of 10 projects. And nobody was aware that I was loaded

> down with that much work. Whereas in Fortuna Research, they realize when you have too much work load and they say things like "We're aware you have too much on your plate, so let's distribute [that work load]" in the meetings. However in Trans Research, they would load more and more work on you, saying you're very good and nobody would care. Frankly, there was no team spirit. (Interview with Aylin)

> When I worked full time, I used to spend the whole day at the office. I used to keep busy with the work at home too. I remember working two days straight, without sleeping at all. I worked for three years, in about 150 projects big or small. So you may assume that I worked for 10 years. Of course there are one week long projects among them. We had around five projects per month, all being conducted simultaneously. I was the only employee who was there from the very beginning of the company and I knew how things worked. So I was obliged to be in every project, one way or another. (Interview with Defne)

> I alone have four projects in my responsibility at the moment and that's me at ease. In busy times that number may go up as far as seven. Since I've started writing reports too, I incorporate the weekends sometimes but not always. Of course I work at nights too. And I often work overtime. (Interview with Burcu)

Although I had some flexibility at K. Research in terms of working from home or a café, many of my interviewees told me that they never (or rarely) had this chance. However, this flexibility does not decrease the workload, rather by giving the opportunity to minimize the time you waste on the way to office, it logically increases the time that you spend the work in total. At the end, the important thing is that one should finish the work in either way. Therefore, researchers should be very punctual, hardworking and always available.

> Due to the nature of my job, I live my days in a very programmed manner. We work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. but I don't always finish my work at 6 because there are too many projects I'm responsible for, I can get off work around 8 p.m. We don't have flexible working hours at all. The only flexibility is this: Your starting time doesn't change but the time you get off work may be delayed. Only one or two people are able to work more flexibly because they have family ties but I'm a professional employee here. I have 17 projects in my responsibility at the moment and that's me at ease. When I'm active, I hardly have less than 20 projects. (Interview with Banu)

> For the last one and half months, the workload reached that of Calypso. But our boss

> makes you feel valued as a human being. For instance, once we worked till very late and they hired a new person in the team so we don't get off work that late. And another time when we had too much on our plate, they let us work home office (Interview with Gözde)

> I used to write reports and prepare question texts when I got back home too. They had given us small laptops, we had to be accessible all the time. [Sometimes] we used to work till 4 a.m. and get the report ready by 8 a.m.. I went through a time when I had some photoshoot to attend, then went back to the office and got worn-out by 3 a.m., I had dark circles under my eyes then. There were times when I worked on Saturdays. (Interview with Aylin)

Some of my interviewees told me that during the years that they were working, they also had to continue their studies in their master's and PhD programs. But that was quite a challenge for them. They barely got permission from their employers to go to school. And even so, they had difficulties to finish their papers and pass their exams. Yasemin told me that she had an incredible tight schedule. In her previous company she had only 7 days of annual leave and her executives gave permission to take her PhD qualification exams in Ankara if she accepts to use those days from her annual leave.

> When I didn't sleep, I worked. I'm not exaggerating or anything. For instance, the reason I went to school by bus, going all that İstanbul-Ankara road back and forth, was because I knew I would use that 6 hours on the road by studying. We experienced many problems in the project we had then. We were left without a project director for quite some time after the project director quit. We did everything, only the two of us and this went on like this for a year. It was very elaborate and challenging. We were literally weeping, we were a couple of nervous wrecks. There's no longer a process of knowledge production there. There's patience there; there is labor, working with no sleep, reading one by one, being very careful and submitting the project flawlessly. We all worked on Sundays too. (Interview with Yasemin)

Nilay had the same problems while she were working in the company. Although she was a part-time researcher on the paper, she worked day and night.

> I wasn't part-time de facto. Supposedly we had a work to which we had to go five days. I had classes jammed in one and a half days, so I went to school for one and a half days and

> I went to the office afterward. Therefore I was in about three and a half days but there were no specific work hours. For instance, I used to come [to the office] about 9 or 9.30 a.m. and sometimes left the office at 8 p.m. and sometimes at 3 a.m.. It was very flexible!! (Interview with Nilay)

Cemal mentioned particularly the demanding work in qualitative market researches. He told me that even though he loved the first months of the job, due to the workload he fed up with what he was doing and his social life was interrupted. He defines the intensity of the work as being in a "production line".

> The problem that caused me to feel somehow unhappy [with the job] was not something qualitative but rather quantitative. I mean I wasn't forced to do something outside my job description. The work load itself became too much, quantitatively speaking, it got extremely heavy. One experiences mental fatigue in these kinds of jobs, sometimes you feel like you're on a production line when you work ceaselessly. Ethnography is a tiresome job. Writing, articulating what you observed in the field, making that piece of knowledge comprehensible for others require energy and concentration. (Interview with Cemal)

Burcu also had some problems in her social and private life and she says that she shared her complaints with the managers. However, even though she got promotions every time she spoke up, her workload did not change.

> I told the bosses that I was unhappy with the pace of work because it's not just you. You've got a family, a boyfriend, a child. My relationship got harmed for instance. I can't endure this pace of work anymore either, I consider it unfair. I also realized that nothing was going to change as long as I kept quiet. Whenever I said this, I got promoted but the working conditions never changed. Promises were made but they were never kept. That period cost me my health. I've got a cervical herniated disc for instance. Yet there are many people who normalize this sort of busy working conditions. Actually I find the extent of normalization in the sector perilous. For instance, a superior of mine recently said "Reports are better written at nights" in a meeting and a lot of people say that. (Interview with Burcu)

What is striking in Burcu's narration is that she thinks that there are some workers who "normalize" this intensity. This shows that some researchers internalize the working conditions and just try to keep their positions in market research sector. A few of them speak up against the structure but the executives or employers silence them with promotions and/or casual bonuses. This situation forces the researchers to compromise on the quality of the job. I also heard exactly the same sentence of Burcu's manager that "the report is best written in the night" from one of my interviewees who worked in another company. Although the reports are one of the major and the hardest part of the job, the executives make them look like a subtask and try to conceal researchers' extra labor. As I discussed above that there is no payment for overtime works in the sector and therefore, this attitude of the companies is a clear exploitation of the researchers. I would like to finish this section by a funny and, at the same time, bitter analogy of one of Kerem's friends regarding a global market research company, which shows how researchers approach the issue:

> I think Calypso is the company which watches over its employees the most and pays them the best. A friend had said something like this: "Working in Calypso is like having a dog. It watches over you but it's difficult to maintain, you need to take it out for a walk every evening, you need to get it groomed etc. You love it but it brings a lot of trouble with it. It's the most decent company in market research but it makes you work like a dog. (Interview with Kerem)

4.2. "You Can't Get Sick Twice!": The Experience of Mobbing

The hardest times of my interviews were the ones that I was listening the mobbing experiences of my interviewees. Three of my interviewees asked me to stop the record during the interview and told me about their mobbing stories in various companies off-the-record. Even the easiest interviews turned out to be pretty challenging after I asked if they had had any experience of mobbing in the workplace. Even though they knew that I would never write their or companies' real names into the study, some of them especially asked me not to mention any detail that may disclose their identities. They believe that the market research companies have the power to wipe out them from the sector, and thus, even they were so eager to tell what is going on in the companies, they felt obliged to hide any detail that may reveal who they are.

One of the interviews was particularly tough. The interview was continuing quite normal until I asked the mobbing question. My interviewee suddenly looked deep into my eyes with a shocking gesture. She changed her sitting posture and after a few seconds she questioned my intention by asking why I asked that question. I tried to explain my intention by saying that it was important because I believed that the working conditions of the researchers would denote the inner problems of market research sector. But she was not convinced by my explanation. I think she thought that I heard something about her previous mobbing experience from someone else and I was trying to take that story out of her. However that was not true. From that moment on, she seemed that she panicked and distracted. She began to talk about some other things to divert the interview some other topics. She could not be able to finish her any sentence; she was saying: "I do not remember what I was telling you". Even after I changed the subject she could not concentrate on the other questions. The day after our interview, she called my phone and politely asked one more time that not to mention the details of her identity as she thought that otherwise she could not be able find any job in the sector ever again.

The interviewees who were much comfortable with the mobbing question were the ones who quit their jobs and had no intention to go back the market research sector. But even for them the disclosure of their intentity could be a problem since they thought that they might be obliged to find a job one day again in the sector.

Derya is one of those who quit her fulltime job in the sector. She is doing some freelance job time to time but she does not want to be employed in a market research company again. That reason that she quit the job was her employer's mobbing.

> We used to be scolded like children. I was put through it a lot. The reason I quit the job was something that's been said as well. When a presentation didn't go well, when something went wrong, always we were the ones to be blamed, they would never take any responsibility. They were always perfect, we were always wrong. For instance, there was this one time when they called their friend who worked in the HR department of … company and asked her to do a workshop. In doing so, they had tried to find what our problem was. And we had try to explain that it wasn't us, it was them but it didn't work because they never accepted their fault. Plus, our major problem was not getting good feedback, not being appreciated. When we told them this, Mr. … [the boss] said "Should I say 'good job' to you all the time as if you're children or something". (Interview with Derya)

Gözde is also confirming that she faced insults from her manager. She says that she was scolded several times by the manager for even small things. She also says that this attitude of her manager made her feel that like an "imbecile".

> My director was a troubled guy too, he insulted people, so I felt even worse there. So there was mobbing. When I first started to work there, I didn't have a proper experience and I was asking my director questions. He didn't answer and if I repeated my question a few times, he used to shout "I see you're not going to be able to pull this job off" and offend me in front everybody. The director I'm talking about yelled at me "Look at me, don't look in front of you" as I was taking notes. I had started to think that I was an imbecile. His very existence had become a cause of stress for me. I had a hard time sleeping at nights, I felt nauseous as I went to work in the mornings. So I had actually decided to quit in my first three months there. (Interview with Gözde)

Nilay has similar stories as well. During our interview, she spent more than twenty minutes for telling me about her bad experiences in the company. Although she is not working there and actually she quit the sector at all, she was still so angry what she experienced. What is striking in her narrative that her employers were intentionally trying to turn the workers against each other in order to take them under control all the time. According to Nilay, whenever there flourished a sort of solidarity and extra cooperation among the researchers, the employers set a meeting and tried to break this solidarity. As she says that the employers wanted them to see each other as competitors. It is very interesting that researchers perceive the workplace as some kind of battlefield.

> There was serious mobbing. There were people who were pit against each other. There were times when they tried to sow discord among us. Since we were physically together all the time, a serious friendship had started to develop between us and this went on later. So we started seeing each other not as competitors but as colleagues. And whenever they realize this, they used to organize a meeting. They said things like "See what a poor job s/he did there, that's why s/he can't work in this company but you can". If you boost someone's ego, you embrace that role and really despise that person. We came to a point where we realized this. After that, we started to share with each other the one-to-one talks they made with us. Once we started to establish that relationship of trust, we as the employees bunched up so well that they couldn't get in between us. (Interview with Nilay)

> I didn't sleep, I had no social life left, I wrote reports day and night and the reports were coming back to me for absurd reasons like "There's a comma missing" or something. They said things like "Nilay has a good communication with the clients but she can't write reports". But that report is sent to the client, this means it's actually OK and there is progress. But nope, we were constantly pitted against one another. (Interview with Nilay)

Kerem gives a different aspect of the mobbing in workplace. He says that managers expect the workers not to get sick more than once. Otherwise, they could get angry and complain about his performance.

> Of course I felt it. For instance, there was no way you could be sick. They didn't accept it and expected you to be busy with the work all the time. So you were supposed to be like a machine, no personal private space. You can't get sick twice, you're allowed to get sick only once. You shouldn't stand out. You're allowed to slow down only once a year. If it happens a second time, they raised their eyebrows. So toleration was quite limited. For instance, you couldn't complain about the work, you could never say "This is how much work I'm going to do, I won't do more than this". (Interview with Kerem)

Although Aylin begins her words by saying that there was no mobbing that much in her previous company, she says that, time to time, a worker was picked as a "scapegoat" and the most boring projects were given to him/her. Furthermore, she says that the intensity of the workload and the exploitation that she felt were the main results for her to quit the job. Therefore, I believe that she thinks that the mobbing is just the visible bad attitudes of managers or the employers. However, in my opinion, the way in which they pushed to work can definitely be seen as mobbing.

> There wasn't much [mobbing] however for instance, if Ms … didn't like someone, that person couldn't last long in the team. She was a control freak and made us work too hard. Plus I was a junior when I started working there. That's also why I was having a hard time taking that fast pace or work. Especially towards the end, I had started feeling like I was being exploited. They saddled me with too much work saying how good I was etc. For instance, a scapegoat was chosen every now and then and the dullest projects were assigned to that person. Once, someone had left the team and I was working in the weekends too. So that pace played an important role in my resignation too. (Interview with Aylin)

Cemal also began his words by saying that what he experienced was not mobbing. However, at the middle of his narration, he suddenly remembered (or realized) that there were some behaviors of his employers that could be seen as mobbing. But I believe that the behaviors of his employers that he describes in the first part of the speech can be exemplified as mobbing in quite clear manner. Therefore, I would like to quote his whole response despite its length.

> Yes, there was a period when we constantly talked about mobbing. But maybe it was something like learned helplessness. When I look back now, it doesn't seem like mobbing anymore. There were times when I didn't do what they said as well, when I felt burned out and slacked. Anyway everything was more flexible compared to the companies of that sort. If I had acted the same way in a finance company, I could have met with harsher reactions. But of course we did hear some offensive remarks. You may give an emotional reaction in the heat of the moment and directly feel that it's mobbing. As a result, you sometimes act passive aggressively and slow down work, you may say "I

> could have done this better but I won't". I'm not sure if it's called mobbing. Because mobbing has to with frustrating and discouraging from work. But the aim of our bosses was not to discourage us from work, on the contrary they tried to make us work more and motivate us in their own fashion. Although things got really tense once. Now that's mobbing, I'm telling you because I just remembered. Back then, they're constantly asking me to do something and I'm saying something else. Then they started not talking to me. Of course there's also that superior-subordinate relationship, so they could say "You can't talk to me that way", and there were times when I got mad. Then they didn't assign me any work for a month. I used to go to the office, get my salary and do nothing. When I shared this situation with my friends with more work experience, they told me that this was a typical mobbing technique, that my bosses were trying to make me quit, trying to frustrate me so that they don't pay any compensation. They told me not to fall into this trap. So I endured. It was a very busy and very bad period in the first place. I couldn't take that busy schedule anymore. Eventually they paid me the compensation.

4.3. "I Had Migraine Attacks Everyday": The Impact of Intense Workload on the Health of Researchers

During my interviews I observed that the issues that I have tried to discuss above such as intense workload, mobbing and insufficient wages create mental and physical problems for the market researchers. Even though I did not ask directly, almost all my interviwees told me about their health issues caused by their job. First of all the stress levels of all the workers are quite high due to the intensity and pace of the work. They have to deal with a couple of things simultaneously. While they try to handle the researches and make them reliable and useful for the corporations, they have to deal with their managers, employers and demanding clients at the same time[27]. Moreover, as I tried to show earlier, they feel that they are atomized in the company and in connection with that, the relations with their colleagues are so limited if any. Since they spend most of their times with working,

[27] I will examine the demanding attitutes and the impolite behaviours of the clients in the following chapter in detail.

they have trouble with allocating time for their social and private life. Therefore, they simply feel stuck. The ones, who do not have the luxury of affording unemployment even a couple of months, feel obliged to put up with the hardships of the job. After a couple of years of experience in the sector, they feel confident to find a position in another market research company, but they think that the new company would not be better at all. Therefore, they have begun to feel depressed and exhausted. Secondly, some of my interviewees have had physical health issues as a result of the work-related stress.

> I had a little bit more time in Johnson but it started to change in time, the number of projects increased. That's when I started to snap and say "I can't work like this". I had a nervous breakdown once. Then I started getting sick all the time. I had migraine attacks every day. I started to suffer from vertigo. I couldn't spend any time with my boyfriend. My family witnessed my work pace and they were astonished too. (Interview with Derya)

> I was having health problems. I was so stressed out that I was grinding my teeth at night. I had gotten a tooth-protector for myself. Then one day, my jaw locked due to tooth-grinding. My manager would show up with traces here [showing her palms] because s/he was clenching his/her fist in her/his sleep. A very high level of stress. But what is it we are doing? We're not building rockets or anything. It's research. (Interview with Yasemin)

> I used to say that I could forgo sleep as long as the school would go well, the work would go well, and the project would turn out good. The rest wasn't a problem for me. But then I wasn't thinking what a partner would expect from, what my father would expect from me. I had burnt out. People used to say "You look very unhappy". And I would answer "I'm not here right now. I'm suffering every second I spend here. I want to go home and work". (Interview with Koray)

> In deadline panic, I saw people break in hives or skip sleep but somehow they carried on working in that pace. Some of them had been working there longer than I had, so they were getting higher salaries. Maybe that's how they were able to tolerate it. (Interview with Kerem)

Banu is relatively pleased with her working conditions. Although she thinks that her job is more stressful in comparison with some other works as she has to deal with the "humans", she says that the conditions of her friends who work for finance sector are much worse. After ten years of experience in the same market research company, now her position is closer to be a senior executive. Therefore, now her workload is lesser than ever.

> [As a reply to the question "Is your job stressful?"] Actually, it depends on how you manage it but of course it's stressful compared to a normal job because you deal with people. In my initial years on the job, I always compared my work pace with that of my friends who graduated from the same department with me. They were very comfortable, they didn't have much responsibility. I had a way more stressful life although we were all in junior positions in our jobs. But then things reversed. As I got promoted, my responsibilities increased but my level of stress decreased, my working hours and my work load decreased. Now all those friends of mine are using antidepressants. They work around the clock. I'm sad to see them unhappy. I consider my job simple as long as there is no huge crisis. It's like our job is smooth sailing. It doesn't mentally strain me much. Only my workload wears me out. (Interview with Banu)

The four of my interviewees are the ex-workers of the sector and they told me that they did not consider to go back to companies any more; and three of them are working either freelance or project-based as they do not want to be a part of any company. I believe that Kerem's words can be an adequate explanation why researchers do not want to work for the sector anymore.

> Research sector is one where human labor is very heavily exploited. And it's hard to say that this labor is remunerated. That's because research is undervalued in this country. Researchers are paid less than those who work in different sectors but in similar pace. So those who remain in the research sector are either those who are not capable of doing anything else but research, who lack the qualifications or courage to embark on a different line of work or those who are madly in love with research, who are married to their job and agree not to have a private life of their own. (Interview with Kerem)

5. Reflections: How Researchers Perceive Market Research Sector Now

In the previous sections I tried to draw a sketch regarding the working conditions in market research sector and what kind of problems researchers in the sector have. I have had two closely related intentions for following such a path. First, I believe that the ethnography of market research sector cannot be revealed and analyzed without the real conditions of its subjects. In order to reach a true understanding of market research sector we should examine both the daily practices and opinions of the subjects. Thus, the ethos of market research sector would be meaningless without analyzing actual relations in that field. My second intention has been to show that how those practical conditions of researchers have affected the quality of the market researches and the perception of the researchers on the sector. Since I will deal with the practical results of those relations and conditions on the market researches in the following chapter in detail, I would like to show how researchers perceive the market research sector after they have had some experience in the companies. This will allow us to see the reflections of the practitioners on the market researches as well.

I would like to start with an observation deriving from my interviews and from my own experience in the K. Research. What made me and most of my interviewees' exited about the work was also the most problematic part: how we use the theoretical and methodological knowledge in our researches and the responses that we get from the clients. From the very beginning of this study, I have always asked a simple (and in a sense childish) question; does, for instance, a civil engineer get the same pleasure while s/he constructs a building as much as I do when I present the outcomes of a research to the clients? I am not sure about the answer, but what I do know is that it was quite satisfying to see how those theories and fieldworks impressed the clients. I heard the very same reactions a couple of times with a certain astonishment from the executives: "I never thought that way!" or "Is it really so?!". Despite the fact that my best and very respectful professors in the university taught me the virtue of studying only "for the sake of knowledge", I was not able to resist the pleasure of seeing usefulness of my researches and insights stemming from them. I was feeling in the same way as one of my interviewee do; I never cared about how much profit my clients made, but I do liked to see the affects of my researches. However, the very problem has emerged at this point. As some of my interviewees told me that, although they like their job despite its hardships, they do not believe that it is something useful. Besides, some of them also feel uncomfortable with using the academic knowledge for the sake of market, as the outcome of those researches produced thank to academic knowledge serves only for consumerism. Some researchers think that the only function of these researches is to "screw money out of customers" who tend to consume what they do not need at all. Therefore, the researchers are not happy about their work.

> In general, I don't think that my job does any good for the world or anything. If I didn't do this job, nothing would be missing from the world. World is not a better place thanks to market research and advertising research. I'm a sociology graduate and I use my knowledge for some products to sell more. This does more harm rather than good for the world. So I don't do this job so heartily. I wonder why I break my neck for a 30 seconds long ad, it all feels purposeless. I feel like we pursue things like "How do we screw people better, how do we make them consume more?". To be honest, I'm pleased with my workplace but not with the work I'm doing. (Interview with Gözde)

> The worst part is that you get inside the guy's head and see. You strip him naked and then develop a strategy over it. This is indeed spying. I get inside your head, dig out some information even you don't know and use that information against you, in order to take your money. Well, what's worse is that it's not even me taking the money but I sell it to some other company. This is nothing but spying. That's what's evil about it. Leaving the consumer so vulnerable. (Interview with Canan)

> A client you previously worked for coming back to you is a positive feedback in itself. We like it of course, we see that we do a good job here but well, you don't ever think "What a beneficial job I did for the world". I guess I could only feel like that if I did social research. There have been people who came here with the expectation of being useful, with a willingness to be beneficial but of course they weren't pleased with the job later. There have been people among them who went back to the academy because of this. One should not expect to find social research experience from market research. We should be aware of the difference between the two. (Interview with Burcu)

Burcu's separation between social research and market research is very crucial. She implies that the only way we speak about the benefit of the society is the social researches. I remember that one of my interviewees, Yasemin, who worked at the social researches department in a big-sized company in addition to market research projects, made the same differentiation between market and social researches. She told me that, since the end results of the social researches give us the possibility of making changes in the society in better ways, social researches are more valuable than market researches to her. She also told me that she never got the same satisfaction from market research projects.

Nilay is one of my interviewees who quit the market research sector. After that she has found a position in a university as a research assistant. She told me that, the mobbing and intense workload in her previous company made her to give this decision. Therefore, she tells how she perceives market research in comparison with the university.

> I feel better [in the university] because you make money by selling knowledge in market research. In other words, you take a piece of knowledge that doesn't belong to you and sell it. You extract the knowledge so as to sell it. You do the same thing in your research in the academy, so that you and your article succeed but you don't make money out of it. This is an important category, an important factor for me. (Interview with Nilay)

> But in case something happened and I couldn't make in the academy, the first place I'd turn to would be market research. Because that's what I can do, that's what I enjoy doing,

> I mean it's definitely not advertising agency. Those places are horrible. Even bigger lies are sold there, I scruple to work there. (Interview with Nilay)

> My students come to me. They're either graduates or students of sociology. They ask me what they're going to do. Personally, I never advise them to go to research companies. And if they should, I tell them to be picky about it, I tell them about the shit going on in those places and that they should agree to work like slaves once they get in. I advise them to go there only temporarily, in case they urgently need money, otherwise never to get caught up in it. (Interview with Nilay)

Cemal also the ones who left the market research sector permanently and now works as a research assistant. I shared his views on academia in the previous chapter. He adds one more point to his view to elaborate his approach to market research and to show why and how he was able to manage to stay in business.

> I think that most of the academic products are not very academic either. Of course, when I was inexperienced, when I had first started that job, I viewed our job as academic. I used to feel like we were doing an academic work there. Of course, I also liked to tell the executives of important companies about anthropology, theory, thinkers and include those people in such a discourse. (Interview with Cemal)

> I didn't use to consider myself as white-collar. After all, I didn't think of being a white-collar as something cool, it was like working in a branch of the … Bank. I was thinking that I was doing a creative job. Since I could write, I used to link ethnography and literature in my head as two literary activities. I also felt like a copywriter. That's why I thought that I was doing something creative and cooler. Plus, we used to distinguish ourselves from the clients. There was a segregation like "These people are white-collars and we have to simplify theories and everything and convey [those theories] to them in a language they could understand". Maybe it was actually being a white-collar and not being aware of it. We were integrated into the market, after all we were in the same sector with those that we called white-collars. These people didn't make us do the work as a contribution to science or so we could develop social policies, they were just looking where and how they could sell their products. But I felt that I was in a more transcendent position, you know, the omniscient social scientist state of mind. We had a sentiment like "We're analyzing cultural codes and this differentiates us from the white-collars". I didn't use to feel like I was doing a routine and mechanical work. (Interview with Cemal)

Canan, after she worked a couple of years in a qualitative market research company, now earns money from other freelance jobs. She does not want to go back to the sector any more. She defines the market research by telling a criticism that she heard from her employer.

> In my first months at work, they criticized my writing for being too academic. I didn't even know what that meant. I mean it was normal writing for me. I learned the language of the market there. Till then, academic writing had meant writing something properly, the way it was supposed to be written. I learned to write for the marketers to read. What matters is to be able to sell it. Being able to sell an idea, a proposal, a text or a product. It's all based on selling everything. The content is not important. It's even more valuable, more important to be able to sell it if there is no content. It was abhorrent to me. They always told me "to buff it up and puff it up". That's where I learned about these terms. (Interview with Canan)

Derya is so reluctant to return back to corporate life again. As a person who worked both in market research companies and at the department of research in a bank, she knows every aspect of the sector and therefore, she thinks that the whole market research sector is a "lie". In her criticism she does not make any distinction between qualitative and quantitative market researches, even though she cares about the insights deriving from qualitative researches. She believes that any kind of market research cannot be conducted as meticulous as it does in academia simply because the sole purpose of the sector is to sell one more product to the customers. Besides, she argues that the market research sector: "They first hire very highly educated, intelligent, bright people and then turn them into a weary, exhausted mass who doesn't want to think about anything" (Interview with Derya).

> Actually, I think that the research sector is a huge lie right now. I don't believe in any research. The reason why I say that research is a lie is that I'm an econometrics graduate, they've already taught us at school that statistics is a lie and econometrics is an even bigger lie. I mean it doesn't matter if you abide by certain rules and conduct surveys which you think are correct, you just cannot determine your whole strategy based on this. Survey can just give you an idea. They expect too much from research companies… Even if the research companies tell them what they want to hear, there's no way it could be true. Even if these companies told you that your recognition level would rise to 80

percent if you did such and such, there's no way it could be true. Because everything's a factor in life. Anthropologist becomes a fly on the wall and no one notices him/her… bullshit. I don't believe it. No matter what you do, the person you observe will be different in his/her everyday life. So all these ethnographic observations are not so incredible things as to give us as much as expected from them. In my opinion, companies in general expect too much from research projects. (Interview with Derya)

Another reason why I think research is a lie… For instance, I think what surveys lack the most are emotions. And what emotions lack the most are numbers. And if you're trying to do something that will serve a world dominated by capitalism, I think that you can't do it properly and in a really beneficial way as it is done in academy. No matter how you do it by the book, I don't believe that it would be something that the opposite part could use because those guys just want to sell something, to boost their brand. (Interview with Derya)

CHAPTER 4

Market Research Projects and Relations with Clients

1. Introduction:

In this chapter, I would like to examine mainly two things; 1) the whole process of market research projects, and 2) the relations with the client companies in this process. These two aspects, as I will discuss, go hand in hand in the market researches. A market research, either conducting by qualitative or quantitative methods, has several steps starting with writing a proposal to presenting the results to the client, which are needed to investigate one by one. However, I will particularly deal with the qualitative researches. Even though those steps have similarities with the stages of a social scientific research and methods, the market research has its own logic and forms. Therefore, it would be a mistake to think that market research projects are the strict implementations of scientific methodology. It is quite common to see in those projects (either in qualitative or quantitative researches) how some steps are skipped quickly due to the very limited timetables.

Researchers usually follow a certain path and steps to carry out the researches but they sometimes would use unconventional methods and ways due to the expectations of the clients. Furthermore, those expectations and interventions of the clients could determine how the researchers design the project and even decide on the sampling. So, it is an undeniable fact that market researchers would never be the only decision-makers in the projects. In every steps of a market research project, researcher should either convince the client that a certain method would be a better way in terms of reaching the most reliable results or modify the project in accordance with the expectations and interventions of the client. This situation depends on various parameters such as whether the client knows how a market research project should design and what they might expect from the outcomes of the research; or, how the market research company approaches the relations with clients; whether they are ready to accept every demand comes from the client as soon as they get their money or they would be insistent regarding the quality and success of their own methods. In that sense, we may argue that a market research is not just what a market researcher design and conduct; it is a process that what two parties, market research company and its client, compromise over.

For instance, during my participant observation in K. Research, I always had the same bargain with the client that how many in-depth interviews we would conduct in the research. In many projects we insist on conducting, let's say, fifty interviews in five cities, but if the budget of the client company is not enough for that, they may ask either for a discount or decrease the number of interviews and the cities. Due to the expenses of a research, even K. Research accepts a slight discount, the client usually asks for a decrease in numbers. If the numbers are not very low than what we plan for the research, we accept the offer and conduct fewer interviews. However, this situation is valid for all market research companies. I was told that in the companies, which conduct quantitative researches, it is quite usual to accept fewer questionnaires in the researches due to the demands of the clients. So, this means that even designing a project and decisions on the sampling depend on the budgets, not just on the expertise of the researcher.

2. The Process of Market Research Projects

2.1. Writing a Project Proposal: First Meeting and the Brief

Writing a proposal is the first major component of a market research project. But the proposal is not “the first” step; even before a proposal there are some other pre-steps which gives the form of the proposal. Therefore, I would like to begin with these pre-steps in order to explain what a proposal consists of.

Almost all market research projects begin with an invitation of a meeting by the potential client company. As I discussed earlier, the clients mostly feel a need for a research when they have a certain problem. Most of the client companies have a “research and development” or “customer experience” department within the firm, and those departments are responsible for finding a market research company, which is suitable for that particular project. Whereas some client companies invite more than one market research companies in order both to meet and let them know that they will decide which company they will work with by putting a tender, some others choose a specific market research company.

The participants of those meetings are usually the executives of the research department of the client company, and the owners and the project directors of the market research companies. For instance, in K. Research, co-owners and one of the project directors who would potentially be the director of that project were joining the meetings. I personally joined a couple of first meetings during my experience. In the meetings, the executives of the client company introduce themselves and their company, and then, explain their specific problem in order to get our ideas regarding possible researches. Following that, we introduce ourselves, explain what kind of methods we use in our projects and in what way we can help for finding a solution to the problems.

Actually, the hardest part in those meetings was to explain the client what the ethnographic research was. Since they are accustomed to the statistical data, pie charts and numbers in all sorts, it was quite challenging to clarify the idea behind the qualitative research. In almost all meetings we were asked that how the methods we conduct, would pave way to significant results. This shows that even executives from those particular departments do not know what the qualitative research is. This was making our job much harder than other market research companies which use quantitative methods simply because in every step of the research we had to explain what we did and why we did.

If the meeting goes well and satisfying for both parties, the client company sends the "brief" to the market research company in the following days ahead. In the brief (the word is used in its English version, not in Turkish "özet"), the client company defines its problem once again and describes what is expected from the market research company. In most of the cases, the brief includes even the expected sampling. In any brief one may see the expected sampling distribution and the specific features of potential participants in details. These expectations may be discussed by two parties, yet, the client companies are generally very insistent on them.

If it becomes necessary, any party would ask for another meeting before the proposal or market researchers call the client to make clear some points. But usually we begin to write the proposal immediately. A proposal mainly comprises what the market research company offers to the client. However, even though it differs in every company, in K. Research it takes a couple of days or hours to write a proposal.

Before we begin to write, we usually make a literature review regarding the topic and the sector we work for. If the client company is from a sector which we have not worked before, we try to understand the particularities of that specific sector. For instance, if a company asks for a research among the teenagers, we check out the literature on that particular segment and try to see what kind of discussions have been made on them; and after that we search for advertisements or, if it is possible, for other market researches having similarities with our project. By doing this, we try to anticipate in what way we may approach the client's problem both theoretically and practically. After all, we should propose something new, and therefore, we should create new ideas to convince the client. I suppose that I personally wrote approximately ten proposals in ten months. Some of them took just a couple of hours since we had had similar projects from the same sector in the past. But I remember that once I spent two weeks to finish a huge project proposal and it took seventeen pages. I cited quotations from some academic articles to make the proposal stronger.

The companies, which carry out the qualitative researches, generally follow a similar path for writing the proposals. Defne describes how they prepared the proposals for the clients.

> Preparing proposals for clients was a painful process. Our bosses wouldn't approve so easily. The process of preparing a proposal was like… Let's say it's a project about

> chocolate. We'd go through the history of chocolate. If we found something interesting in the literature, we'd put it in the proposal. We'd say "We should conduct in-depth interviews because of such and such reasons". (Interview with Defne)

In some other companies, learning how to write a proposal is the first task for the new researchers. Burcu says that she has also begun her job at the qualitative research department of the company by writing proposal. However, in her company the writing process of proposals are much faster than how we do it in K. Research.

> In our case, everyone can write proposals. In fact, as a junior you start the job by writing proposals because it's an important part of the job after all. You write down the objectives and you're expected to determine the sample, so it's an important step in the learning process. So it's not about quoting prices but being able to write about the objectives. I can't say that they teach you how to write a proposal, you figure it out on the way. [I don't review the literature before writing a proposal] because there's no time for that. It takes 20 minutes max for me to write a proposal. After all, the brief comes in the proposal phase. Client would have already told you about the problem and that's what you more or less summarize in the objectives section of the proposal. You write down the research subject underneath. That's something you can easily do by looking at similar proposals. It's prepared in PowerPoint form and is about 10 slides long except the introduction texts. (Interview with Burcu)

The time limitations hugely affect the quality of the research proposals. Normally in quantitative market researches the proposals are relatively short and plain in comparison to the qualitative and ethnographic researches. However, sometimes clients want to read proposal in one or two days. Therefore, the preparation period for the proposal becomes lesser. Nilay, who wrote proposals for qualitative market researches, says that she was writing proposals by imitating the older proposals due to this time limitation.

> There was a time when I copied and pasted from previous proposal because I didn't write proposals from scratch. I only added the academic stuff if there was something new there. In fact, this was one of the things that satisfied me. Incorporating theoretical knowledge very seriously. So we weren't doing some worthless work there. Of course

> these references used to impress the clients too. They made them think that we knew what we were doing. Beside this impression, what partially fueled us in the inside were these theoretical issues. (Interview with Nilay)

Derya underlines striking facts from her previous company. Her company is one of the global, big-sized companies in the sector, which generally conducts quantitative market research. She says that, those who did not know how to write them wrote proposals. Furthermore, since senior executives were using their "personal relations" to get a project, they were writing their own proposals.

> There was also a marketing department in Trans Research. Some proposals would be written by them, especially if it was a new client. But these people had never done research before and they had no idea about the research business. And sometimes executives would offer proposals. In other words, they would use their personal relationships, their own networks in order to get projects. (Interview with Derya)

We also have inner meetings and discussions to decide what to write into the proposal. After all, even though there is a project director who is responsible from the whole steps, the research project is teamwork. Thus, we share our thoughts on brief and try to decide on our approach together with other researchers. These brainstorming meetings were also helping us to think deeper on some issues other than our research. So, after we finally manage to establish a structure, explain our methodology and add the budget of the research the proposal becomes ready to send. The budget is usually unknown for the workers. It is prepared by the employers at the end and send directly to the client. I coincidentally learned the budgets of some research projects, but it would not be ethical to disclose the amounts here. Rather, I just want to share Kerem's opinions regarding how the budgets are determined:

> There are two dimensions to budgeting. Firstly, whether the work is hackneyed or not. Secondly, the potentiality of future projects coming from the client. Thirdly, I may add to these the quality of your work. If you're trying to keep good researchers in your team,

> then you have to be paying them well. Therefore the client needs to pay a large sum. You can't be underpaid under these conditions. (Interview with Kerem)

I should also add the dimensions above some fundamental parameters which effect the budgets of the projects such as how many in-depth interviews or questionnaires the company conduct and how long the project takes and in how many cities the project carrying out. So, the companies should consider the intensity of the projects while they prepare the budgets. As I mentioned before the client companies, due to their budget limitations, sometimes ask for a discount.

After clients read the proposal they may send back it with some small revision requests. These revisions can include changes in the cities that selected for the project or an aspect of the scope. If they ask for major changes then we call them for a meeting and discuss our approach and try to convince them. A similar process happens during the preparations of the "fieldguide". A fieldguide is the semi-structured question form that defines the questions, which will be asked in the fieldwork. Unlike a questionnaire, fieldguide does not contain the actual questions; rather, it includes the general titles and sub-titles of prospective questions and some reminders for the researcher about what s/he will ask for. A researcher never asks his/her questions in the way that asked in the fieldguide. His/her task is to modify and organize these sub-titles in accordance with the peculiarities of the personal experience of interviewees. The researcher always has the freedom to ask some other questions that do not listed in the fieldguide, or refrain to ask any question that s/he thinks that would be inappropriate. So, fieldguides give researcher a general idea what s/he is investigating.

The project director is responsible from explaining and making clear the scope of fieldguide for the fieldworker team. S/he also has to make the same explanations to the client, because before the approval of the client, no fieldguide would become effective immediately. Clients usually demand revisions in the fieldguides as well. However, the problem is, since they do not know the idea behind the fieldguide, they always ask to add more questions. They think that we will ask a few and insufficient questions to the interviewees, as they see just the sub-titles in the fieldguide. In almost every research that I directed I had same reaction from the clients. Therefore, I tried to explain the purpose of the fieldguide and how our research team will ask the details of the topic during the fieldwork.

At this point, what is important for our purposes is that there is a certain lack of a research question at the very beginning of these steps. In academic writing the research question – appears either by an intuition or by a need to response to a practical problem – contains a questioning of or a challenge to an inherent truth. The ultimate goal of an academic research question is not only the representations of the occurrences of the things but also to confront with the order of routines. In that sense, the academic knowledge intentionally or unintentionally undermines what have been presented as the only truth. However, the market research projects would never aim such a challenge for their clients. At the end of the project the clients would never ask a new paradigm, but just the solutions. For that very reason, the research questions of market research projects are given by the clients in the briefs, as they do not need (or desire) such an investigation.

2.2. Deciding on the Method(s)

Almost every market research company has its own business character in terms of using a method or variations of methods. Whereas some companies define and commercialize themselves with a specific method, some others prefer to combine different methods and techniques. For instance, K. Research Company is known with its successful ethnographic researches, and clients especially choose the company for this specific method. In addition to this, in recent years some companies are specialized on neuromarketing research techniques or online marketing researches. The quantitative research methods are the most popular ones in the sector and therefore, many of the companies prefer to conduct surveys. Especially, the global market research companies offer various techniques for their clients in quantitative market researches. However, since they are big-sized companies, they have many departments specialized in particular methods and topics; in doing so, they may apply any method in accordance with the clients' needs. Also, they use some relatively new techniques in their researches such as content tests and advertisement tests.

But even the very specialized companies (such as ethnographic market research or neuromarketing research companies) gradually tend to use amalgamation of the methods. For instance, K. Research has begun to conduct surveys in some researches in order to strengthen and diversify the data obtained by qualitative researches. Also it is known that neuromarketing research companies are using a special kind of in-depth interview, in addition to their eye-tracking and brain profiling techniques. During my fieldwork, I observed that the clients are compelling the market research companies to use various methods, since they want to get both statistical data and qualitative insights together. Thus, the market research companies have been trying to change their business character to all-in-one business. In my view, this tendency will increase in the future and the companies will become departmentalized in order to conduct various methods. Erdem argues that the companies should not stick to one specific method, and they should use compositions of methods in accordance with clients' interests and problems.

> Let's say someone has come to me and asked "I'm trying to understand this matter and

> you're a research company, how do we solve this?". I think that I should approach you not based on a method but rather based on your problem. I think the more complete the solution I find for your problem, the stronger and bigger I become. I think growth results from this rather than relying on a single method. In this sense, I'm not obsessed with ethnography. I'm not a conservative in terms of methodology, I'm open to everything. (Interview with Erdem)

Canan and Aylin told me that in their companies they were using more than one method in order to enrich their outcomes.

> It was always triangulation, I mean we always used three different methods. For instance, it didn't use to be participant observation alone; we used to conduct in-depth interviews and also surveys with the help of another company. All these methods fed each other and this worked really well. (Interview with Canan)

> We have definite questions and a definite model as we go out in the field. We interpret the data with the help of open-ended questions as well. I mean the reports are not just like "This increased and that decreased". We try to use both qualitative and quantitative [techniques] in major projects. So we sometimes get help from the qualitative team in certain projects. (Interview with Aylin)

Banu, on the other hand, says that her company only uses quantitative research method. She thinks that qualitative research methods demand more time and labor. Furthermore, she has a very interesting distinction in her mind between qualitative and quantitative methods. She asserts that, whereas the data gathering by quantitative methods is the "fact", the qualitative methods can only provide "insights" which give limited idea about any issue. Therefore, she and her company do not prefer to carry out qualitative research.

> We mostly do face-to-face [survey] and CATI, our thing is quantitative [research] after all. We rarely conduct qualitative. To be honest, I don't really pursue qualitative anymore, I don't prefer it as much because it requires a lot of labor. Whereas in quantitative, you're able to work faster, you prepare reports and some analyses quicker. In qualitative, each time you have to labor the same amount. (Interview with Banu)

> I know that one needs to be careful using qualitative methods because they are insights,

> not facts. For instance, let's say we conduct a focus group and a guy says something striking. OK, we may get a good material to work on from there but I can't generalize it. Because that's just something a guy said, maybe it's a quantitative researcher thing. For instance, let's say I'll conduct four focus groups and in one of them, one person among six or seven participants said something. I can't just say "There's something here, let's concentrate on it". I'm more likely to say "We have something here, it's a good insight, let's see if we can support it quantitatively, what proportion of the population thinks so. And I always have these questions in my mind. Even if it's something that will get the client excited, I don't rush and get the client going. I say "Wait, first let's see its percentage". In other words, I rather consider statistical data as fact. I think using qualitative methods requires more precision and care. But of course there are many aspects where qualitative is stronger. For instance, regarding something more creative, for projects where we rather search for answers to why's and how's, qualitative is the right path to take. I'm just saying that one needs to be more cautious about generalizations while using it. In this sense, qualitative instills fear into me, I wonder how I can make a generalization. Therefore, if the client doesn't have a methodological preference, I always prefer and suggest the quantitative method. (Interview with Banu)

Derya, as a person who worked both in the market research companies and the research department of a bank, makes a distinction between Ethica, which is a small sized, qualitative market research company and other global, big-sized companies. Although the former gives more satisfying insights by different techniques, the latter were just trying to convince the clients by superficial and rapid suggestions.

> I think there was a difference [between the qualitative departments of Trans Research and Johnson and what Ethica did]. After all what Ethica always claimed to be using was ethnography. Plus, they had developed some different methods themselves, like brainstorming with the employees [of the client] first. The qualitative departments of Trans Research and Johnson were not companies to develop such methods. Usually, as soon as they met the client, they used say things like "All right then, I'll conduct this number of [focus] groups for you" or "[Focus] group cannot be conducted with these people, let's conduct in-depth interviews for you". That's how the executives of the department made decisions and closed the deal. (Interview with Derya)

2.3. Conducting Fieldwork in Qualitative Market Research Projects

In this section, I will specifically describe and discuss how in K. Research we were conducting fieldworks. But, at some points I will try to show how in some other companies this process differentiates at some certain points. In doing so, I plan to denote the differences between a scientific study carrying out in the university and market research sector.

In K. Research, I personally directed three researches and worked in seven projects as a fieldworker in ten months. Since K. Research had awarded with several Owl Awards just before I became a project director, the potential clients began to knock our door to meet us. As a result, the number of projects drastically increased in a couple of months. Our workload became intensified and thus, every researcher in the company had to work hard.

As a project director my duties were, after we shake hands with the client, to establish a team from both fulltime and project based researchers, have a first meeting with them, describe the project and the purposes, and lead the fieldwork. Like every other project director, I personally preferred to conduct some interviews and made observations in the field by myself in order to see the reactions of the interviewees and whether there was any question in our fieldguide which did not work properly.

In our project process the hardest part was to find the proper interviewees described in the sampling. Although almost all other market research companies use the data collection companies to reach the interviewees, K. Research purposefully do not prefer to find them via those mediator companies. There are two reasons for that; first, the co-owners of the company believe that what gives the quality of a research is to find the interviewees by our sources; and second, they do not trust the data collection companies since those companies could direct us to the people who do not match with the sampling.

As I will discuss in the following chapter that, in my opinion, the co-owners of K. Research are completely right – at least - with their second reservation. It is well known in the sector that many of the data collection companies tend to use “dirty respondents” which refers to the people who could introduce themselves differently in separate projects. For instance, a respondent employed by data collection company, can join a research, let’s say, as a civil servant in a state institution, but in another project he can introduce himself as a butcher. And the problem is no one can check whether he says the truth or not. Therefore, even though it was a quite hard task, we were trying to find our interviewees by the means of our own connections. So, for instance, if I was looking for a banker or a lawyer to make an interview with, I was asking my friends, my relatives and my colleagues whether they knew someone in that business. I was also requesting to do the same thing from my fieldworkers. Every fieldworker had to find his/her own interviewees by themselves. Of course any researcher in the company was trying to help each other, but this method was very time consuming.

However, in my view, there are also some risks immanent to this method in terms of the quality of the research. First of all, using this snowballing method in every research can cause confining ourselves with our own circles. For instance, if I ask my friends to find someone for my project every time, this might become a very limited sampling universe, which composed only of my personal circle, and that might affect the quality of the projects. Secondly, as I witnessed several times, the people who try to find interviewees for us, may fed up with our endless demands. This may also cause problems and confusions in researchers’ personal lives. After a certain point, I had problems to ask same people to find me interviewees, simply because I felt ashamed. Therefore, even though this method has several advantages in terms of ensuring the reliability of the researches, it may also cause many problems.

A possible solution to those problems would be auditing the data collection companies tightly; but as I will discuss in the following chapter, this solution is quite hard to maintain as well. The second possible solution, as we have done in the K. Research time to time, is to use ethnographic techniques which is throwing ourselves onto the field and try to create connections randomly. I benefited from this technique in some researches. However, it is not always easy to convince people to make an interview which takes at least one hour. Almost nine people out of ten reject to make the interview. But, as I said before, since in market research projects we have very limited time to finish the project, we did not have the luxury to ask another ten people to find one more interviewee.

After we finish our preparations, we begin fieldwork as soon as we find an interviewee. Since the interviews are the most important parts of the job, we had always approached carefully to our interviewees. I can assert that, the interviews were the most solid and successful part of our job. Every researcher in the office knows the rules and delicacies of the work. Therefore, they conduct the fieldwork meticulously. However, as the time limitations become an obstacle especially for participant observations, we could offer limited insights to the clients (even though we never say them that!) about that part of the work.

2.4. Reports and the Presentation to Client

In K. Research we either take field notes or tape recording in ever interview, if the interviewee approves. However, we do not transcribe the whole recording, rather we write 8-10 page reports by listening the record and checking the field notes. Although we are free to write whatever we think important, there are some standard things we are expected to write. First, it is expected to organize the report in accordance with the subtitle order in the fieldguide. This is a helpful way for preparing the presentation. It is also important since during the TÜAD auditing process, the auditor checks if the reports are in the same style with the others. So, we begin to write the proposal with the first demographic questions and then follow the fieldguide order. It is also expected from the fieldworkers to write down to their reports the striking quotations as they make huge impact on the client during the presentations. No matter we say to the client in the presentation, they want to hear the voice of the customer what we call “verbatim”. Begüm underlines the importance of those direct quotations.

> I think verbatim is very important. It’s like a seatbelt in qualitative research. When someone says “On what grounds are you saying this?” I take out the verbatim and put them in front the person. Because in qualitative research, there is nothing else you can do about objectivity, there are no figures to put forward. Therefore, if there is any problem about my interpretation, I put verbatim wherever I see necessary in the report. Initially, I used to put down every verbatim as I wrote reports. I wanted to tell the client “This is the language of your target group” because what we actually do in these reports is translating the data into marketing jargon and present it to the client. Verbatim enables us to say to the client “This is the raw version of what your target group says, not translated into marketing jargon”. (Interview with Begüm)

At the end of the reports we are asked to write any observation or any idea in our mind that we can connect with some theoretical discussions. The project director should read all the reports and take notes for presentation preparation. He may ask the field workers extra questions to establish a presentation structure. After we finish all the interviews and reports, we begin to prepare the presentation. This is the most difficult and tiresome part of the research. It takes at least two or three days of work including the nights. The project director and some other researchers may join this preparation period. First we decide on our structure; what are the outcomes of our research; what kind of insights we can provide; what would be the best way to present the insights.

Then we try to make an "extraction" which means the separation between the most and the least important points in the reports. This is a quite challenging process since we all know that every data of the fieldwork is important in a sense. What we do during extraction is to keep in mind the points which the client asked us to find out and choose the important points accordingly. In addition to that, we look for the particular aspects of the reports which may be presented as future suggestions. So, what makes a point valuable is its capacity to meet the expectations of the client. This very approach is quite different what we try to do in academic researches. Even in a scientific research we follow a similar process, however, a scientist should show every facet (positive or negative) of the research in his/her study. Unlike a scientific study, in our market research presentations we highlight or bring forward the points which clients expect to hear. This does not mean that we hide negative issues in the presentations; quite contrary to that we feel responsible to denote the strong and weak sides of the client. But, we should more concentrate on the answers to the questions asked in the "brief".

The key concept in qualitative market researches is "insight". In any standard online dictionary, the meaning of insight is: 1) the ability to perceive clearly or deeply; penetration; 2) a penetrating and often sudden understanding, as of a complex situation or problem[28]. At the beginning of my participant observation I was always hearing that concept (or its Turkish equivalent "içgörü") in the office. It was hard to understand what insight meant for the market research. What we were expected from our projects was to "catch" a point that no one has ever seen before and turn it into something which can lead the client to take an action that may change the current situation of the company. For instance, if a company wants to sell its product to a particular group in a specific socio-economic status which have not been the customer of the company before, the market research company's task is to "crack" the codes and consuming patterns of that group in order to reach them with an accurate marketing language.

It would be helpful to give an example from one of my projects in K. Research to understand what was expecting from us. One of our clients from automotive industry came us with a particular problem. They were preparing to launch an upper-segment new car to the market, and they wanted to sell this car particularly to the upper-class customers who can afford much expensive ones than our client's new car. Our client's hypothesis was that if this target group could be convinced to buy this new car, this would have a huge positive effect on their brand sense in the future. But the problem was, that target group has some certain preferences when it comes to purchase a car and they are very conservative about their choices. This particular group of customers choose their cars in accordance with their positions in the business, and even the brand of the car that they have, is an important parameter for their business relations. They normally choose their cars from one or two particular well-known brands and models, and our client's brand was certainly not one of them. So, we basically were trying to crack the

[28] http://www.thefreedictionary.com/insight

codes of those customers and figure out in what conditions this target group could be convinced to buy this new car.

This is the point where the “insight” comes into the scene. It is not possible to find out a solution this particular problem by conducting a quantitative research. No survey would help us. The nature of the problem does not allow us to approach it with numbers or statistical analysis. Therefore, we somehow had to “penetrate” into the “minds and souls” of those customers and figure out a way to sell them our client’s new car. So we conducted in-depth interviews with the people who were CEOs or vice-presidents of various firms. Needless to say that it was quite challenging even to get an appointment from those people. We had to ask our questions in a very limited time period. We collected our reports and observations and then we made the extraction that I was mentioned above. After that we tried to find possible answers to the question that how those people could be persuaded to purchase this new car. So basically, our answers were our insights, regardless of to what extend they were effective.

Kerem underlines the importance of the insight by arguing that it is crucial to propose new things to the clients.

> You can also call those who put a frequency table in front of their clients a research company. But you need to put a lot on top of that and be able to tell the client how to take action all the time. If you cannot convey this, you’re not a researcher. It’s not enough to take a picture of a situation in a sector. Those who consider research is simply going out in the field and collecting data are still common though. (Interview with Kerem)

As Kerem suggests, what makes a market research company is more successful than the others is its ability to find out the ways that shows how its client can take action. It is not enough in market research sector only to present the row data. Market researchers should be confident to themselves while orienting their clients to certain ways. The clients' expectation is not only to see what potential customers said; beyond that, they want to hear suggestions. Burcu argues that what makes an interview valuable is its capability to give such insights.

> I'm trying to capture what we call insight, something different than finding, something that cannot be identified in a quantitative research but more like telling a story. It think that it's these points which make an interview a good one. Because not everyone can express himself/herself well in interviews. Some interviews say a lot about something whereas some are just garbage, therefore I say "Skip it" as I skim through transcripts. In my opinion, an insight conveyed in a report is simply its polished version, adapted to marketing jargon. Actually you get that from the participant but there are times when we also write down the feeling. For instance, some research companies strictly say "The respondent didn't say this, so I can't say this either" but we're not afraid in that sense, we can say "The respondent said so but it's not". (Interview with Burcu)

Aylin says that there is a difference between her previous and current companies. Her previous company did not allow her to add even comments to the reports, whereas the current company is open every sort of insights.

> [In the company I previously worked] there were traditional people, nobody thought out of the box. They weren't open to innovation. Whenever I found an insight and wanted to add my comment, they restrained me by saying "There is no such thing in your interview". So I was shy about adding my comments when I first started working in Fortuna Research but adding comment is the very thing they want here. I have a free work environment, I'm free to add my comments. (Interview with Aylin)

Begüm thinks that, even though it is something valuable what we call insight, it would not be expected to create insights in every research.

> They keep saying insight everywhere. I think one can find insight in a creative project. But you don't necessarily get it in every project. After all it also depends on how you design the research. I've never led my clients into thinking that I would dig out an insight. I know that you can't get an insight from every project and I act accordingly. Otherwise, I believe that a thing called insight really exists and it's very valuable. There is a picture everyone looks at and there is a small thing over there that nobody sees. That's an insight and the question is being able to see it. To attain it, you use certain methods and design your research. (Interview with Begüm)

Derya, on the other hand, argues that market research companies are not able to provide insights. She thinks that some companies were able to give insights but even in those companies, %30 percent of what they say is just fiction.

> Honestly, I don't think any research company provides insights. This goes for every company. Only Ethica may be an exception. In terms of insight, I think 70 percent of their work is correct and they make up the 30 percent. I saw this also when I was on the client side. I think those companies that claim to provide insights whistle in the dark considerably. None of the companies I worked in, neither Trans Research nor Johnson claimed to be providing insight. And those who had such a claim, like Ethica, actually made interpretations that had nothing to do with the data and if they were eloquent enough, they also said consultancy-style stuff that could help with strategy. (Interview with Derya)

Cemal has a different point in regarding the insight. He argues that since we have certain hypotheses in our minds before we go field, we are programming ourselves to find what we intend to see. This process leads us a sort of conceptualization, he argues, and those concepts has such as effect that restricting our view.

> A 50 interview project makes a large amount of pages. You're trying to squeeze something out of all those pages of data. And as I said, we already had some hypotheses in our mind when we went out in the field. So as you filtered data, you could also feel like you were finding what you were programmed to look for in the first place. Plus, I think concepts usually emerge in the field. I mean a concept emerges as you see a pattern while analyzing the data. Then it's given a name. Once you name it, you bring the concept into existence and then start thinking about it. You're programmed to think about it, and this may sometimes obstruct you, prevent you from seeing new things, so you may end up focusing on the same concept all the time. (Interview with Cemal)

2.5. “Selling Mary Douglas” or “Admiring Darth Vader”: How Theoretical Knowledge Commercialize in Market Research Projects

Theoretical knowledge is what paves the way for insights in market research projects. As I discussed earlier, in K. Research we always used an appropriate theoretical approach in our presentations. Theoretical knowledge was not merely a decoration for the projects. Although we knew that the theoretical knowledge we used had a very positive affect on the client as their knowledge about authors and their concepts were very limited, we were naturally making connections with that knowledge. Theoretical knowledge was making easier to consider on the issues for us. In doing so, we could give a meaning what we were doing. Besides, without that knowledge, our projects and outcomes would have become prosaic and futile for the clients. After all, the executives do not want to listen only the raw data (it’s valid even for ethnographic research), but they need to hear how we can transform this data into actionable insights. Therefore, we had the habit to think the issues from within the theory. I remember that, we used the theories of Marx, Bakhtin, Bourdieu and some other anthropologists and sociologists in various projects in K. Research.

> I participated in the presentation even in my first research there and it actually went well. Because you sell the clients something they don’t know about. You sell ethnography to people who have nothing to do with social sciences, you talk about theories from the literature. Maybe they may have heard about Marx and all but don’t have the slightest clue about his theory, that’s why theory attracts their attention. (Interview with Defne)

> For instance, we sold Marx to … [a retail company in Turkey]! We sold Bourdieu to …[an international company from automotive industry]. We sold Bourdieu’s types of capital. Like “In your consumer group, these have this much social capital and those have that much cultural capital etc. You appeal to this and need to do that in order get those people over there too. It was this academic approach that bewitched me. (Interview with Canan)

Even though it sounds awkward to hear that the figures such as Marx and Bourdieu and a small part of their theories become the subject of commercializing, this is basically what market research companies do; at least it is part of their business. Although this theoretical knowledge was feeding our projects and us in personal level, we knew that we also commercialize that knowledge for the sake of our company's profit and survival. I remember that we had a discussion on the ethical issues regarding the commercializing the theoretical knowledge with Canan, since I was feeling uneasy about this issue. She asserts that, this has nothing to do with ethics:

> This has nothing to do with ethics. But I couldn't really make sense of it in the beginning. Later, when I started doing projects and being a part of the process, I saw that it was clever in an evil way. It worked, it was useful. When I read Marx and Bourdieu in the university, I had never imagined that one could make money out of theory, that companies could make money out of it. It hadn't even crossed my mind. It evoked somewhat admiration in me that these guys had come up with this but it was like the admiring Darth Vader. Seeing that it worked excited me. (Interview with Canan)

At this point I would like to remind Pierre Bourdieu's opinion, who we usually "sell" in the presentations, regarding the "academic market". He says that: "The market in scientific goods has its laws, and they have nothing to do with ethics" (1975, p. 26). What is at stake for market research is exactly the same approach. The market research sector can (and should, for its own sake) transform any knowledge into commodity, and social theory is not free from this process. Contrary to that, in my view, the market research sector cannot manage to survive without using that knowledge; otherwise, the projects would only be confined into statistical data which does not say too much to the clients. I argue that, market research sector does not produce new kind of knowledge, but rather, it just present and provide a translation of that knowledge into marketing language. This is why the title of this study includes the phrase "re-production" of the knowledge. What we were doing in the presentations was also a translation of theoretical knowledge into market language, by articulating it with our data. In that sense, I assert that the separating line between academia and market research sector is blurred; and positioning of social sciences from an ethical dimension and its contempt against market research sector is just clearing its “uncomfortable conscience”.

> No top executives like to listen to a lecture about Bourdieu in a meeting. Well of course you try to make it entertaining with jokes and stuff and you tell about it in an itemized fashion which is not how you’re supposed to address social sciences. So we used to tell about it on a level “for idiots”. But the effort it takes to simplify it so much… not everything’s crystal clear in your head. Mary Douglas for instance… We sold Mary Douglas to someone. I don’t know which of her things. But ultimately, only one of her concepts. I don’t like it at all. I hate to see theory as something that is pimped, something to be cheapened and marketed to people who don’t understand it, in the boardrooms of central business district. But man, it works! (Interview with Canan)

3. Relations with Clients: Dialogues, Negotiations, Demands and Mistreatments

The clients, as being the funders of the projects, are the crucial components of the market researches. As I mentioned before, the whole process of projects must be in collaboration with the clients. From the very beginning of the project till the end, clients always make requests and in doing so, shape the project. Thus, market research companies are obliged to design the projects by taking the demands of the client into consideration. Neither the sampling nor the questions that will be asked in the field could be determined without the consent of the client. So, we may argue that the whole project process, even the presentations, is full of negotiations.

Clients consider themselves that they can intervene any part of the research even if they do not know how to carry out a project. Those interventions sometimes can cause problems for the operationalization of the research and for the relations with market research companies. It is always a challenge to decide how to deal with the client for the researchers, since some of the executives of the client company may mistreat researchers with their words, gestures and behaviors. Some of the clients believe that they have every right even to yell at researchers for their mistakes as they think that they are the real employers of the market researchers. Therefore, in this section, I want to investigate all kinds of relations with the clients.

3.1. Dialogue with the Client

The relations with the clients normally are pretty formal for the researchers. Since both parties are responsible to their own executives or employers regarding the success of the project, they look only for a mutually beneficial relation.

> Usually I have a very formal relationship with clients, I don't have many clients whom I've become friends with. There was just this client from …. Bank with whom my communication lasted long after the project, I'm friends with that person but it's an exception. Though I don't really call my clients Mr. and Mrs., especially if our ages are close. It's more of a distant friendship. (Interview with Banu)

However, like in the any other business relations, the clients expect to be satisfied. Therefore, researchers sometimes may face "the client is always right" motto in their business relations. They have to be available all the time even in the middle of the night. If the client asks something to prepare for the other day morning, a researcher cannot postpone the request. Burcu says that, in that sense, every researcher should establish a balance between the demanding attitude of the client and their position

> Customer satisfaction is considered top priority. And they say "No matter how you do it, make concessions if necessary but pursue customer satisfaction". Even if the client demands absurd things, you have to watch your language while expressing your problem, you can't just write "There's no way it can be done like this". If a negative answer is to be given, it's definitely controlled first, the language is checked. For instance, a client calls you in the evening, you can't snap at him/her. What can you do? You may not pick it up for instance but this may have consequences the next day. For instance s/he may have called you to tell you to find a translator. You didn't answer the phone, so if you don't have a translator the next day, you may have a hard time, you may be held responsible for not having answered the phone. Something's happened recently. I ran into a friend from school. She's been our client and given unpleasant feedback to an experienced moderator. This means that she's seen herself as his superior in the hierarchy. I'm sure that everyone who works in a research company strives to establish this balance. We watch our language. (Interview with Burcu)

Cemal says that at beginning of his market research experience he overestimated the client. According to him, his main tasks were to convince the decision-maker executives and speak a special language which fits the client's personal political position. In that sense, he gives another example of what Burcu suggest by establishing a balance with client.

> I mean, these people [clients] usually pretend to be very professional. And you make too much of them at first, you suppose that they have huge responsibilities but you get a little closer you realize that you shouldn't exaggerate it. The guy turns out to be an asshole for instance. These people used to have objections regarding the research too. Some of them are decision makers and they have to be convinced. So we were told to make a special effort to speak their language. Like "The owner of this company is conservative", so we thought we needed to use a certain language while talking to him, we were driven to think so. In time you get used to speaking differently to different clients. (Interview with Cemal)

What is important in Cemal's words is that he asserts that his company were pushing them to speak a careful language with the client. But beyond that, in my opinion, this extra attention regarding the usage of language is also a tactic to keep the client for the next time. Koray argues that using such a special language for particular clients is a “game and strategy”. According to him, the structure of the market research sector is forcing the researchers to compromise over the quality of the project. The clients, for him, ask for exact results which lead them to solve their problems. Therefore, researchers should be “flexible” regarding their scientific truths.

> We say that it’s ethnographic research that we’re doing, we say that this is the method. However, to what extent it’s ethnography in academic terms, now that’s disputable. One of the first things I learned in the field was this: Yes, academic knowledge and to be using it are all very valuable but the client doesn’t pay you to share your opinions and listen to your sentences starting with “I think…”. You have to talk to the clients in a precise manner. They come to you in order to find an answer to the question “Well, on what should we base our strategy?”. Here, I have to be able to pass the academic knowledge through the filter of private sector and convey the outcome properly. I have to determine my position according to the client. If the client is conservative, I have to use another word for “creative”. Working so client-oriented certainly restricts my anthropological freedom. But that’s the way the sector, that’s the job and this is a part of that job. So I regard it like a game and a strategy. It’s like speaking a different language. It’s the client who pays me after all. Some day you may have to do something where you compromise your values. Sometimes you have to compromise your academic principles in this job. Accurately analyzing the cultural codes of the client and using a language in accordance with those codes, filtering academic knowledge. (Interview with Koray)

What is important here is the fact that market research companies’ owners or executives determine the relations of their workers with client executives. Some of my interviewees told me that especially the attitude in the global, big-sized companies is pleasing the demanding client; thus, they even tolerate the mistreatment of the workers.

> The client cannot snap at us here, there is a cool attitude and that attitude is due to the quality of the work being done here. Whereas in Trans Research, we used to work with huge companies and there was a tendency to suck up to them. Clients were free to snap at us and no stance was taken in such cases. (Interview with Aylin)

> For instance our boss tells us never to work with a client if s/he misbehaves and annoys

> us. Whereas in Calypso, we always kept on the good side of the client. I saw very demanding clients there and they were always responded positively. There were clients who called and failed to reach you, got annoyed and said "I should be able to reach you whenever I call". They thought "I'm paying you, so you should do everything I say". (Interview with Gözde)

3.2. Requests and Negotiations: Client's Result-Oriented Approach

Clients can make requests at every step of the research. It is mentioned in previous sections, the sampling of the research and the questions asking during the fieldwork should be approved by the client. In addition to that, many of the clients want to come to the fieldwork as if a member of research team. They would like to hear the voice of their potential customers by person. The other reason why they want to join the fieldwork is to check the quality of the researchers whether they can ask critical questions and get the valuable answers. Moreover, some clients ask to join the interim meetings of research team in order to follow closely what is discussing among the team and what is the primary data says. Once, one of my clients asked to join both interim meetings helding before the presentation and I had to accept this request. My client was the customer satisfaction department of an international company. They were expecting groundbreaking results from our research, which can be presented to senior executives proudly, and in this way they aimed to become a significant department in their own corporation. Thus, they were so eager to be a part of every step of the project. They even asked to take a look at the reports of researchers, which was an impossible demand to meet for the K. Research. I rejected that demand without asking the opinion of my employers since those reports are the most private documents of the company.

However, our employers accepted them to join our interim meetings by getting my consent. But, even though I gave my consent, I did not want them to come every meeting since those meetings are the occasions, which the team members can speak freely about every aspect of the project and I thought that fieldworkers could hesitate to speak frankly if the clients join the meeting. After the first meeting it turned out that I was right. Although all the fieldworkers told some things about their interviews and observations, they mostly mentioned just the standard points. But the worst thing about the participation of the client was that they tended to generalize any observation or quotation that they were expecting to hear before the meeting. This was so dangerous simply because at the end of the project we could reach a result contrary to what we discussed in the interim meeting and that would be quite hard to explain the client about those opposite outcomes during the presentation.

I asked my interviewees regarding the expectations of their clients from a research. Their answers also reveal how clients perceive the market research projects.

> In this sector, with regard to clients, I mostly suffer from… well, especially in Turkish owner-managed companies, they tend to think "Since we're doing research, let's ask them about everything". I mean I've seen clients who'd come for preliminary test for advertisement and ended up having it all the way to package testing. (Interview with Gözde)

> Usually the clients would have it their way. No one ever said things like "No, this can't be done" or "This can't be done so fast". Johnson was a little better at restraining clients but Trans Research wasn't at all. Clients who didn't know about research business were particularly difficult. They used to give us a really hard time about timing generally. Those clients who claimed they knew something whereas in fact had no idea whatsoever were especially challenging. They used to expect something from you that you couldn't possibly get from that survey, some incredible result or something. (Interview with Derya)

> Clients ask for some solid keys, data that will boost their sales, they expect you to be specific. So your boss doesn't attempt to get philosophical with them. Therefore there's a tendency towards more pragmatic knowledge. We had clients who said that they wanted more data regarding something, that they were curious about something we had discovered. They used to ask us "So what should we do?". (Interview with Cemal)

These three quotations are indicating two closely related problems in the market research sector. First of all, the clients would like to examine almost everything with researchers, if their budget is enough for that. To a certain point this attitude is understandable from their perspective. After all, the success in the market depends on removing the uncertainties and foreseeing the future developments. In a highly competitive market conditions, they naturally desire to know the facts about their brand. However, here the problem is that they expect to get knowledge of a broad field with particular and quickly done researchers. If we use an analogy to put it differently, they want to see a movie by looking at a single photography. There are just a few corporations that conduct researches regularly. But when they cannot get the results that they are expecting to, they tend to blame market research companies. The second problem is, on the other hand, many of the market research companies – especially the big-sized global ones – do not want to say "no" to their clients since they want to work them in the future as well. Even some companies give huge promises to their clients which they cannot achieve with a limited research project. But when it turns out that they could not reach the outcomes that they promised, their clients loose their trust to market researches.

Begüm argues that there must be a "methodology education" for the clients, as they do not know what should and should not be expected from the projects. She also underlines the similar points that Derya and Cemal do. According to her, the clients perceive the market research projects in a more pragmatic and result-oriented way. Also, they cannot handle the pressure of uncertainty. Therefore, they try to grasp the research in a statistical framework.

> I think that clients should be given training for research because they suppose that research is all about numbers and their expecting the same perspective they expect from quantitative researches. For instance when I write something in the report, they sometimes ask "How many of the interviewees said that?". The client's mind works that way. For instance interviews were conducted with 10 people and in the report I mention something that an interviewee said. The client instantly starts doing calculations like "So one out of every 10 people thinks like this". And I'm obliged to reply "Do not think of it as 10 percent, the important thing is the motivations of these interviewees". That's why I think that they need to be taught about qualitative research. Clients' ignorance regarding this matter is totally normal since market research is a result-oriented, pragmatic business. So the clients fail to tolerate uncertainties, they just want to go straight to the result, to the solution. They don't know about the nature of qualitative research. I think qualitative research is not bound up with a rule or a schema by nature. That's why writing reports at the end of a qualitative research is very hard because there are no figures, no schemas, and no rules. It's not obvious how that data is going to be interpreted and organized. (Interview with Begüm)

So, those kinds of requests can cause some negative impacts on the researches. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the clients are the only responsible party for those inconveniences. As some of my interviewees told me that some market research companies misled their clients with superficial researches in the past, and therefore, some clients lost their trust and patience against the companies. If we consider that the client companies spend a considerable amount of money to the market researches every year, it would not be surprising that they are expecting to see the results. Thus, their demands are understandable to some extend. Banu and Aylin told me that how their companies deal with the clients regarding the project process.

> We really take great pains to technically direct clients. We're very strict but of course it doesn't mean that we're headstrong. For instance if the client insists on following a different path after we shared the margin of error, we don't say "We won't do the project then", we say "OK, as you wish". Apart from that, there are many more things that we

> pass just so the client is satisfied, customer satisfaction is very important. We should satisfy them so they keep purchasing projects from us. (Interview with Banu)

> Research is enough by itself. You can't predict anything 100 percent, you can't name it precisely, and something is always missing, so you can't guarantee anything to the client. Therefore clients and researchers have to be able to work together and be open to each other. Clients shouldn't say "Just give me the data and leave the rest to me". Only then we can work together on the aspects that research inevitably lacks. (Interview with Aylin)

The clients' approach to research and the data, which Aylin points out, is a common problem for the market researchers. Since the clients are so focused on the raw data, they do not need to hear the interpretations and insights. Moreover, some clients are so persistent to conduct the researches in their ways. The market researchers for them are just the operators of the research. Besides, it is important how market research companies approach to clients and their requests.

> It is actually thought that companies like X [transnational consumer goods company] only say things like "Give me this and that, do as I say and leave the rest to me, just send the numbers" and they make you do whatever they want you to do and you send them a report and get millions of revisions back. That's why companies like Fortuna Research and Euro Insight do not want to work with such big companies. (Interview with Aylin)

> Trans Research is way more corporate, influential, well-known research company compared to Forum Insight. But they failed to influence clients because they let clients gain control over themselves. Since top executives display such tolerance, employees don't get to say anything. In Fortuna Research, they endeavor not to let clients exercise power over us, our bosses try to make them respect us. Let me give you an example. In one of my ad tracking projects, the client called and demanded something. We contemplated what that could they possibly gain from it, we found the demand absurd and unnecessary. My manager called the client and said that that data would not contribute anything, so we would give them something simpler, more explanatory. Thus we explained it to them in three slides and it was over. If it were another company, the client would insist and get that data from us. Of course, sometimes clients insist so hard that we come to a point where we say "Let's give them the data and get over with it" but usually, we rationally explain our reasons to reject their demand, so clients are convinced and they pipe down. (Interview with Aylin)

Some other clients, on the contrary, expect market researchers even tell them what their action should be. Whatever we present them about the research, in the end, they ask that particular question: "So, what do you suggest us to do?". Therefore, market researchers feel themselves obliged to take position in accordance with the client's approach.

> I've come to realize what the client considers most important is this: "OK you told us about these at great length, now what is it that you suggest we do?". By the way, I think the clients who thinks like this actually fouls his/her own nest. It's a very limited approach and a very unfruitful point of view. If only they could pay attention to the analysis part, maybe they could see something that we couldn't. After all, they have a good grasp of one aspect of the issue about which we don't know much. (Interview with Begüm)

> For instance, we tell the client "You can't do this by using this method" but s/he insists. Or sometimes we say "You divided this into these segments but these segments are actually identical" but s/he doesn't accept it. This sort of stuff decreases both the quality of the job and my job satisfaction. You say "What kind of a question form is this? You can't get any answers with it" but it doesn't work sometimes. Then you just give in and say "As you wish". In other words, you do the job just because you had to. Especially when the question form is sent from abroad, when you get a global job, the issue of cultural difference comes into play. You look at the question form and say "This can't be asked in Turkey". So unfortunately, clients do make silly interventions in terms of method and sample. In short, there's a problem of resistant client. And then there is the client's fetishism of numbers. You describe something at length and then the guy just says "Yeah but tell me what the number is". (Interview with Koray)

Begüm says that she was much freer with the researches conducting for international clients. According to her, the difference between the local and international clients is that the latter knows "the nature" of the ethnographic studies.

> Those who made me enjoy qualitative research have always been foreign clients. They have been very open, very free. Turkish clients usually make you feel like "OK, I obtained this result but how am I going to say this to the client?". However in your foreign clients might even say "Let's not have any numbers in the project". When you hear the global client say this, you're able to say "OK I'm on the right track here, I can go on defending

> what I believe". So them [the foreign clients] saying "Just give me the motivations" was very important in this sense. In fact, I think that they're better at understanding the nature of qualitative research. (Interview with Begüm)

As I mentioned above, one of most common demands of the clients is to join the fieldwork as if a member of the research team. Once a client asked me to join to an interview and I accepted that, but they could not manage to come due to their busy schedule. But during the negotiations of that request, I made it clear to the client that I did not want them to ask too much questions which would be a difficulty for the flow of the interview. We were conducting a research among teenagers and I was worried that the client could ruin the interview with inappropriate questions and comments.

My interviewees have different opinions about this request but even the ones who are more positive about conducting interviews with the client are insistent to apply his/her own rules. Koray has never had a bad experience with the client in terms of the interviews but he says that he had to warn them not to intervene too much. According to him, although the client causes a loss of productivity, they had to consider the situation in "customer relations" base.

> I used to go out to the field with the client a lot. Well, clients want to go out to field when they really embrace a project. When they came, participants never knew they were actually clients. (Interview with Koray)

> This happened in focus groups. A client could say "I'll go in" and we tried to stop him/her. I didn't experience a client seriously jeopardizing an in-depth interview. I only witnessed a couple of clients asking a question I had already asked. When that happens I wonder "Haven't you even listened to me?" but you can't say it of course, s/he's the client after all. So they haven't really sabotaged the job but have slowed it down or caused it to be less productive. I mean we couldn't reject the clients who definitely demanded to see the field. We are obliged to think not academically but in terms of customer relations then. (Interview with Koray)

On the other hand, Defne told me her bad interview experience with a client, as her female client did not think on how to dress up before the interview. Therefore, the interview was a waste of time.

> We couldn't thwart the client when we were inexperienced, so they could ask to come to the interview too. There was this one time when a client came with me. The interviewee whose house we were going was from lower class. The properties of the household we're set to go are already written down, so I was dressed accordingly. No bright colors, no make-up. On the other hand the client showed up in lace stockings, high heels, with a flashy dress and a fancy hairdo. Imagine, if you go to an interview with such a client, can you ever make the interviewee talk? And we were to cook together and everything. Well, consequently it all got very difficult. We got nothing from that interview. (Interview with Defne)

Burcu says that she does not feel good when the client joins the in-depth interviews. She argues that the participation of the client creates a sort of "performance anxiety" on her. Although she thinks that she knows her job much better than the client, she feels that she is tested by them.

> Client wanting to be present in the in-depth interview makes you feel bad of course. You experience performance anxiety then. They're constantly talking at the back, so you worry whether they don't like it, whether you're doing something wrong. But actually you're not doing it wrong. Above all, there's no way the client can know about research business better than you do. But they make you feel that way. Of course it also has to do with my age, they can't do this to a moderator with 15 years of experience. Sometimes we say that "The participant is bad", it means that the participant can't express himself/herself. Yet later the client makes *you* feel bad about it, that they got nothing out of it. Therefore, in my opinion, it's for the best that they don't participate. Participation of the client affects both the course of research and my feelings. You experience performance anxiety even more than you do in in-depth interviews. Because the client is not with you then [in focus groups], you can't figure what s/he disliked. (Interview with Burcu)

One of my interviewees told me off-the-record that what kind of strategies researchers follow in order to protect themselves in the researches since clients can easily blame the researcher for the failure of the project.

> A client may say that s/he wants a moderator with 5 year experience. For instance when I enter a focus group room, I feel the urge to say that I have 4 years of experience and I'm actually saying it to the back [where the clients watch and listen to the focus group behind a glass that looks like a mirror to the participants]. In fact, I also don't want them to blame me if the product sucks. I don't want to let them blame me for the results. It's actually an effort to take precaution so that I don't become the weakest link. (Off-The-Record Interview)

Begüm is more positive about the participation of clients to the interviews. She says that she wants client to see what is going on during the fieldwork, because in this way, they can make a comparison between the opinions about the field in their mind and the real situation. She argues that the participation of the client makes her job easier and more humane. However, she is strict about applying her own rules in the field. She says that the person who knows the field is herself, not the client, and therefore, they must obey the rules of fieldwork.

> They do intervene sometimes but I prefer the client to attend the interviews anyway because I want them to see what we're talking about. Well I keep them in line whenever they try to intervene anyway. I wasn't able to do it previously but now I do it. I include them in the field by introducing them as my colleagues in the project. It's an interesting experience for the clients too. To tell the truth, I'm more like "Don't just sit in your office, come and be a part of the job". Since I restrain them in advance, I've never really encountered a problem. I mean I tell the client about my rules at the outset. Of course I don't include them in the field in groups, I say "Just one person at a time please". If my interviewee is a woman, I ask for a female client to come with me. Plus, I've come to feel this confidence in time, "This is my job, I should protect it, I should do whatever it takes. If the client needs to come to the field for the sake of the research, let him/her come. After all, they are not the ones to teach me about research business, I am the one to teach them, there's no way they can know it better than I do". I haven't had a problem ever since. On the contrary, everything's turned out to be more humane. (Interview with Begüm)

However, Begüm says that she has also some limits. According to her, some clients approach the research as if it is a "game". They sometimes propose her to join the focus groups by hiding her researcher identity as if she is another participant of the research, and by doing so, they expect her to fire the customers up to get more data. She says that she refused this demand as she does not like to “play” within the research. This shows that clients might ignore the rules of the research time to time. And it is not hard to guess that there may be some market research companies and researchers who would accept the offer and pay no attention to methodological rules for the sake of clients’ interest.

4. Conclusion: Between Academic and Market Researches

In the second chapter of this study I tried to locate the market research in connection with the science, knowledge, value and the transitions between academia and market research sector. I asserted that the market research sector is both a response to commodification of knowledge, and the symptom of the crisis of academia, particularly the social sciences. I argued that the commodification process of the knowledge in the scientific field pave the way to a ground that makes knowledge commercialized without any ethical or moral restrictions coming with scientific ethos in its ideal type. In that sense, market research appears as a response to growing need of the capital. However, the truth is even scientific field has created its own laws for the production of knowledge that in close connection with the academic market as we see in Bourdieu’s criticism. Therefore, it may be asserted that the academic field is not free from capitalist economic relations. So, I argued that the harsh criticism to market research sector deriving from academia, which condemns the sector basically for its direct service to capitalistic economy, could be read as a symptom of the crisis of academy. Market research sector is the crystallization of such capitalistic relations emerged in universities and particularly in social sciences, which does not act “as if”.

I would like to give a very striking example from an article published in an academic marketing journal. The author of the article, Alan Tapp, argues that there is a “growing concern within the marketing academia with the gap between academia and practice” (Tapp, 2004, p. 492). According to him, it is a fact that there is a decrease in the number of readers of academic articles since the academics cannot manage to integrate theory and practice in their studies and he suggests that the academic researches are “failing the ‘so-what’ test” (2004, p. 493). He approaches this situation as a “problem” stemming from the “restrictive academic cultures”:

> The peer review system still emphasises methodological soundness, demanding often that additional data is gathered which may add plenty to reliability and validity, but arguably little or nothing to understanding. Researchers could concentrate on their findings, with detailed discussion of the implications for practice. Instead readers would find long, self justifying literature reviews, and further justifications of research validity or a series of excuses about the lack of this. The dominating view that marketing is a science has driven a publication style that demands de-personalisation, objectivity, and cold emotionless analysis using theory neutral observational language (Tapp, 2004, pp. 493–494).

Tapp also complains about a very few articles published in top-tier journals address the top issues of practitioners. He suggests two ways to overcome this problem:

> First, re-position our work so that it is of more interest to practitioner agendas, without compromising the primary function as knowledge creators. Second, adjust our methodologies and communications to account for the nature of the subject and its readership (2004, p. 494)

At this point he directs his attention to market researchers and presents their work as an example for the academics. He argues that market researchers do not constrain themselves with the rules of restrictive academic environment, they use multiple methods to deal with a single problem. For Tapp, market researchers incorporate “harder, more scientific, more objective data with softer, anecdotal qualitative data". In that sense, they discovered that "subjectivity is a good thing", since they are encouraged to use their own judgment and intuition.

> Eclecticism and bricolage are the approaches of an industry that is at ease with itself, *no longer obsessing about methodology*, focusing on adding value with its findings. The commercial change from market research departments to customer insight departments is a fundamental recognition that the customer (business decision makers) values insights above everything else; *above being objective, above data collection, above classic methodology, even above validity and reliability* (2004, p. 497) (emphasis is mine)

He clearly draws a line between the "pure social science" (2004, p. 498) and a new approach in academia that has to meet the needs of industry. This new approach, according to Tapp, should be flexible and "relaxed" in terms of conducting methodology and free from the concerns regarding reliability. The academics should reposition themselves in accordance with this new approach in order to comply with the new conditions in industrial developments. Furthermore, he argues that academics would get some advantages if they reposition themselves to this practitioner-oriented approach:

> Academic marketers will benefit in two ways from such a re-positioning. *We will be better placed to take credit for our ideas - important in these justify-your-existence times*. Second, we will be better placed to form closer relationships with practitioners, allowing a symbiotic, fruitful synthesis of thinking and experience (2004, p. 497) (emphasis is mine)

In my view, Tapp is articulating the things that dwelling in the minds of academics but not expressing in public. He, on the one hand, implies that academics cannot survive without complying with this new approach, and on the other hand, he is blinking at them by suggesting that they will benefit from this new order in many ways. As I mentioned in the Japanese case before, social scientists are dismissing from the universities simply because they cannot figure out the ways to "justify their existence" in academia. Therefore, as I have argued, the market research sector is the response to those conditions. The academics or the social sciences students, who see no future in academic circles, try to find a way in market research in order to survive.

In this chapter I have tried to show how market research projects are carried out in practical level in such a manner that Tapp calls “flexible” and “relaxed”. In my opinion, market research projects can be called “flexible” but certainly not “relaxed”. All research projects are bound up with the demands and expectations of the client as being the funder of the project. The basic aim in the projects is to find out the “actionable insights” to help the client’s ad hoc needs. Thus, an amalgamation of methods can be used in market research projects to reach that result. However, as I mentioned, what determines these methods and techniques are the characteristics of that particular need. Furthermore, market research companies should decide those methods by negotiating with their clients. The theoretical knowledge is also used in accordance with that goal and it commercializes in the sector along with the methodology. So, the market research must be flexible in this sense, but the negotiations and interventions of the client make hard to define the sector “relaxed”.

So, what are the differences and resemblances between academic and market researches? In my opinion, two things make hard to answer this question: 1) the variations in the business characters of market research companies, 2) the ultimate goal and the funders of the academic researches. As I tried to analyze that there are different types of market research companies. The big-sized global companies conduct dozens of research projects in a month, and the researches that they carry out seem to produce in an assembly line. The departmentalization of these companies makes possible to conduct numerous projects in a short time period. Roughly speaking, every department handles a single step of the project;

while one department carry out the survey, another one analyzes the raw data and the other one prepare the analyses for the presentation. In the strict vertically organized business chain, every worker is responsible for a small part of the project. It is hard to find any similarity between academic researches and the projects produced in such an organization.

However, in small-sized “boutique” companies, which conduct mostly qualitative researches such as K. Research, a small group of people deals with the whole process of a project. As I mentioned, in K. Research, as a project director I was taking part in every step of the research and my team members would join even the preparations of the project. Although we restricted in very limited timetables, we could check every step of a research. In my opinion, even the alienation of researchers in such a system is lesser in contrast to the big-sized companies. Therefore, I believe that we were conducting the researches in close connection with methodological rules. As I will discuss in the following chapter that in big-sized companies it is harder to control whether they could get the reliable data from the field.

If we take a look at the scope and the goal of academic and market researches we may find some differences between them. Brigitte Jordan and Monique Lambert, who worked for Intel Corporation as anthropologists, argues that the funders of two kinds of researches separates them.

> In contrast to academic research projects which are most often driven by an investigator who makes a proposal to a funding agency, corporate projects are typically initiated by a corporate decision maker—often high up in the hierarchy—who for reasons that may not be clear believes that an ethnographic investigation could help them achieve certain goals. This imposes particular restrictions on topic, focus, methods, timespan, and funding that the ethnographer has to come to grips with. Though our corporate counterparts tend to speak in terms of specific goals and unambiguous outcomes that need to be achieved ("a 20 percent increase in productivity"), it is often the case that at

> least in the beginning what they really need from us is less than clear. This is one of many unacknowledged issues that materialize in corporate work (Jordan & Lambert, 2009, p. 99).

Although the point that the authors make bears a truth in it, we should remember that in almost any academic project the funders have right to determine the scope and the ultimate goal of the project. For instance, let's suppose that we conduct a research on agricultural development in the rural areas and our funder is the Ministry of Agriculture. In that case, the ministry would expect us to find out solutions in order to remove the obstacles of the development of agriculture. So, at the very beginning, the institution becomes the decision maker in the project. Moreover, if you figure out that the main obstacle is the class structure of the established order, it is very doubtful whether you would present this outcome to the minister herself or to publish it. Thus, in my opinion, the destiny of the project depends on the funder both in academic and market researches.

Jordan and Lambert also mention the "negotiations" with the funders of the research projects.

> In academic research, you are done negotiating with your funders once your project is approved. In corporate research, the situation is a bit more complex. Ethnographic consultants know that these early communications are really negotiations about who we are, what the sponsors want, and what we can deliver. They are extremely delicate. Neither party quite knows what they need, or desire, what they would be thrilled about or extremely disappointed with. This is the time when the two sides only begin to figure out what they could actually do together and what that might come to, what it might mean, how useful it might be, what would count as success and what would be deemed a failure in the end. Often this is a time of major revelations and disclosures, but also a time of major papering over of issues that all parties hope will work themselves out. (2009, p. 100)

> In academic research, once you have been awarded, say, a project funded by the National Science Foundation, the funder has effectively signed off on your goals. You have the green light to proceed. In corporate projects, the light is never green. It is always shades of yellow—blinking into red every so often. Corporate ethnographers regularly find

> themselves in a position of having to (and wanting to) revise and re-negotiate what the project is all about. While we are always working toward the goals identified by the company, what exactly those goals are, and to what uses our findings might be put may not be clear at the beginning, though that is a fact that neither we nor they acknowledge. (p. 104)

Finally, the authors argue that another important difference between the academic and market research is regarding their results and the evaluations.

> Another feature of corporate ethnography has to do with positioning and accountability. In university-based research, the relevant audience is the academic community and, usually in second place, the people and communities we study. In corporate research, accountability is first and foremost (if not exclusively) directed toward our corporate funders. They are the ones who will construct stories of success or failure, they are the ones who will decide what, in the work that was done in the field, is relevant to their enterprise and their interests. The construction of this story, of what ethnographic work comes to for them (as well as for us), is a dynamic process that has as much to do with company politics and the interpersonal relationships we are able to establish as with any objective evaluation (2009, p. 106)

All in all, I suggest that the resemblances between both types of projects are more than their differences. If we consider the methods that are used in the projects, even in the academic researches the mix-methods have been using for a long time. But maybe the most different aspects of academic and marketing research projects are the time constraints and, in close connection with that, the reliability of the projects which I will discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Reliability and Scientific Value of Market Research Projects

1. Introduction:

In the previous chapters I tried to show the details of market researchers' experience (daily practices and relations) in the sector, and how and in what conditions market research projects design and conduct. Doing so, I tried to reposition market research sector and denote its bonds with academic researches. In that sense, I have attempted to investigate two main dimensions of market research sector. However, there is one more dimension that I would like to discuss in order to close the circle and give the whole picture of what we call market research ethos. This last dimension is the reliability and scientificity problem of the projects. I this chapter, I will deal with these issues.

As I suggested before, none of market research companies explicitly claim that they carry out a scientific work. However, almost all companies commercialize their business as if it has a scientific character since they use – at least partially – scientific methods and theoretical knowledge in some cases. In its advanced versions, for instance, in neuromarketing researches, researchers use very complex machines, which can detect the brain waves by the means of special algorithms and tell which wave indicates what kind of feeling. This character of scientifically used methods, techniques and theoretical knowledge add more value to the business of market research companies. In that sense, even though it would be an over interpretation to treat and evaluate market research projects as if they have scientific value, we may examine the reliability of their methods. Despite the fact that clients expect to see reliable data especially in statistical results, it is hard to claim that all clients look for reliability of the researchers. As I have been underlying from the very beginning that what is important for the clients is to get useful outcomes. Although the usefulness seems to depend upon the reliability, they do not necessarily overlap in all the projects. For instance, in ethnographic market research projects it is harder to detect whether the collection process of data was reliable than the projects carried out by surveys. However, if the market research company can make good marketing suggestions at the end of the project, and if those suggestions work in a positive way for the client's business, then the reliability issue becomes an insignificant detail for both parties.

On the other hand, the situation is different for the surveys. For example, if the statistical results of a survey-based project are much different than the outcomes found in previous year for no obvious reason, then the client may suspect from the reliability of the survey and ask the market research company to repeat the project. So, this becomes a waste of time and money for both parties; and the loss of trust for the client. Therefore, the reliability is generally an important issue for market research sector.

The data that is not collected properly is called "dirty data" in the sector. This phrase implies unreliable and distrusted data which gives nothing to clients. There are a couple of reasons that pave the way to dirty data. The insufficient education of the pollsters and their waging conditions is an important reason. The second reason is – in close connection with the first one – the data collection companies. Some market research companies, as I mentioned before, prefer to use data collection companies to find appropriate participants that suits the sampling of the research. Since market research companies do not want to employ pollsters in order to keep their company smaller, they make collaboration with the data collection companies. So, data collection companies are the subcontractors of their researches. The both conduct the surveys with their own pollsters and also they have a database in a considerable size which they can easily find the appropriate participants to the researches. However, it is nearly impossible to detect whether these participants really exist, or whether they are the people whom they have indicated in the database. As I will discuss below, some of the people who appear in the databases are just fake ones or they misinformed the companies in order to get gifts or money from them.

There are some factors that affect the reliability of a research project. They are ranged from the quality of the researchers to not obeying the rules of methodology. Moreover, some factors stem from the structure of the market research sector, such as very limited time constraints. As I mentioned before, market research companies are obliged to finish projects in days or weeks. In one of my projects in K. Research, the research team had to conduct 90 in-depth interviews, write their reports, and prepare and present the outcomes in six weeks in total. These very limited time span have a very negative effect on the quality of the research projects. Furthermore, another important factor, which affects the reliability of the researches, is the expectation of manipulations of the clients in the results of the project. The manipulations in the outcomes of the research can be a “slight emphasis” on the positive results or totally ignoring the negative ones. Whereas some market research companies harshly reject these expectations, some others feel obliged to make some changes in the results in order to keep working with the client. So, this problem has also impact on the reliability issue.

2. Surveys, Pollsters, Data Collection Companies and Dirty Data

For quantitative market research projects the reliability is the most important issue for the companies. Since their business totally bases on the statistical data, they have to reach the reliable numbers. The success of the projects depends on the accuracy of the statistical analyses. Otherwise, clients would never work with the company again. What provides trustworthiness to the company is its meticulous approach to the researches.

However, on the other side of the coin there are the "facts" of the market research sector and its enforcing structure. Needless to say, for a successful research, the company has to be certain about every element of the project. One of those elements is the pollsters who conduct the surveys and collect the data personally from the field. Therefore, their job is the fundamental ground of the projects. But, my interviewees told me that working conditions and waging system of pollsters are making their job harder than any other market research worker. Hence, the pollsters might tend to cheat by using some survey tricks. Some of them fill the questionnaires by themselves and also find out ways to make them coherent. In the sector, these pollsters are called "professionals". Thus, researchers, who analyze the data, have problems to trust the survey. Some of my interviewees told me that they occasionally needed to check the data flowing from the field. Aylin describes the conditions of pollsters and its impact on her job perfectly.

> I think pollsters are right too. They are paid so little and they are forced to work under terrible conditions… We are to blame as well because we can't make the questionnaires any shorter. They take too long, I'm talking about 30 minute or 45 minute long surveys here. I mean it's impossible. If I were them, I would fake it too. I don't check the surveys after the fieldwork is completed. We have interim controls, otherwise it's impossible to

> handle. We sometimes cancel some surveys in the meantime. If a pollster fakes it way too much, we don't assign him/her to the field again. Of course, no matter how much we check, I can't say that the data here is a hundred percent reliable. If a pollster has reached a professional level in this and figured it all out, s/he can also manage to cover up his/her faked surveys. Well, give promote the person and let him/her be a director then! I mean if s/he is capable of wrapping things up so well, s/he deserves it. Sometimes I come across such answers to open ended questions that even I can't write so beautifully in the report or come up with such comments. If I were a pollster who got paid so little, I would go to a corner and fill out a survey too. Also, when you be a smart ass with the pollsters in the pollster training, their tendency to fake surveys increases. I think they're right about this too. The data you get is directly related to how you treat people. (Interview with Aylin)

There are three important aspects in Aylin's words. First, she admits that pollsters working conditions are awful. Expect a few market research companies, the pollsters are working under data collection companies without a regular salary and social insurance. They work project-based and get a very small amount of money per questionnaire that they conduct. Most of them see this job as an extra income. Therefore, they do not treat the job seriously and this situation leads them to dishonest ways. Secondly, Aylin says that their questionnaires are pretty long. Although she did not specify, the only reason that they cannot shorten them is the high expectations of the clients. As I mentioned, clients want market research companies to ask "everything" about their brand and expect to learn some information which can only provided by in-depth interviews. This makes the questionnaires unnecessarily long and impractical. As a result, neither participants nor pollsters bother themselves with all these boring questions. For this reason, the outcomes of the surveys become unreliable. The third aspect is that, as Aylin says it is almost impossible to check every questionnaire whether they are fake or not, and therefore, hard to trust the reliability of the data.

> I can't remember the number of surveys I monitored. The survey business has no quality whatsoever. I remember the times when I almost cried in the pollster trainings. Surveyees' outlook on survey is problematical. (Interview with Derya)

> Those who use companies as intermediaries to find pollsters would know that they shouldn't trust that information if they worked with those pollsters just once. We used to pick pollsters according to their looks and the way they talk because we wanted to trust them, you're doing a niche work and getting paid a lot of money. So I get kind of scared when I hear "quantitative". (Interview with Nilay)

Gözde, who previously worked for a public opinion research company, mentions some other aspects of carrying out surveys. She says that the pollsters, who worked in her previous company, were beaten by the participants. Therefore, she argues that this job is open to cheat.

> We had many pollsters who got beaten up. I think this job is vulnerable to fraud since it's a tough job. Some of the pollsters whom we call "professional pollsters" may sometimes conduct a few surveys in the field and then fill out the rest according to them. Those who made a profession out of it may sometimes mass-produce [the data]. We nab the ones we can. See, some of them do the fraud very blatantly. They enter the same answer consecutively or they complete a survey in an extremely short time, so you get suspicious like "Who can conduct a survey in two minutes?". To be honest, we don't have a definite control system concerning this issue. I mean probably we fail to nab them every now and then. And that makes me feel bad. Sometimes I get worried whether we're giving out incorrect information, so I tend to exaggerate the control in such times. A colleague had once warned me that I was worried too much. But then again, when I took the controlling business a little too far, I was warned that I could disturb the order. To tell the truth, there is a mindset like "This is the way this business works". Every research company experience the same problems because there is no such thing as the perfect pollster. Therefore we're all aware of the fact that we're not receiving a hundred percent reliable data. Personally, I don't think that surveys are reliable. (Interview with Gözde)

The most striking point that she makes is the fact that the companies accept the situation and continue their job without any effort to fix it. They are all aware that the data obtaining by questionnaires is not reliable, but they resign to inevitable. Gözde says that her executives warned her not to insist on checking the data as they think that this attitude can cause a disorder in the company which means that she (and the other workers) may neglect the other jobs. This shows that market research companies do not care too much for the reliability. As I suggested that market research companies think that they can compensate the reliability issue with some “actionable suggestions” during the presentation and convince the client. This attitude is a clear indication that market research companies are providing dirty data to their clients.

A few companies deal with the reliability issue seriously. They try to check the reliability of the data. There have created some ways to control the data by the means of new developments in technology. However, even in those companies the researchers do not trust the data a hundred percent.

> Since we can see the data instantly thanks to our system, it can be constantly checked. It shows when there’s something wrong going on. In other words, quality of the surveys are always measured. Differently from other companies CATI is listened, face-to-face surveys are listened here. We take voice records so the pollsters don’t fake it and fill out the surveys themselves sitting at desks. That’s why we’re considerably distinguished in terms of quality. None of our employees in the field is outsourcer, they are all our own employees. (Interview with Banu)

> There was no data control in Trans Research for instance. So I didn’t know how reliable data was, I couldn’t be sure. Whereas in Forum Insight we had online data in the first place. Everyone filled them out themselves. If there was any problem, you’d just go out in the field all over again and the whole thing was over in two days anyway. However in Fortuna Research, controls are carried out very strictly. The data is checked for inconsistency, like “If he says this here, then he can’t say that there”. Is it always the same ones marked in the image questions or whether there are too many zig-zags… this sort of things are looked over. It’s trying to be controlled in reference to points like “The brand he says he buys most frequently is not listed as a brand he buys at all, somewhere else”. If we can’t get anything from it, we send what we have in our hand to telephone controls within [the company]. We say “Let’s give a call and check if the participant is right”. I conduct 200 surveys per month in my tracking project and I cancel at least 100 of them. In other words, in order to reach the number 200, I cancel 100 surveys. However, I still don’t think that this definitely takes care of it. Probably there are things that we cannot control. (Interview with Aylin)

However, in my view, the real problem is not the pollsters but the structure of market research sector. After all, pollsters are the people who try to earn their living from this job and blaming them is the easiest way to conceal the facts happening beneath this business. As Banu argues that:

> A certain deadline and a certain number of surveys are given to the data collection companies, so this causes them to work under pressure. They are underpaid. So they can't survive if they don't fake. They really surprise us for the price they charge for face to face interview is the same price we charge for CATI. It's impossible to conduct those surveys with that price. It obviously means they'll fake the surveys. (Interview with Banu)

The ones, who make pressure on the data collection companies, are the market research companies, which are forced to finish the research projects in a very limited time span by their clients. So, every player in the sector is enforcing each other to finish the job as soon as possible. Therefore, they are ready to neglect the reliability.

The dirty data problem in the sector does not stem only from the questionnaires but also from focus group researches. Data collection companies provide participants for the focus group researches as well. However, these participants are those who earn their living with the research participation since the companies pay a sum of money or give gift cards for every focus group meeting. Therefore, they try to participate every possible research to get the money or gifts. However, there are some rules regarding the participation to the focus groups. But the data collection companies and the "professional" participants have figured out ways to breach those rules. Kerem told about one of those rules and his experiences with the participants:

> In fact, there's a rule such as this: Participants who are to come to a focus group shouldn't have participated in another research for at least six months and shouldn't have participated in a research in the same category of the same sector for at least nine months. You offer 50-60 TL to these participants. There are companies that provide these participants. And these "professional" participants enter the database of each and

> every one of these companies using different names, changing their ID numbers and by putting on or taking off their head scarves. (Interview with Kerem)

> In a focus group, I saw a woman named Emine, I remembered her from a project we did three months ago. But this woman talked differently, I thought to myself "This woman wasn't like this". Then we got out of the focus group. I asked the field company if I could see that woman's register in their database. The company is a grafter too. They looked up and saw that the woman is registered as Fatma in their system but she's just said her name was Emine inside the focus group room. As a company that considers the statements of participants true, what are you going to do about it? The client is watching from behind the window. They too are aware of what's going on. In other words, there's a serious unreliable participant problem in the industry. You know I said I conduct 25-30 in-depth interviews a week? At least a couple of them turn out to be people I interviewed before. Some of them know my name and ask me "Will we be meeting you again Mr Kerem?. (Interview with Kerem)

It is obvious that the participation in the focus groups has become a market in the market research sector. But the real problem is, as Kerem says, everyone (even clients) knows this issue but no one acts to fix it. Or, to put it another way, none of the parties of the sector see the issue as a problem. For the market research companies what is important is to satisfy and keep working with the client at all costs. Three of my interviewees told me almost the same thing that even though they witnessed the frauds they closed their eyes and kept doing their job.

> I draw on companies which provide participants for focus groups. In order to overcome the problem of unreliable participant, I keep a list of the people I included in the past focus groups and I ask for the name list two days before the focus group and check it name by name. If they've put down an unreliable participant, I don't accept that person as a participant. *But if the time is limited and the client is impatient, then I keep quiet about it. So there are times that I act like a scoundrel too*. But if I have the time, I use snowball technique a lot for instance. I follow a reliable path with her friend such and such and his friend such and such. (Interview with Kerem)

> One way to handle the issue of unreliable participants is to establish control through Turkish Republic ID numbers. Actually it is said that this control method is used in our company. Anyway, I can't think of any other way to control it. However, if it's a tough research project and participants are hard to find, sometimes we don't make a big deal out of it. But I also remember having intervened. Especially if I have the client with me, I

> can never accept the unreliable participant. Otherwise my every other research project would be questioned. (Interview with Burcu)
>
> There was an agency we used to work with. We used to go to the people that they found for us. And they usually turned out to be people who kind of made it their profession. *And we used to ignore it.* (Interview with Defne)

My aim, at this point, is not to make a fake separation between market research projects and academic projects in terms of the reliability problem. We may question the reliability of any academic research's data and outcomes as well. However, in the market research sector this issue has gradually became the rule since the economy of the sector depends on the swiftness and the cycle of new projects. The circle of this process begins with the demands of clients who ask practical and pragmatic results for their business as soon as and as cheaper as possible. Following that, the market research companies transfer the fieldwork process to the data collection companies since they do not want to hire too much worker in the company. As market research companies have a very limited time span, they put pressure on the data collection companies to finish the fieldwork in rush. Finally, the data collection companies have to conduct the surveys with the project-based employees who have no knowledge about what a research is, since they cannot offer sufficient money for the job. However, at the end, the research projects are completed and circle is done successfully. I would like to remind the reaction of an executive against one of my interviewees' (Gözde) one more time; since she became obsessive regarding the dirty data in the surveys, her executive warned her that she could violate the order of the company. What I am suggesting is that "the order" that the executive tries to protect is the order of whole sector. Therefore, what is different between academic and market researches is, whereas the former embraces and tries to protect the reliability in the researches regardless of to what extend achieving in particular projects, the latter benefits from its absence or at least indifferent to such as issue.

3. Manipulations and Manufacturing the Researches

From the very beginning of this study I have touched upon the time constraints several times. It can be asserted that one of the determinants of the structure of the sector is its pace. Since the time allocated for any project is so limited, the researchers have difficulties to adjust their work to what they desire to do. As I mentioned before, the working experiences of researchers in the sector are also affected in a negative direction due to the time constraints and workload. In addition to that, the projects have gradually become superficial and monotype. My interviewees told me that they feel that their researches seem like manufactured in the same factory. Defne suggests that the most important problem in the market research sector is the time limitations.

> I think the main problem is time pressure. If really more quality time could be spent on projects, each of them would be better. Clients always say it's urgent and [research] company owners usually tend to take more projects in order to make more money. And that causes a problem for us employees. Otherwise, the quality of human resources employed in research companies are quite high. If you know how to use it, you can put it to good use. (Interview with Defne)

Although the expectations of the business enforce researchers to figure out solving big problems of the clients, they never have time to meet these demands. Especially in the qualitative research projects the main objective of the market research companies to find out actionable insights for the clients, but the sector does not allow researchers even to read and think on the basics of the specific issue. This makes researchers suspicious regarding their researches. Burcu says that she is not happy with this situation.

> I'm not really happy about where I am right now. I want to go back to the academy, focus

> on theory and listen to my brain. Market research has turned into a hackneyed job, as a researcher you do not worry about brainstorming but submitting the report on time. (Interview with Burcu)

I heard the same criticism of "manufacturing" the research projects from my other interviewees. For instance, Begüm argues that the pace of the system creates a sort of automation which enforcing the researcher to handle a couple of projects simultaneously and this makes the researches (both qualitative and quantitative) shallow.

> Market research operates very fast, it works in the market's pace. There's no time to stop and elaborate on something. You proceed in a certain, predetermined course. You can't feel the excitement of conducting research. The projects are not niche. Everything's too fast, the sector itself is very fast. At one point, it becomes like mass production. It's probably already like that in quantitative research but it sometimes happen in qualitative research too. It's because the client sometimes says that s/he wants to have the report in two days. However, a report is in fact written in one or two weeks. Plus you deal with a number of projects at the same time. So when you're faced with such a demand, you work in a consuming manner, you're forced to write a report before the research is really complete. A person is responsible of five or ten projects simultaneously and that leads to automation of course. This is even more severe in global companies. (Interview with Begüm)

The crucial point in Begüm's words is the fact that the researchers should "follow a certain path" without any effort for deepening their analysis. However, in my view, the clients do not expect the researchers think deeply, rather they are looking for short cut ways to resolve specific problems. Therefore, the conflict that researchers experience is an inner one. Even though they know that their findings are superficial, they have to finish the project and send it immediately. So, the market researchers feel obliged to make negotiations with the client to find a middle way between the true course of action and the immediate expectations of the client.

> It's a fact that the sector operates with a demand so high that it cannot produce quality

> works. If you're a really good research company, the client begs you to take the job. The client doesn't care although you say that it's not your area of expertise. You say that you can make a mistake there but well, there is a term like "quick and dirt jobs". The client doesn't care, they say that they need to have the report in ten days. They say "Go on and conduct mystery shopping for us" and when I say that I'd need 6 weeks for that, they say that they need to have the report in 15 days. And when I say that this job can't be done in such a short time, they say "Why? X Company does it". When I say "Go on and give the job to them then", they say "They're not good at it, you do it". Eventually we agree to do the job. I try to keep them in line, we try to meet half way. (Interview with Kerem)

The phrase "quick and dirty" is a good description of the market research projects. As I discussed about the reliability issue in the previous section, the clients do not care about the errors in the research either. The market research companies also apply this attitude in the project processes.

> I once asked the general manager why a client asked us to conduct a particular research project and he answered "Never mind". I mean they thought that the money kept coming anyway. There was no strategy whatsoever. It was an unsuccessful company. The end product was hackneyed, you just packaged it and sent it off. There was no endeavor to contribute creative insights [to the work]. (Interview with Koray)

> I have doubts about the extent to which ethnographic criteria are complied with. You don't write these reports as academic texts, no such principles are expected. The important thing is to complete the number of interviews promised in the first place. You conduct your share. You're not allowed to say "You can't conduct this many interviews in such a short period of time". You do not question in terms of academic quality and scientificity. You say "OK, this is what needs to be done". My writing had accelerated a lot due to practice. And that is not a healthy thing. (Interview with Cemal)

The clients basically make a choice between "quick and dirty" and "solid and permanent" projects. Since they focus more on the ad hoc issues, they mostly prefer the former. Only a few of clients ask market research companies to repeat the same project that conducted in previous years in order to see the impact of their specific policies. Apart from that they interested in the particular moments of specific issues. After all, the departments in the client companies, which ask for those researches, wish to bring solid outcomes to their executives. But if they do not see the expected results, they may ask market research companies to juggle with the outcomes of the researches before the presentations. As I suggested before, some senior executives do not bear the negative issues regarding their companies. So, the research departments of client companies come with the requests of manipulation in order not to make upset their managers.

> Manipulation is done in every company. They say "Let's discuss the data before the presentation and then go upstairs". They're afraid they're going to say something wrong in front of the CEO. Executives who communicate with us, top management get together with us without seeing us. They say "Could we say it like that rather than like this?" or "Should we change this?". It's the filter phase in a sense. In short, yes, manipulation is done. (Interview with Koray)

> We don't manipulate but we may sometimes ignore. Because clients can come up with really silly stuff. For instance they may have an attitude such as "Tear the X brand apart but soften the comments concerning us, do not say bad things about us". They say "We don't want those slides, do not present this data". You can't resist in such cases, you say "OK we won't omit them if you don't want them" and you just ignore it. Actually this is also manipulation in a sense, when you think about it. (Interview with Aylin)

> There are times when we keep some slides to ourselves in line with client's demands. We may say "Let's not show this to them" when we see something that the company fails at and that something doesn't work or when we discover something in contrast with what the client had defended at first. But this only happens when it's not a very big deal. It's not like keeping a big secret, covering up huge differences. We highlight some points, puff this up and buff that up. They're going to fire me for telling you all this (laughingly). (Interview with Gözde)

I think Gözde will never be fired because of what she told me, simply because almost all my interviewees agree on the fact that every market research company have had to deal with similar requests. In some cases clients only ask for a "careful language", and in some other cases they ask to change the numbers of the data; but in any case market researchers are asked to make changes on the outcomes. The market research companies have to act strategically in order to establish a balance between their results and the demands of the clients. However, at the end of the day, what emerges from this balance is “a lie which is known by everyone”.

> There were times when I did manipulation. I’m ashamed but it’s true. Softening it, puffing it up, buffing it up… I did all of them. Not only numbers and graphs, you can flex things out of shape also in qualitative research. In fact, qualitative research is a place where you can easily flex the story out of shape, alter it, and puff it up. I think there are a few kinds of success in this business and none of them have anything to do with morality. All of them exist in a realm where morality does not exist. For instance if the client gets back to you once more and if you are able to sit together and establish a somewhat humane relationship, that is a success. If you can establish that humane relationship a little, you can say “Don’t make me go this far”. However, sometimes the client say “Please Kerem, say this in the presentation” and you go along with it. So in both cases, a lie comes out, a lie that everybody knows. Actually you lie even when you say “The research we did last year was a lie, the one we did this year is correct”. You constantly lie because you always work in a mad rush. (Interview with Kerem)

The striking thing is that after a certain point every researcher learns what kind of a language s/he must use and how to present the results to the executives. Yasemin says that this is a kind of “self-censorship” of the researchers. They feel obliged to pay attention to their wording and tone.

> Sure we felt interventions. It’s a sort of filter of course. But in time, the researcher internalizes that filter. It’s a deliberate censor in other words. We had started pondering how we were going to express something appropriately and properly. I was doing it too. Not only in reports but also in our communication with clients. But we never had to flex the data out of shape. We encounter such demands sometimes, like “Can we say it like this in the presentation?”. We had heard this question before the research started. We had blushed when we heard it. It’s so wrong. It’s totally against research ethics. And it’s an approach that goes against my identity as a researcher too. (Interview with Yasemin)

Begüm, in addition to that, mentions the impact of an internal power sharing issue emerged in the client companies to the manipulation demands. She argues that the marketing departments of client companies might ask researchers to bring forward the problematical points of the company.

> There has been no expectation of manipulation. This also has to with the company's stance. If the research company you work for can stand it's ground, then you can share the result as it is. Of course sometimes we visually emphasize some points but we never withhold rest of the data. Sometimes marketing departments [of the clients] would try to emphasize the problematical areas in order to receive more budget. We didn't use to do that. (Interview with Begüm)

At this point, I asked my interviewees about their thoughts about the scientific value of market research projects, which swing between very limited time spans and manipulation requests. Some of them think that we may call the market research projects as "scientific productions" as long as they provide reliable data.

> Of course I think [that market researches has scientific value]. Because it's not false information. In an environment where we have so many strict controls, I can surely say that there is scientific data. We try to attain true information whenever possible. (Interview with Aylin)

> You can use it [the term "scientific" for the resultant projects] but I wonder if they could be more scientific if we didn't work to such a tight schedule. I mean it's definitely scientific but if the outputs could be way better if we weren't rushed like that. I think we'll never know since we rushed so much. (Interview with Defne)

Kerem, on the other hand, argues that most of the market research projects do not deserve to be called scientific. He has some certain criteria to differentiate two fields. He thinks that, the method that we use is an important aspect but not the sole parameter that makes market researches scientific. According to him, a scientific study must be repeatable, that is, it should be tested and checked for whether we find similar results in every time we conduct the research. However, even if we reach a partially tested outcome, our market research project can never meet the standards of the "academic world" which is interested in the "Ideas".

> No, the great majority [of researches] are not [scientific]. The methods we're using may be scientific… well, there is great trouble in the methods part, and there is evidently the question of unreliable participants. The method is not enough to make our work scientific. For one thing, data is not collected systematically, methodically. For me,

> repeatability is a very important aspect of scientificity. I mean it's important that you find the same or a similar result when you repeat it. In in-depth interviews, I end the fieldwork once I start hearing the same things over and over, I say "It's enough, that's it". Of course it has a scientific quality in this sense. But if you'd address its scientificity with an academic perspective and put it to test, it wouldn't meet the academic standards of scientificity. Academia is a very strict world, a world of ideas, the standards are high because it is interested in what is ideal. (Interview with Kerem)

Kerem discusses the same issue in a moral/ethical perspective as well. He argues that in some of ethnographic studies, including his own research projects, the researchers do not treat the participants with a certain honesty in order to maintain the research. He says that we, as researchers, tend to get the knowledge of the people without their consent and cheat them in order to commercialize this knowledge in the market. He implies that this is a sort of exploitation of the participants.

> For instance, sometimes we do not reveal our identity as we conduct ethnographic research. This may cause things like… For instance, the person you're talking to sincerely opens up to you. You studying bakeries for instance, asking how many loaves of bread they sold and the person is telling you everything just like that. Sometimes we witness ethnographic researchers lying a lot. Sometimes I lie too. For instance, I say that I'm working on a research being conducted in such and such university. It's true, there really is such a research going on there. Maybe, the research in question is really a part of it but that's not the whole thing. Yes, there is such a research there and yes, there is such a professor there. And it's also true that the research I conduct will go into his/her work but it's not going to be used there alone. It will also be converted into market knowledge. I mean if it's not scientific in this sense, then it's not scientific at all. You take people for a ride. How ethical is that? There is a dilemma here. If you tell the guy that you're a researcher, his behavior will change. But you never say it in market research. Maybe the guy will tell you not to use his data. In terms of these things, what is done in market research has no scientific quality whatsoever in the moral sense. They're trying to write a code of ethics for it and everything but there is no committee to test it. (Interview with Kerem)

So, if we follow the argumentation of Kerem, we should deal with two main criteria that make a research scientific; the one is the testing the results in various researches and the other one is the ethical/moral positioning of the researcher. In my opinion, Kerem's second criterion is also a problematical issue for any academic researcher. In every research that s/he conducts, the scientists should consider his/her position again and again. Since especially in the fieldworks of any research, sharing the "real theme" of the research can cause a certain change in participant's behavior, scientist should find out ways to decrease the effect of disclosure of the research topic. However, in my view, it is almost impossible to expect the resolve this dilemma in any research. At the very moment we call an individual as "participant", it is unavoidable that s/he would change his/her behaviors. This approach also presupposes that any individual acts and behaves in a standard way in his/her daily life. Yet, we cannot get the knowledge of the individuals' changing character by a single in-depth interview or even in a long-term observation. So, the ethical/moral positioning is not a problematic situation only for market researchers but also for every social scientist that conducts any kind of research. But, I think what makes Kerem feel uneasy about the ethical issue is to transfer the studies into the benefit of market use and profit. However, if we remember Bourdieu's intervention, we should keep in mind that scientists are not free from the disinterested acts. Any scientific study, according to Bourdieu, can be converted to a symbolic (or any other) capital in academic market. Therefore, we may assert that the borderline between a market researcher and an academic becomes fuzzy when it comes to ethical issues.

Banu, on the other hand, makes a distinction between "the method" and "the purpose" of the researches.

> I have to make the guy sell his product, so I have to present the right stuff to him/her. I'm using scientificity so that the capitalist system gains advantage. In other words, I'm not being scientific so I can contribute a nice research to the literature, my purpose is to understand the present situation correctly so I can present something correct to the guy. If I stop being scientific and use a silly sampling, I would mislead the client. Therefore I'm speaking of scientificity only in the sense that the method gives accurate results,

> otherwise none of our researches is scientific. (Interview with Banu)

There are some important points in Banu's approach to scientificity of marketing researches. First of all, she has a two-fold understanding regarding the science. According to her, the appropriate usage of method, and in connection with that, to reach the statistically reliable data give a scientific character to a market research project. The appropriate usage of the method is also important for her responsibilities to the client. However, she suggests considering also the purpose of the projects. In her view, the market research projects, which aim solely the interest and the benefit of the "capitalist system", cannot be considered as something scientific. So, she basically suggests separating the methodologically scientific character of market research projects with the Scientificity, written with the capital "S". What makes a research "Scientific", according to her, is its contribution to the literature. But again, if we follow the argumentation of Bourdieu, it does not necessarily be the only motivation beneath the scientist's mind to make a contribution to literature. Besides, it does not matter what scientist aims when s/he publishes an article or a book; what is important here is that the study that published is open to use for the benefit of that scientist in the scientific field. If we approach the issue reversely, then we should treat any market research project that, for instance, published in a book as a "scientific study". So, in my opinion, it is hard to distinguish market and academic researches by their sole purposes.

So, the question is, what does differentiate the market research sector and the scientific field? In my view, the only distinction between market and scientific field is the unavoidable ground providing by scientific field that makes possible to challenge any established order. Although it is an undeniable fact that even academia has gradually complies with the capitalist mode of production and market logic, it still keeps open the possibilities that make inroads into the sideways, which do not accept to reconcile or compromise. Either in social sciences or in liberal arts fields, the academia holds the potentiality of making holes within the given structures regardless of it aims to do that. I believe that the real meaning of "knowledge for the sake of knowledge" can only be possible in these efforts. To conduct a research might be a matter of finding sufficient funding, but to contemplation on the issues is an intellectual quality that can disturb any established order. In my opinion, what makes crucial and valuable the ground of science is the potential to question any subject. Market research ethos, by its nature, cannot provide such a ground for any researcher. As I have tried to discuss several times, the clients, as being the funder of the researchers, have right to determine the scope and theme of any research. A market researcher can only think and act in accordance with its real employer, that is, the client companies. Therefore, I argue that, despite their resemblances, the ground that scientific field provides for sideways is the only true difference between those fields.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This study has started as an inner challenge and a process of making sense of what I was doing in market research sector. In every step of this thesis I have basically tried to establish a dialogue between my academic background (and my position in a public university as a research assistant) and my experience in a market research company. So, in a sense, the whole study can be read as my personal struggle to figure out the codes of two-way transition between these fields. Yet, naturally it cannot only be confined to my personal journey. By analyzing market research ethos, this study can also be read as an attempt to show the "transformation" of the condition of knowledge and its implications on the knowledge production process. In addition to that, an inquiry on market research ethos gives us a possibility to examine the academic field on a new ground.

I mainly have three closely connected assertions: 1) Even though it is quite valid to approach market research sector as an implication of commodification of knowledge and increasing consumerism in capitalist market, this perception would be inadequate without tracing its connections with the transformation of knowledge and its impact onto scientific field; 2) Market research sector does not produce a new kind of knowledge; but, it "re-produce" the knowledge by recreating its exchange-value by the means of commercialization of scientific method and theoretical knowledge; 3) Contrary to what is believed, there is an obvious convergence between academic field and market research sector; yet, academic field keeps its scientific character only in connection with its ground, which gives the possibility to challenge any established order, and its openness to public discussions.

As I discussed in the previous chapters, it is argued that we live in a new age which is called "industrial". What characterizes this new industrial age is the logic of production which goes hand in hand with an expectation of mass consumption. Hence, it cannot be thought without marketing techniques such as advertisement and inquiries on the consumer behavior. Thus, knowledge gets a new meaning and value in this new age. While knowledge had been considered as an asset, which created commodities (or the technology that paved the way for consumable commodities), now in industrial age it has gradually become a commodity itself that has its own value. However, although knowledge has not lost its use-value, its dominant character has appeared in its exchange-value, which means knowledge itself becomes the subject of commerce in capitalist market. This transformation in the form and the character of knowledge creates the informational economy. In this new economy, knowledge emerges as the main asset and the commodity of market forces which creates wealth.

The impact of this transformation in capitalist market has had a considerable effect on scientific field. As I tried to show that, despite the fact that the relation (and even collaboration) between academia and industry can be traced back to early 1950s, this relation has taken a new form and content by the beginning of 1980s, and transformed into a partnership. In this way, while private sector – along with the NGOs - has turned into the major funders of research conducting in universities, the academia has become the fundamental knowledge-producer of industry. Needless to say that in this process the knowledge has taken a goal- and profit-oriented character which aim to solve the problems of private sector. The effects of this partnership on the inner structure of academic field have been more dramatic. As Bourdieu observes in the late 70s, the transformation of knowledge into information economy has created its own “specific forms” in academia. As I underlined that Bourdieu argues that appearance of this transformation in academic field is a kind of “prestige” or “reputation” economy. By defining academic studies and researches as “scientific goods”, Bourdieu suggests that scientific field has generated its own market where all scientific commodities commercialized and transferred to capitals. Although Bourdieu argues that the prestige economy in academic market creates symbolic capital, he also says that it is something transferrable into other types of capitals. So, according to Bourdieu, we have lost our ground to assert a “pure scientific research” anymore. Now the scientific field enforces its own new rules to its actors (such as professors, TAs and even students) and determines the character of scientific knowledge production.

This transformation in the knowledge production and its appearances in the scientific field have paved the way the research as something functional and useful tool for the marketing strategies of corporations in what it is called industrial age. Marketing departments in universities have emerged as the new fruit of the cooperation between industry and academia. Yet, the catalyzer of newly creating marketing techniques has stemmed from theoretical knowledge and scientific methods of social sciences. The dramatic dilemma for social sciences, which have had issues in “justifying” its existence in this capitalist market logic of scientific field, was to literally perish or to adapt the new expectations. In a world where social sciences have gradually become to seem (as we witness in Japanese case) “unnecessary”, market research sector has appeared as a new ground to survive for those who do not manage to find a position for himself/herself in academic circles. Thus, social science with its theoretical knowledge and scientific methods has engaged a mutual relationship with capitalist market. For this reason, I argue that market research sector has emerged as a response to those conditions in scientific field and "existential" crises of social sciences.

The researches conducting in market research sector, by nature, do not aim to produce a new kind of knowledge; yet, they may rarely contribute to scientific knowledge depending on the scope, time limitations and method of the project. They simply focus on the ad hoc problems of client companies and aim to figure out solutions. The research question of market research projects is not (and actually "cannot") posed by market researchers; it comes to them as something given in project "brief". Market research companies may discuss and negotiate the scope and problematic of the project with client companies, but the suggestions on "revising" (not changing!) can only be confined within the ground of the problem that client posits. So, the project proposals usually do not contain any analysis regarding the problem areas of the client company (some qualitative market research projects can be seen as exceptions).

In client meetings, as I suggested before, the market research companies mainly commercialize their methods, techniques and previous accomplishments in other research projects. The measure of the success could be an increased profit in client's side or an Owl Award previously given by Turkish Researchers' Association. A client can be convinced with those factors, but the most important thing is the market research company's promise to client to find out "new" ways of solving the particular problem. The method, techniques and even technology that are using by market research companies are the fundamental tools for persuading the client. Therefore, the negotiations in that very first meeting generally based on the method and the size of sampling, since both of them determines the price of research.

As I tried to discuss before, there are various ways to conduct a research depending on the quality of particular market research company and its business type. However, what is never change in a project process is the ongoing negotiations with client companies. As the sole funder of the project, clients see themselves competent to intervene the research in every step of the project, and doing so, they intentionally try to make an impact on results. At the end of the project, what market research companies present their clients is either statistical data, which shows the actual numbers of client company's particular problem, or theoretical knowledge of social sciences (particularly in qualitative researches).

As I tried to show from my experience in K. Research or the words that I quoted from my interviews, market researchers intend to use theoretical issues of social sciences in their presentations in order to make a "difference". However, the figures mentioned in presentations are used in a very limited approach. For instance, Pierre Bourdieu's concepts such as capital, habitus or field are used in particular instances and without making any discussion on them. Or, Karl Marx would be never used in its analysis on capitalism or class struggle, but by selecting his a single concept to make a limited contribution to the topic. These particular figures and their concepts are used in their exchange-values in market research projects. Therefore, it can be argued that results of projects, in my view, do not produce new knowledge on scientific issues. In that sense, they are just the "re-productions" of existing discussions, but in a "purified" and "sterilized" forms. As I argued before, the limits of argumentations are only determined by clients' expectations. That is the reason why market researchers feel that they self-censor themselves before the presentations.

My third assertion is what I have been asking to myself from the very beginning of this study and the most important aspect which has motivated me to keep writing. The question was/is actually a simple one: Why is it harder to call market researches as “scientific studies” in comparison to what we do in academia? The reason that I keep asking this question is the obvious similarities between academic and market researches.

As I tried to show in my fieldwork data that we might criticize academic researches in a way that we do it for market researches. For instance, the reliability problem in market research sector is a hot issue, which is known by every actor in the field. But no one attempts to resolve this problem simply because the very structure and mechanism of the sector depends on the speed which cause reliability issue. In that sense, although market research companies try to figure out their own ways to overcome the problem at least partially, they will also have similar problems in the future. Furthermore, as my interviewees told me several times that, even client companies are aware of the situation but they do not speak up as long as they get useful suggestions or actionable insights. However, the academic researches are not free from similar problems. We may easily argue that any academic research could have errors in reliability. In academic field the only entities that make the control the reliability of scientific studies could either be a committee or the readers of that study. But that would not solve the problem for good. So, the mistakes (or frauds) in application of method are not inherent to market research sector. Therefore, it would be an unsatisfying attempt to differentiate academic and market researches in terms of their errors in method.

In a similar manner, the question of by whom the research question is posing in either fields are not enough to differentiate them. In market research sector it is obvious that the client, as being the funder of research, is the only side who can pose the research question and enforce it to the company. However, in today's scientific field, the institutions (either private or public), which are funding the research projects, have every right to intervene the scope and method of researches. Without negotiating with the board no researcher can pose his/her own research question freely. This is quite valid even for scientific journals as well. An author who wants to publish his/her study will eventually face the criticisms that can be seen an "invisible" intervention to the approach of the study.

So, in my opinion, it is almost impossible to differentiate academic and market researches in terms of above-mentioned issues. In that sense, as I argued, we may observe a clear convergence between the fields in many respects. However, we still have a question waiting for an answer. If we try to make the question simpler we may ask that: what makes us to think that the researches emerging in academic field are more "scientific"? I have two answers so far. First, academic researches still give us the possibility to challenge and question any political, social, economic or even scientific established order. Despite its compliance or convergence to market logic, academic knowledge itself opens up the opportunity to seep from the cracks of scientific order and dare to say. The scientific field, in this sense, is a field of struggle between counterforces. Therefore, academic researches bear the opportunity to be called scientific. However, such a challenge is impossible in market research sector by its nature. The client determines the limits of any market research project. A market research company can conduct a research by the means of its own budget, define its own research question and criticize any established institution by its own will. Yet, that would not be a "marketing" research. So it is unrealistic to expect such an approach from market research companies.

My second answer is that the openness of academic researches to public reading and inquiry. It is quite easy to publish an academic research even in any simple website and make it open to public. Although the scientific order try to confine the scientificity of academic studies into peer-reviewed journal system, making the studies public gives the opportunity for discussions and evaluations. Not the act of publishing itself but this public character of academic researches gives a scientific quality to them. In that sense, any market research project can be published in any media too. However, the problem is still the same thing, which is the "consent" of the funder. But any academic study can be published without getting permission from any institution. Therefore, the openness to public gives us the opportunity to call academic studies "scientific". This perception does not make market research "less valuable"; but able to show the inherent limitations of market research sector.

Like any other academic study, this thesis has its own limits. In this study, I have particularly focused on three main fields by an attempt to connect "organizational/business anthropology" and "sociology of knowledge" in order to show market research ethos, regardless of to what extend I have achieved that purpose: 1) the structure of particular market research companies, 2) the relations of market research actors, and 3) the character of market research projects. Yet, a study, which attempts to denote the position of market research sector in connection with its functions among the general structure of capitalist mode of production and its relations with other sectors (such as advertisement sector), would have an enhancing effect on the topic.

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APPENDICES

A. FIELD GUIDE

1. **Demografik Bilgiler ve Persona Özet:**
   a. Yaş, Okul, Medeni Hal, Memleket
   b. Gündeliğinde neler yapar? Bir günü nasıl geçer?
   c. Neler yapmaktan hoşlanır? Neler canını sıkar?
   d. Hayata nasıl bakıyor? Hayatla nasıl ilişki kuruyor?
   e. Ne hayalleri vardı? Bunları gerçekleştirebildi mi? Şimdi ne gibi hayalleri var? Bunlar için bir şeyler yapıyor mu?
   f. Araştırma şirketlerinde çalışmadan önce bir yerde çalışmışsa neden ayrıldı? [Buradaki deneyimine dair başka sorular da sorulacağı için kısa geç]
2. **Araştırma Şirketi Deneyimi:**
   a. Ne zaman çalışmaya başladı?
   b. Neden bu sektörü tercih etti?
      i. Hikayesi ne? Sektörü nereden öğrendi? Nasıl başvurdu?
      ii. Ne tür işler yapacağını biliyor muydu? İşe alınırken herhangi bir sınava (sözlü/yazılı) tabi tutuldu mu?
      iii. Başka yerlere de başvurdu mu?
      iv. İsteyerek mi yoksa zorunluluktan mı bu işe girdi?

<u>BURADAN İTİBAREN İKİYE AYRILIYOR</u>:

(Sektörden Ayrılanlar ve Hala Bu Sektörde Çalışanlar)

3. **Sektörden Ayrılanlar:**
   a. Tek bir araştırma şirketinde mi çalışmış yoksa başka şirketleri de denemiş mi?

b. Şirketteki ilk günleri nasıldı? Şirketteki pozisyonu neydi? Ortam, iş arkadaşları, patronların davranışı, iş yoğunluğu... Beklediği gibi miydi? Aradığımı buldum diyebiliyor muydu?
c. Ne tür projeler yapıyorlardı? Bu projelerde ne tür görevler aldı?
d. Bir projenin aşamaları yaklaşık olarak nelerdi (Brief, Proposal, Toplantılar, Ekip Seçimi, Ekibin Hiyerarşisi, Sunum/Rapor Hazırlanması, Sunum... ve diğer şeyler)? Bu projeler geldiğinde ne tür tartışmalar ve hazırlıklar yapılırdı? Ne tür duygular hissedilirdi (heyecan, gerilim, kaygı, isteksizlik...)
e. Hangi metotlarla araştırmalar yapılırdı? (Anket, derinlemesine görüşme, katılımcı gözlem etc.) Örneklem seçimi nasıl yapılırdı?
f. Çalışma saatleri nasıldı? Yoğunluk? İzin?
g. Aldığı ücret tatmin edici miydi? Sigorta-Yol-Yemek?
h. Patronlarından/üstlerinden kaynaklı mobbing'e maruz kaldı mı? Bunlarla nasıl başa çıktı?
i. Stresli bir iş miydi yaptığı? En büyük stres kaynağı neydi?
j. İş genel olarak tatmin edici miydi?
k. Çalıştığı diğer kurum veya sektörlerle karşılaştırdığında yoğunluk, ücret, stres, iş tatmini gibi konularda ne tür farklılıklar gözlemledi?
l. Araştırma sektöründe başka şirketlerde çalıştıysa yukarıdaki konularda farklılıklar var mıydı?
m. Müşteriler ile ilişkiler nasıldı? Tuhaf, can sıkıcı olaylar yaşanıyor muydu?
n. Müşteriler bu araştırmaları ne kadar ciddiye alıyorlardı?
o. Alan araştırması süreci nasıl geçerdi? Sıkıntılar, zorluklar, keyifli anlar, duygulu anlar? En unutamadığı proje hangisi; neden?
p. Çalıştığı süre boyunca karşılaştığı en iyi ve en kötü anlar/olaylar nelerdi? Neler şaşırttı? Ne umdu ne buldu?!

q. TÜAD denetleme süreçlerine katıldı mı? Bu süreç nasıl yaşanıyordu? Herhangi bir usulsüzlüğe şahit oldu mu?
r. Toplamda güvenilir bir bilgi üretildiğini düşünüyor mu?
s. Araştırma sektörünün ve yaptıkları araştırmaların müşterilerine olumlu katkıları olduğunu düşünüyor mu? Örnek verebilir mi?
t. Genel olarak araştırma sektörünün sıkıntıları neler?
u. Toplam ne kadar süre çalıştı?
v. Neden işten ayrıldı? Yeniden bu sektöre dönmek ister mi? Hangi koşullar sağlansa geri döner?
w. Eğer şu anda başka bir işte çalışıyorsa, bu işten memnun mu?

4. Hala Bu Sektörde Çalışanlar

a. Çalıştığı şirketteki pozisyonu ne? Ne tür işler yapıyor?
b. Daha önce şu an çalıştığı şirketten başka bir araştırma şirketinde çalışmış mı?
    i. Eğer çalıştıysa;
        - Nerelerde çalıştı? O şirket(ler)de ne kadar süre çalıştı?
        - Neden ayrıldı? Hikayesi...
c. Şimdi çalıştığı şirkete ne zaman başladı?
d. Şirketteki ilk günleri nasıldı? Şirketteki pozisyonu neydi? Ortam, iş arkadaşları, patronların davranışı, iş yoğunluğu... Beklediği gibi miydi? Aradığımı buldum diyebiliyor muydu?
e. Ne tür projeler yapıyorlar?
f. Bir projenin aşamaları yaklaşık olarak neler (Brief, Proposal, Toplantılar, Ekip Seçimi, Ekibin Hiyerarşisi, Sunum/Rapor Hazırlanması, Sunum... ve diğer şeyler)? Bu projeler geldiğinde ne

tür tartışmalar ve hazırlıklar yapılır? Ne tür duygular hissedilir (heyecan, gerilim, kaygı, isteksizlik...)

g. Hangi metotlarla araştırmalar yapılır? (Anket, derinlemesine görüşme, katılımcı gözlem etc.)
h. Örneklem seçimi nasıl yapılır?
i. Çalışma saatleri nasıl? Yoğunluk? İzin?
j. Aldığı ücret tatmin edici mi? Sigorta-Yol-Yemek?
k. Patronlarından/üstlerinden kaynaklı mobbing'e maruz kalır mı? Bunlarla nasıl başa çıkıyor?
l. Stresli bir iş mi yapıyor? En büyük stres kaynağı ne?
m. İş genel olarak tatmin edici mi?
n. Çalıştığı diğer kurum veya sektörlerle karşılaştırdığında yoğunluk, ücret, stres, iş tatmini gibi konularda ne tür farklılıklar gözlemledi?
o. Araştırma sektöründe başka şirketlerde çalıştıysa yukarıdaki konularda farklılıklar var mıydı?
p. Müşteriler ile ilişkiler nasıldı? Tuhaf, can sıkıcı olaylar yaşanıyor mu?
q. Müşteriler bu araştırmaları ne kadar ciddiye alıyorlar?
r. Alan araştırması süreci nasıl geçer? Sıkıntılar, zorluklar, keyifli anlar, duygulu anlar? En unutamadığı proje hangisi; neden?
s. Çalıştığı süre boyunca karşılaştığı en iyi ve en kötü anlar/olaylar nelerdi? Neler şaşırttı? Ne umdu ne buldu?!
t. TÜAD denetleme süreçlerine katıldı mı? Bu süreç nasıl yaşanıyor? Herhangi bir usulsüzlüğe şahit oldu mu?
u. Toplamda güvenilir bir bilgi üretildiğini düşünüyor mu?
v. Araştırma sektörünün ve yaptıkları araştırmaların müşterilerine olumlu katkıları olduğunu düşünüyor mu? Örnek verebilir mi?
w. Genel olarak araştırma sektörünün sıkıntıları neler?

5. Yöntem-Bilgi-İşle Kurulan İlişki

a. Katılımcılar ile kurduğu ilişkiyi nasıl değerlendiriyor? Onlardan ne alıyor? Onlara bir şey katıyor mu?
b. Araştırmanın sonunda hediye verirler miydi? Buna nasıl bakıyor?
c. Kullandıkları yöntemleri "bilimsel" sıfatıyla değerlendirir mi?
d. Sonuçta çıkan veriyi "bilimsel bilgi" olarak değerlendirebilir mi?
e. Bu tür araştırmaları bir üniversitenin çatısı altında yapmakla pazar araştırma şirketi çatısı altında yapmak arasında ne gibi farklılıklar olurdu? (Araştırmanın süreçleri, sahası, amacı, elde edilen verinin güvenilirliği vb.)
f. Üniversitelerin sosyal bilimler bölümlerinin konumunu nasıl değerlendiriyor? Sosyal bilimler bölümlerinde akademisyen olmakla Pazar araştırması şirketlerinde araştırmacı olmak arasında ne fark var?
g. Tek tek yaptıkları projeleri değerlendirdiğinde, elde ettikleri verileri müşterilerine vermek yerine bir makale/kitap haline getirmek isteseler anlamlı bir ürün çıkar mıydı?
h. Araştırma şirketlerinin bütçelemelerini nasıl değerlendirir? Hak ettiklerini alıyorlar mı? Yoksa az bir bütçeyle mi çalışıyorlar?
i. Bir araştırma nasıl bütçelenmeli? Haberdar olduğu diğer araştırma şirketleri varsa farklı fiyatlandırmaları oluşturan şey ne (Araştırmayı "daha iyi" yapma? Farklı yöntemler kullanma? Şöhretli bir araştırma şirketi olma? Ödül alma?)
j. Pazar araştırmaları daha iyi yapılabilir mi? Nasıl?
k. Baykuş ödüllerini nasıl değerlendiriyor?

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

ÖNDER GÜNEŞ

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EDUCATION:

PhD	2010 - ...,	Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University (coursework finished), CGPA: 3.69
M.A.	2005 - 2010	Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University, CGPA: 3.50 Thesis Title: *The Dynamics of Töre as the Ethos of Tribe in Kızıltepe*
B.A.	2000 - 2004	Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Political Science, Ankara University, CGPA: 73.91 / 100

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS:

- **"The Best Thesis Award", 2009-2010 Academic Year,** Middle East Technical University, Graduate School of Social Sciences**,** *The Dynamics of Töre as the Ethos of Tribe in Kızıltepe.*
- **Middle East Technical University Erasmus Committee Fellowship**, 2008 (6 months), University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology.
- **Scholarship for Visiting Researchers**, Higher Education Institution of Turkey.
  Visiting Scholar, in University of California, Santa Cruz, Department of Politics, 2013-2014 (9 Months), Advisor: Prof. Dean Mathiowetz

RESEARCH INTERESTS:

Political Sociology, Social Movements, Sociology of Law, Legal Anthropology, Political Anthropology, Middle East Studies, Social and Political Theory

PRESENTATIONS:

- "No Disgrace to Powerful: Power Relations in Tribal Societies", 2009, **The Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Congress of Graduate Students of Social Sciences**, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi (Bosphorus University), İstanbul.
- "The Idea of Justice in Kurdish Tribal Societies: Reconsidering 'Töre' as the Ethos of Tribe", **International Journal of Arts and Sciences (IJAS), June 21-24, 2011**, Anglo-American University, Prague, Czech Republic.
- "The Idea of Justice in Kurdish Tribal Societies: Reconsidering 'Töre' as the Ethos of Tribe", **Ethnographic Engagements, Department of Anthropology, UC Santa Cruz**, May 2014.

INTERNATIONAL LECTURES:

Title of the Lecture: *What Binds Tribe Members Together?: Kurdish Tribes In Turkey*, **Department of Anthropology, San Jose State University (SJSU)**, Invited by: Prof. Annapurna Pandey, April 2014.

PROJECTS:

- **Project Assistant**, *Alevilerde Hukuk, İktidar ve Adalet: Modernleşme Sürecinde 'Dar' Kurumu* (Law, Power and Justice within Alevis: The Institution of "Dar" in the Process of Modernity), 2007, İzmir and Tokat, Project Coordinator, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım
- **Project Assistant**, *Aşiret Toplumlarında Adalet Fikri: "Kurucu İlke" Olarak "Töre"yi Yeniden Düşünmek* (The Idea of Justice in Tribal Societies: Reconsidering of "Töre" as the "Constitutional Principle"), 2008, Kızıltepe/Mardin, Project Coordinator Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım.
- **Project Assistant**, *Avusturya'daki Türklerin "Zorla Evlendirme" Deneyimleri ve Bu Deneyimlerin Farklılıklarını Belirleyen Etmenlerin Araştırılması* (The Experience of "Forced Marriage" of Turkish Community in Austria and Analyzing the Factors Which Determine Differences of Those Experiences), 2008-2009, Salzburg and

Vienna /Austria, Project Coordinator, Prof. Dr. Sabine Strasser (University of Bern).

- **Interviewer**, *Türkiye'de Çocuk Yoksulluğu: İzmir ve Diyarbakır Örneği* (Child Poverty in Turkey: Cases of Izmir and Diyarbakir), 2010, İzmir, Project Coordinator Prof. Dr. Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS:

- **Research Assistant,** 2006 - 2015**,** Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University.
- **Research Assistant,** 2016, Department of Sociology, Gaziantep University.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

- **Teaching Assistant**, 2007-2013, *Sociology of Law*, Instructor Assoc. Prof. Erdoğan Yıldırım.
- **Teaching Assistant**, 2008, *Introduction to Social Anthropology*, Instructor Prof. Dr. Sabine Strasser
- **Teaching Assistant**, 2009, *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, Instructor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım
- **Teaching Assistant**, 2012, *History of Sociology*, Instructor Assist. Prof. Dr. Barış Mücen
- **Teaching Assistant**, 2014, *The Secularization Debate: Comparative Perspectives And Case Studies*, Instructor Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Aydıngün
- **Teaching Assistant**, 2015, *Secular State And Islam*, Instructor Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Aydıngün

OTHER JOB EXPERIENCES:

- Membership of Editorial Board, **Kırkbudak: Anadolu Halk İnançları Araştırmaları Dergisi, (Kirkbudak: Journal for the Research of Anatolian Folk Beliefs), 2005-2007**
- Technical Editor, **Sosyoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi (Journal of Sociological Research), 2005-2007**.
- Editorial Assistant, **Journal of Social Sciences of Gaziantep University**, 2016.

NON PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS:

- Önder Güneş, 2006, "Uyan(ama)mak: Aleviler ve 'Uyanış'ın Sorgusu", (Alevis and the Question of 'Awakening') **Kırkbudak: Journal of Anatolian Folk Beliefs**, Issue 5.
- Önder Güneş, "Kürtler Esasen Neye Karar Verecek" (What Essentially Does Kurds Decide On), **Radikal İki**, 30.11.2008, http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/kurtler-esasen-neye-karar-verecek-910677/
- Önder Güneş, 2013, *'All of a Sudden': Gezi Park Resistance in Ankara*, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/12320/all-of-a-sudden_gezi-park-resistance-in-ankara

LANGUAGES:

Turkish (Native), English (Fluent), German (Basic)

C. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu çalışma en temelde Türkiye'deki pazar araştırması şirketlerinin farklı veçhelerini birbirleriyle ilişkileri çerçevesinde çözümlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Farklı sektörlerden şirketler bütün dünyada giderek artan bir biçimde pazar araştırmaları yaptırmaya yönelmektedir. Türkiye'de de buna koşut olarak özel sektör aktörleri pazar araştırma şirketlerine çok çeşitli konularda araştırmalar yaptırarak bir taraftan ürettikleri ürünlerini daha geniş bir pazarda satmaya diğer taraftan da şirketlerinin gelecekteki pozisyonunu belirlemeye çalışmaktadır. Bu anlamda pazar araştırması şirketleri kapitalist pazarda belirli bir ihtiyaca cevap olarak ortaya çıkmış ve bu ihtiyacın artmasıyla da önemini pekiştirmiş ve hacmini genişletmiştir.

Peki kapitalist pazardaki bu "ihtiyaç" neyi ifade etmekte, neye karşılık düşmektedir? Esas olarak bu ihtiyaç yukarıda değindiğimiz rekabetçi pazar koşullarında şirketlerin bir adım öne çıkabilmek adına duyduğu *bilgi* ihtiyacıdır. Özellikle büyük hacimli uluslararası şirketler her ne kadar giderek artan ölçüde müşterilerinin profillerini, onların alışveriş örüntülerini, beklentilerini, ihtiyaçlarını ve eğilimlerini çok çeşitli yollarla veri tabanlarında depolayıp saklıyor olsalar da, "big data" (büyük veri) adı verilen bu bilgi "niçin" sorusuna cevap verebilme kapasitesinden uzaktadır. Tüketicilerin ihtiyaç ve tercihleri sürekli bir biçimde akan etkilerle değişmekte ve çeşitlenmektedir. Şirketlerin veri tabanlarında tuttukları bu devasa bilgi yığını ise söz konusu değişimlerin ve çeşitlenmelerinin yönünü ve nedenlerini açıklamakta yetersiz kalmaktadır. Bir şirket, kendi ürününü belirli bir tarihte almış olan bir tüketicinin yaşını, işini, medeni durumunu, eğitim durumunu vb. bir çok bilgiyi elinde tutuyor olabilir, ve fakat aynı tüketicinin başka bir tarihte rakip firmanın piyasaya sürdüğü muadil bir ürünü neden aldığını açıklamakta zorlanacaktır.

Şirketler işte bu tüketicinin (veya bir tüketici kümesinin) hangi etkenlerle ve motivasyonlarla tercihlerinin farklılaştığını veya hangi koşullar altında yeniden kendi ürünlerini tüketmeye devam edeceğini *bilebilmek* adına pazar araştırması şirketlerine araştırma yaptırırlar. Kısacası, piyasadaki şirketlerin pazar araştırmalarından beklediği belirli bir tür bilgidir; pazar için *faydalı* ve *işe yarar* bilgi. Piyasada tüketiciler açısından oluşan değişim ve dönüşümleri açıklamaya yarayacak ve bunun da ötesinde, bu değişimleri ve dönüşümleri kendi lehlerine çevirebilecek öneriler içeren bir bilgiyi talep ederler şirketler. Pazar araştırması şirketlerinden de işte bu bilgiyi, yani neden'leri ve niçin'leri gösterme kapasitesine haiz ve bunları müşterisinin faydasına değiştirebilecek önerileri ortaya koyan işe yarar bilgiyi sağlaması beklenmektedir. Pazar araştırması şirketlerinin ana işlevi bu bilgiye ulaşmak ve müşterisi olan şirketlerin politikalarına yön vermede yardımcı olmaktır.

Pazar araştırması şirketlerinin işlevine dair bu tanımlamanın önümüze çıkardığı iki sorunsal bulunmaktadır. Bunlardan ilki şirketler için yapılan bu pazar araştırmalarının niteliği, yani hangi yöntemlerle, hangi koşullar altında, kimler tarafından ve nasıl yapıldığı sorunsalıdır. Pazar araştırmalarının çözümlemesi aynı zamanda bizi pazar araştırması şirketlerinin pratikleri, iş yapış biçimleri, şirket içerisinde çalışanların durumları üzerine bir çözümleme yapmaya zorlayacaktır. Bu anlamda bu çalışma esasen pazar araştırma şirketlerinin *ethosunu* anlamaya ve açıklamaya çalışmaktadır.

Pazar araştırması şirketlerinin işlevinin ortaya koyduğu ikinci sorunsal ise bilgi ile kurulan ilişkidir. Yukarıda da bahsedildiği üzere pazar araştırmalarından beklenen en temel şey müşteriler için fayda sağlayan, işe yarar bilgiler üretmeleridir. Bu amaçla pazar araştırması şirketleri çok çeşitli yöntemler kullanarak araştırmalarını gerçekleştirmektedirler. Her ne kadar hemen hiçbir araştırma şirketi yaptıkları araştırmaların sonuçları için "bilimsel" sıfatını kullanmasalar da, yaptıkları araştırmaların bilimsel (çoğunlukla da istatistiki ve sosyal bilimsel) yöntemler çerçevesinde yapıldığını iddia etmektedirler. Bu noktada pazar araştırmaları sonucunda üretilen bilginin bilimselliği veya başka bir biçimde söylersek, bu araştırmaların ve ürettikleri bilgilerin *bilimsel bilgi* sıfatıyla değerlendirilip değerlendirilemeyeceği sorunu karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmada söz konusu bilimsellik sorunsalı üzerine bir çözümleme yapılmaya çalışılmaktadır.

Yukarıda özetlenen iki sorunsalın ayrıntılarına girmeden önce çalışmanın yöntemi üzerinde durmak yararlı olacaktır. Pazar araştırması şirketlerinin *ethosunu* çözümlemeye dönük bu çalışmada başat olarak etnografik yöntem benimsenmiştir. Bu anlamda bir pazar araştırması şirketinde yaklaşık 10 ay boyunca aktif katılımcı gözlem yöntemiyle araştırma gerçekleştirilmiştir. Söz konusu araştırma şirketinde araştırmacı ve proje direktörü sıfatlarıyla aktif olarak görev yapılmış ve çalışma için gereken veri bu alan araştırması yoluyla sağlanmıştır. Şirkette aktif olarak proje hazırlama, müşteri şirketlerin yetkilileri ile birlikte çalışma, araştırmayı bir ekip ile sahada uygulama ve çıkan sonuçları müşteriye sunma gibi pek çok etkinlik gerçekleştirilerek, bir pazar araştırması şirketindeki bütün süreçler birebir içinde bulunularak gözlemlenmiştir.

Bu anlamda, kullanılan etnografik yöntem pazar araştırma ethosu olarak adlandırabileceğimi hemen bütün süreçleri birebir deneyimleme şansı vermiştir. Ancak elbette etnografik araştırma yönteminin, bilhassa aktif katılımcı yöntemin önümüze çıkardığı kimi sorun alanları da mevcuttur. İlk ve en önemli sorun ise literatürde "going native" olarak adlandırılan, araştırmacının araştırma nesnesi ile giderek belirli bir düzeyde özdeşim kurması ve buna bağlı olarak nesnelliğini yitirme riskidir. Bir pazar araştırması şirketinde bir yandan diğer araştırmacılar gibi çalışıp diğer yandan da yapılan her tür işi ve gerçekleştirilen bütün eylemleri nesnel biçimde gözlemlemek ve bir tezin konusu haline getirmek kolay olmamıştır. Tez çalışması için çok gerekli ve önemli olan verinin kendisi esasen kendiliğinden önümüze çıkıyor olsa da, zaman zaman bu veriyi bütün nesnelliği içerisinde değerlendirmekte zorlanma yaşanması kaçınılmazdır. Bu tez çalışmasının da söz konusu sorundan tümden azade olduğu iddia edilmeyecektir. Ancak bütün zorluğuna rağmen çözümlemeler olabildiğince nesnel bir biçimde gerçekleştirilmeye çalışılmıştır.

Gerçekleştirilen aktif katılımcı gözleme ek olarak, başka pazar araştırması şirketlerinde daha önce çalışmış veya hali hazırda çalışmakta olan araştırmacılar ve iş verenlerle 16 derinlemesine görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu görüşmelerde pazar araştırması sektöründe çalışmış ve çalışmakta olan kişilere şirketlerdeki çalışma deneyimleri, araştırmaları nasıl gerçekleştirdikleri, söz konusu araştırmalar ve sektör üzerine düşünceleri ve bunlarla bağlantılı konularda yarı yapılandırılmış bir soru formu aracılığıyla (soru formu ek'ler bölümünde yer almaktadır) sorular yönlendirilmiştir. Görüşmeler ortalama olarak 1,5-2 saat civarında sürmüştür. Bu görüşmeler, aktif katılımcı gözlem yöntemiyle uygulanan araştırmanın sonuçları ile görüşülen kişilerin deneyimleri ve anlatılarının ne ölçüde benzeştiği veya ayrıştığını karşılaştırmak açısından son derece faydalı olmuştur. Bu anlamda bu görüşmelerden çıkan veriler çalışma boyunca yoğun olarak kullanılmıştır.

Esasen bu tez çalışmasına kaynağını veren, yani bir tez konusu olarak ortaya çıkmasını sağlayan şey tam da yukarıda değinilen iki sorunsala dair kişisel bir kafa yorma halidir. Pazar araştırma sektöründe yapılagelen araştırmaların ve bu araştırmalarda kullanılan yöntemlerin üniversitelerin özellikle sosyal bilimler bölümlerinde kullanılan yöntemlerle çakışıyor oluşu, iki alan arasında beliren bir benzerliği daha en baştan çağrıştırmaktadır. Alan araştırması sırasında da ilk gözlemlediğimiz ve deyim yerindeyse bizi "çarpan" şey, pazar araştırma projelerinin belirli anlamlarda sosyal bilimlerde yapılan araştırmalar ile benzer kurgular çerçevesinde gerçekleştiriliyor oluşudur. Özel olarak, bizim de aktif katılımcı gözlemle araştırmamızı gerçekleştirdiğimiz pazar araştırması şirketi gibi, daha ziyade niteliksel araştırma yöntemlerini kullanan şirketlerde sosyal bilimler bölümlerinde (sosyoloji ve antropoloji gibi) gerçekleştirilen araştırmalarda kullanılan tekniklere yakın tekniklerle araştırmalar yapıldığı ortaya çıkmaktadır. Benzer biçimde niceliksel yöntemler kullanan pazar araştırması şirketlerinin de uyguladıkları anket formları ve bunların analiz edilme süreçlerinin üniversitelerde yapılan araştırmalara (en azından yöntemsel düzeyde) yakınlaştığı ileri sürülebilir.

Aynı şekilde, akademinin yaklaşık son 40 yıllık süre zarfında piyasa aktörleri ve endüstri ile giderek artan ölçüde kurduğu "ortaklıklar" ve bunun üniversitelerdeki, özellikle araştırma faaliyetleri üzerindeki yansımaları da bizi pazar araştırması sektörü ile akademi arasındaki benzerlik ve farklılıkları daha derin düzeyde düşünmek durumunda bırakmaktadır. Bu çalışmada da gösterilmeye çalışılmıştır ki, üniversitelerdeki araştırma faaliyetleri (sosyal bilimleri de kapsayacak şekilde) piyasanın ihtiyaç, istek ve beklentilerini karşılamaya odaklanmaya başlamıştır. Akademi içerisinde özellikle araştırma fonlarının dağıtımında esas alınan temel kriterin "fayda" olması ve bu fonları sağlayan kurumların özel sektör aktörleri olması, araştırmaların konu, amaç ve niteliğinde bir dönüşüme neden olmaktadır. Bu anlamda akademi "bilgi için bilgi" (knowledge for the sake of knowledge) idealinden uzaklaşmakta ve giderek piyasa için faydalı bilgi üretimine yönelmektedir. Dolayısıyla pazar araştırma sektörü ile bu anlamda da bir yakınlaşma yaşamaktadır. Ancak bu durum akademi ve pazar araştırma sektörünü bir ve aynı şey olarak anlamamıza neden olmamalıdır.

Benzerliklerle beraber farklılıklar üzerine düşünülmesi gerekmektedir. İşte bu çalışma bu benzerlik ve farklılıklar üzerinden iki alan arasında bilginin konumunu sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu sorgulamayı da pazar araştırması şirketlerinin ethosunu, yani şirketlerin araştırma pratiklerini, müşteriyle olan ilişkilerini ve araştırmacıların çalışma koşullarını tartışarak ve anlamlandırarak yapmaya çalışmaktadır.

Pazar araştırması şirketlerinin değerlendirilmesinde ortaya çıkan, yukarıda değindiğimiz iki sorunsalın ayrıntılarına geldiğimizde, her şeyden önce pazar araştırması şirketlerinde çalışan araştırmacıların hem sektöre hem de yaptıkları işe dair fikirleri ele alınmaya çalışılmıştır. Böylece araştırmacıların hangi zemin ve koşullar üzerinde pazar araştırması projelerini gerçekleştirdikleri ortaya konmuştur. Gündeliklerinde bir araştırmayı nasıl ele aldıklarını göstermeden önce işin nasıl örgütlendiği ve iş ilişkilerinin niteliği önemle üzerinde durulması gereken bir konudur.

Özellikle çalışmanın üçüncü bölümünde ele alınan bu konu için her şeyden önce araştırmacıların pazar araştırması deneyimlerine odaklanılmıştır. İşe ilk giriş süreçlerinde pazar araştırması sektörüne dair düşünce ve hislerinin neler olduğundan, sonraki süreçlerde bu hislerin ne yöne doğru değiştiği gösterilmiştir. Bunun için de yapılan derinlemesine görüşmelerden yararlanılmıştır. Yapılan görüşmelerden ortaya çıkmaktadır ki, pazar araştırması sektöründe çalışanların önemli bir kısmı üniversitelerin sosyal bilimler bölümleri mezunlarıdır. Bununla birlikte çeşitli mühendislik bölümlerinin mezunları da (özellikle işletme ve endüstri mühendisliği) pazar araştırması sektörüne yönelebilmektedirler. Görüştüğümüz kişilerin işe başlama öncesi deneyimlerinden genel olarak çıkan ortak durum, pek çoğunun pazar araştırması sektöründen üniversite yıllarında pek fazla haberdar olmadıkları ve farklı işleri denemelerinin ardından bu sektörde kendilerine yer bulduklarıdır. Mezuniyetlerinin ardından kimisi reklamcılık sektöründe kendisine iş ararken, kimisi de akademide kalmayı denemiştir. Özellikle akademide kalmak isteyenlerin yaşadıkları sıkıntılar onları ikinci tercih olarak pazar araştırması sektörüne yöneltmiştir. Ancak benzer şekilde pazar araştırma sektöründe umduğunu bulamayan kimi görüşmecilerin ise yeniden akademiye dönmeye çalıştığı gözlemlenmektedir. Dolayısıyla çoğu görüştüğümüz insan için pazar araştırma sektörü de diğer sektörler gibi hayatlarını kazanmalarına yardımcı olan bir iş olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Yani yaptığımız araştırmadan ortaya çıkmaktadır ki, pazar araştırması sektörü üniversite yıllarında hayali kurulan bir alan hiç olmamıştır. Pazar araştırması sektörünü isteyerek ve bilinçli bir şekilde tercih eden çok az görüşmeci bulunmaktadır. Bunların da genel olarak yaptıkları işten sağladıkları tatmin giderek azalmakta ve bu nedenle yeni iş arayışlarına başlamaktadırlar.

Araştırmacıların işe dair tutumlarını belirleyen çeşitli parametreler bulunmaktadır. Bunlar genel olarak iş yerinin fiziki koşulları, çalışma süreleri, iş yoğunluğu, maaşlar ve sosyal haklar, işveren ile kurulan ilişki, diğer çalışanlarla ilişkiler ve de müşteri ile kurulan ilişkiler olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bütün bu parametrelerin esasen her pazar araştırması şirketinde farklı şekillerde belirdiği ve şekillendiği söylenebilir. Özellikle söz konusu pazar araştırması sektörünün, iş yapış ve yönetim biçimi öne çıkmaktadır. Buradaki temel ayrım ise daha büyük çaplı, geniş hacimli, yüksek sayıda çalışanı olan ve global düzeyde işler yapan şirketler ile nispeten daha küçük çapta ve hacimde, az sayıda çalışanı olan, daha ziyade yerel şirketlerle iş yapan, sektörde "butik" olarak adlandırılan şirketler arasındadır.

Bu iki farklı türdeki şirketlerin yukarıda saydığımız parametreleri büyük değişkenlik göstermektedir. Bu değişkenlikler yukarıda da bahsettiğimiz gibi pazar araştırması sektörünün çalışanlar açısından algılanışını da büyük ölçüde değiştirmektedir. Büyük çaplı global pazar araştırması şirketlerinde her şeyden önce ortaya çıkan temel farklılık hem işin hem de buna bağlı olarak araştırmaların örgütlenişinde belirmektedir. Bu şirketlerde birbirinden farklı departmanlar bulunmaktadır ve çalışan sayısı da buna koşut olarak artış göstermektedir. Bu çapta bir işin organizasyonunun sağlanması da nispeten belirgin, katı ve dikey bir iş içi hiyerarşiyi getirmektedir. Yapılanmalarından kaynaklı olarak bu şirketlerde çalışan araştırmacıların kendilerini "beyaz yakalı" olarak tanımlamalarının daha yaygın olarak ortaya çıktığı gözlemlenmiştir. Şirket içerisinde her çalışanın iş tanımı daha belirgindir ve yaptıkları işlerde kime karşı sorumlu oldukları net olarak ortaya konmuştur.

Bununla beraber bu global şirketlerdeki iş yoğunluğu butik şirketlere göre nispeten daha yoğundur. Esnek (evden) çalışma yok denecek kadar azdır ve fakat mesai saatleri oldukça belirsizdir. Çalışma saatleri tamamen işin bitirilmesine göre belirlendiği için geceleri ve hafta sonu dahil uzun saatler boyunca çalışılmaktadır. Bu durum araştırmacılar üzerinde negatif etkiler yaratmaktadır. Bu etkilerin başında araştırmacıların kişisel ve sosyal hayatlarının azalması ve yaşamlarının tümden işe göre belirlenmesi durumu ortaya çıkmaktadır. Görüştüğüm pek çok araştırmacı yoğun ve belirsiz çalışma saatlerinin hem aile hem de arkadaşlık ilişkilerine son derece negatif yönde yansıdığını ve bu durumun çok büyük bir stres yarattığını ifade etmektedirler. İşi bitirmek adına gece yarıları bile çalıştıklarını ve kısıtlı iş dışı boş vakitlerinde de yine sadece işi düşündükleri için yakın çevreleriyle ilişkilerinin sürekli biçimde sekteye uğradığını söylemektedirler. Bu durumun orta ve uzun vadede dayanılabilir olmaktan çıktığını ve bu nedenle para kazanma ile ilişkilerini sağlıklı biçimde sürdürme arasında sürekli bocaladıklarını ortaya koymaktadırlar. Ayrıca araştırmacıların, bedensel ve ruhsal sağlıklarının da daha çalışmaya başladıkları ilk yıllarda bozulmaya başladığı gözlemlenmiştir. Pek çok araştırmacı ciddi sağlık sorunlarıyla uğraşmaktadırlar.

Söz konusu global şirketlerde alınan ücretler de genel olarak düşük düzeydedir. İşe yeni giren bir araştırmacı asgari ücretin biraz üzerinde bir maaşla işe başlamakta ve ancak iş yeri hiyerarşisinin yukarılarına doğru çıktıkça maaşlarında düzelmeler olmaktadır. Bazı şirketlerde ise maaşlara ek olarak zaman zaman promosyonlar verildiği ve bu sayede nispeten anlamlı ücretler elde edilebildiği görülmüştür. Yıllık izinler en fazla iki hafta ile sınırlıdır ve her hangi bir hastalık veya acil durumda kullanılan izinler bu yıllık izinden düşülmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu şirketlerde çalışan araştırmacılar pratik olarak bütün yıl boyunca çalışmak durumunda kalmaktadır. Bu yoğun çalışma koşulları nedeniyle iş yerindeki ilişkiler de en alt düzeyde yaşanmaktadır. Pek çok görüştüğüm kişi iş yerinde arkadaşlık ilişkisinin yok denecek kadar alt düzeyde olduğunu çünkü herkesin elindeki işi bitirmeye odaklandığını vurgulamaktadır. Bir görüşmecim bu tür şirketlerde "şirket içinden evlenme" oranlarının da yüksek olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Bu tür global şirketlerde çalışanların ayrıca kimi zaman şirket içi hiyerarşideki üstleriyle yaşadıkları sorunlar da işe dair algılarını belirlemektedir. Her çalışanın bir üsttekine karşı sorumlu olduğu ve yoğun iş yapıldığı bu şirketlerde ufak aksamalar bile krize neden olabilmekte ve astlar ile üstler arasında tartışmalara neden olmaktadır. Bu anlamda görüştüğüm araştırmacıların hemen hepsi bir "şirket içi mobbing" hikayesi anlatmaktadırlar. Dolayısıyla bu şirketlerde işten ayrılma oranlarının da oldukça yüksek olduğu ifade edilmiştir.

Global pazar araştırması şirketlerine ilişkin bir diğer önemli mesele ise araştırmaların nasıl gerçekleştirildiğidir. Yukarıda da belirtildiği üzere, bu şirketlerde farklı departmanlar bulunmaktadır ve esasen her departman yapılan araştırmanın spesifik bir kısmını icra etmektedir. Yani bir proje alındığında, bu proje için gerekli olan anketleri gerçekleştirecek olan birim, bu anketleri analiz eden birim, bu analizleri yorumlayan ve sunum haline getiren birim ve son olarak araştırmadan çıkan sonuçları sunan birim (veya kişiler) tümden farklılık göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla hiçbir araştırmacı projenin bütününden sorumlu değildir. Birazdan ifade edileceği üzere, bu durum küçük çaplı, butik araştırma şirketleriyle tamamen bir zıtlık oluşturmaktadır. Global şirketlerdeki araştırmanın bu tür organizasyonu araştırmacıların kendi işlerine yabancılaşmasına neden olmaktadır. Yani araştırmanın yalnızca tek bir kısmı ile ilgilenen araştırmacılar bütüne hakim olmadıkları için yaptıkları araştırmanın "kendi araştırmaları" olduğuna dair hissi duyumsamamaktadır.

Buna mukabil, butik olarak adlandırdığımız daha küçük çaplı şirketlerde ise durum biraz daha farklıdır. Genel olarak global şirketler bünyelerindeki farklı departmanlar sayesinde niteliksel ve niceliksel yöntemlerle araştırmalar gerçekleştirebilseler de, butik şirketler daha ziyade belirli bir yöntemle ön plana çıkmaktadırlar. Söz gelimi, bizim de aktif katılımcı gözlemle içerisinde araştırmamızı gerçekleştirdiğimiz şirket daha çok niteliksel yöntemli araştırmalar (derinlemesine görüşmeler, katılımcı gözlem) gerçekleştirmektedir. Bazı diğer butik şirketler ise nöropazarlama adı verilen belirli bir tür pazar araştırmalarına odaklanmaktadırlar. Dolayısıyla butik şirketler belirli yöntemlerde uzmanlaşmayı ve piyasada kendine bu alandaki uzmanlıklarıyla yer bulmayı amaçlamaktadırlar. Global şirketler ise müşterilerinin ihtiyaçlarına göre farklı yöntemler önermekte ve farklı birimleri aracılığıyla bunların birini veya birden fazlasını gerçekleştirmektedir.

Butik şirketlerde şirket içi hiyerarşi daha ziyade yatay biçimde örgütlenmektedir. Çalışan sayısının az olması ve belirli türde araştırmalar yapılması önemli sonuçlar doğurmaktadır. Bizim katılımcı gözlemle araştırmamızı gerçekleştirdiğimiz şirketle örneklemek gerekirse, şirkette, şirketin sahipleri ve bir hizmetli dahil yaklaşık 15 çalışan bulunmaktadır. Şirketin sahipleri ve hizmetli dışında tam zamanlı olarak çalışan herkes proje direktörü ve alan araştırmacısı olarak görev yapmaktadır. Bu araştırmacılar üniversitelerin ağırlıklı olarak sosyoloji ve antropoloji bölümlerinden mezun kişilerdir ve saha araştırması yapma bilgisi ve deneyimine sahiptirler. Bu anlamda her biri "uzman" olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Bu nedenle söz gelimi bu araştırmacıların maaşları global şirketlerde çalışan araştırmacılara göre nispeten yüksektir. Birbirleri arasında şirket içi konumları anlamında bir hiyerarşi bulunmaz ve fakat elbette "görünür olmayan" bir hiyerarşi zaman zaman hissedilir. İş yoğunluğu anlamında global şirketlerde çalışanlara göre daha az çalıştıkları söylenemez. Hatta sık sık geceleri ve hafta sonları çalışmak durumunda kalabilmektedirler. Ancak esnek çalışmaya yani şirket binasına gelmeden işleri halletmeye izin verilmektedir. Bu durum işin yoğunluğunu azaltmasa da iş yeri stresini azaltabilmektedir.

Şirketteki her araştırmacı kendisine verilen projenin tamamından sorumludur. Proje direktörü olmak demek, müşteri ile yapılan ilk toplantıdan araştırma teklifinin yazılmasına, soru formunun hazırlanmasından araştırmanın bir ekiple birlikte sahada uygulanmasına, yazılan görüşme raporlarının okunmasından müşteriye sunum hazırlanmasına ve en sonunda sunumun yapılmasına kadar her konuda sorumlu olmayı gerektirmektedir. Bu anlamda global şirketlerdeki birimlere ayrılmış biçimde yapılan araştırmalar butik şirketlerde söz konusu değildir. Proje direktörü yalnızca şirketin sahiplerine karşı sorumludur ve işleri onlarla birlikte gerçekleştirir. Her proje direktörü aynı zamanda şirkete gelen farklı projelerde de saha araştırmacısı olarak çalışmaktadır. Yani bir yandan kendi sorumlu olduğu projeyi yönetirken, diğer yandan da başka bir iş arkadaşının sorumlu olduğu projenin saha araştırmasında onun ekibinde yer alarak yardımcı olmaktadır. Dolayısıyla her araştırmacı proje bazlı olarak birbirinin hem astı hem de üstü konumuna gelebilmektedir. Bu durum şirket içi hiyerarşiyi önemli ölçüde azaltan bir etki yaratmaktadır. Aynı zamanda şirket içi yardımlaşmayı da arttırmaktadır. Global şirketlerde çalışan araştırmacılar aynı anda 10-15 projeden (fakat elbette belirli bir kısmından) sorumluyken, butik şirketlerde bu sayı daha azdır. Ancak projenin başarısından da başarısızlığından da çok büyük ölçüde proje direktörleri sorumludur. Bu nedenle global şirketlerde çalışan araştırmacıların yaşadığı yabancılaşma hissi butik şirketlerdeki araştırmacılarda daha asgari düzeydedir.

Niteliksel araştırma yöntemlerine ağırlık veren pazar araştırması şirketlerinde gerçekleştirilen araştırmalar ortalama 4-5 hafta zaman alabilmektedir. Gelen projeler daha büyük bir emek gerektirdiğinde butik şirketler dışarıdan proje bazlı / yarı zamanlı araştırmacı alma yoluna gitmektedir. Global şirketlerde ise genelde uygulanan niceliksel araştırma yöntemleri çok daha kısa süreler içerisinde tamamlanabilmektedir. Özellikle teknolojideki yeni gelişmeler sayesinde artık anketler tablet bilgisayarlar üzerinden gerçekleştirilip, eşzamanlı ve online olarak şirketin veri tabanına geçmekte ve böylece zamandan tasarruf sağlanmaktadır. Ayrıca analizler de bu veri tabanındaki veriler üzerinden çok çabuk bitirilebildiği için, araştırmaların çoğu 3-4 gün içerisinde bitirilip sunum yapmaya hazır hale gelebilmektedir. Niteliksel yöntemle yapılan pazar araştırmalarında ise rakamlardan ziyade "içgörü"lere odaklanılmasından dolayı araştırmalar daha çok emek ve zaman istemektedir.

Fakat her iki tür şirket tipinde ortak olan en temel husus ise gelen projelerin müşteriler tarafından çok kısa süreler içerisinde yapılması talebidir. Rekabetçi pazar koşullarında kısa sürede sonuç almak isteyen müşteri şirketler, pazar araştırması şirketlerinden de benzer bir tutum beklemektedir. Ancak burada (özellikle niteliksel araştırma projelerinde) ortaya çıkan temel sorun, araştırmaların özenle, dikkatli bir biçimde yapılması gerekliliğidir. Zaman baskısı nedeniyle sıkışan pazar araştırması şirketleri kimi zaman araştırmanın belirli adımlarını atlamak (veya hızlıca geçmek) ve araştırmanın güvenilirliğinden taviz vermek zorunda kalmaktadır. Esasen müşteri şirketler de bu durumun farkında olmakla birlikte bütün sistem hız üzerine kurulu olduğu için, işe yarar ve faydalı bilgiler elde edildiği sürece araştırmanın güvenilirliği ikincil önemde yer bulmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, katılımcı gözlemle gerçekleştirdiğimiz alan araştırması sırasında niteliksel yöntemlerle yapılan bir pazar araştırmasının çeşitli adımları olduğunu ve bu adımların her birinin farklı derecelerde öneme sahip olduğunu gözlemledik. Bu adımlar aynı zamanda bize bir projenin esasen müşteri şirketlerin istek ve taleplerinin dışında bir yerde, yalnızca pazar araştırması şirketinin inisiyatifiyle gerçekleştirilemeyeceğini de göstermektedir. Müşteri şirketler ile ilişkileri de belirleyen bu adımlar üzerinde durmak gerekmektedir.

Niteliksel yöntemle yapılan bir pazar araştırması projesinin en temel adımlarının başında "teklif" yazmak gelmektedir. Elbette bunun öncesinde potansiyel müşteriler ile toplantılar gerçekleştirilir. Bu toplantılarda müşteri şirketin yetkilileri araştırma yaptırmak istedikleri konuyu tarif ederler. Bu konu üzerinde ne gibi sorunlar yaşadıklarını veya neyi amaçladıklarını açıklarlar. Bu sorunlar veya amaçlar daha önce de değinildiği üzere bir ürünün hangi müşteri kitlesine nasıl satılabileceğinin araştırılmasından rakip şirketlerinin ürünlerinin neden daha fazla rağbet gördüğüne veya şirket içi organizasyondaki sıkıntıların tespitine kadar pek çok konuda ortaya çıkabilmektedir. Söz konusu toplantılarda müşteri şirketler araştırmadan ne beklediklerini ifade ettikleri gibi, pazar araştırması yöneticileri ve araştırmacıları da şirketlere nasıl yardımcı olabileceklerini, ne tür bir araştırma önerdiklerini ve hatta müşterinin sorununu daha genel bir düzlemde nasıl tanımlayabileceklerini anlatırlar.

Bizim bu toplantılarda gözlemlediğimiz en önemli durumlardan biri de müşteri şirketlere niteliksel araştırmanın istatistiki veriden nasıl farklılaştığını ve niceliksel araştırmalarla karşılaştırıldığında ne tür avantajları olduğunu anlatma çabasıydı. Müşteri şirketlerin yöneticileri büyük ölçüde belirli rakamlardaki yükseliş ve düşüşlere odaklanmakta ve bu rakamları daha fazla önemsedikleri için "içgörü" sunan niteliksel araştırmaların sunabileceklerini kavramakta güçlük yaşamaktadır. Pazar araştırması şirketlerinin bu toplantılarda en çok yapmaya çalıştığı da bu yöntemi anlaşılır kılmaya çalışmak ve müşteriyi bu araştırmalara ikna etmek olmaktadır. Bu anlamda aslında pazar araştırması şirketleri de müşterilerine kendi yöntem ve tekniklerini pazarlarlar. Müşteriler ikna olurlarsa "brief" adı verilen, toplantı sırasında tanımladıkları sorun alanlarının ve beklentilerinin yazılı olduğu bir belgeyi pazar araştırması şirketine gönderirler. Burada çarpıcı olan nokta şudur: hemen bütün müşteri şirketler ayrıntılı bir biçimde hangi örneklemle, hangi şehir ve/veya ilçelerde, kaç adet görüşme yapılacağını belirtirler. Yani aslında pazar araştırma şirketinin uzmanlık alanına giren konuda müşteriler kendi istekleri doğrultusunda araştırmayı dizayn etmek istemektedirler. Araştırmacılar açısından örneklemin onlara önceden sunulması kısıtlayıcı bir yaratır. Esasen operasyonel anlamda zor ve aslında faydasız bir *brief* araştırmacıların işini büyük ölçüde zorlaştırmaktadır. Bu nedenle gelen *brief* sonrasında kimi zaman telefonla kimi zaman da yeni bir toplantı talep edilerek *brief* üzerinde pazarlıklar edilir. Araştırma şirketi müşteriyi belirli konularda ikna etmeye ve araştırmayı daha anlamlı ve faydalı bir hale getirmeye çalışır.

Bu aşamadan sonra teklif yazma aşamasına geçilir. Teklif temelde iki şeyi içermektedir. Birincisi, araştırma şirketinin projeyi ne çerçevede ele aldığı, hangi yöntemlerle, ne kadar sürede ve nerelerde gerçekleştireceğinin tanımlanmasıdır. Bizim araştırmamızı yaptığımız şirkette teklifler ortalama 10-15 sayfa civarında yazılmakta ve bazen bir kaç günlük bir zamanı alabilmekteydi. İkincisi ise bütçelemedir. Yani yapılacak araştırmanın ne kadar tutacağının kalem kalem belirtilmesidir. Bu noktada da yine belirli pürüzler çıkabilmektedir. Eğer araştırma bütçesi müşterinin beklediğinden fazla çıkarsa ya indirim talep edilir ya da görüşme sayısı ve/veya görüşmelerin yapılacağı şehir sayısında azaltıma gidilmesi beklenir. Bu nedenle kimi zaman araştırmalar çok az sayıdaki görüşmeler ve temsil kabiliyeti az olan örneklemlerle yapılmak zorunda kalınır. Dolayısıyla araştırmanın sonuçları da buna paralel olarak yetersiz kalabilmektedir.

Teklifin kabulünden sonra, yarı yapılandırılmış bir soru formu hazırlanır ve bu da yine müşterinin onayına sunulur. Müşteriler bu soru formunu genelde yetersiz bulurlar çünkü içerisinde pek çok sorunun sorulmadığından şikayet ederler. Yine bu noktada araştırma şirketi aslında bu soru formunun araştırmacı için bir hatırlatma niteliğinde olduğunu, görüşmeler sırasında araştırmacının bu formdakini çok aşan sorular soracağını ve bu nedenle kaygılanmamaları gerektiğini müşteriye anlatır. Soru formu onaylandıktan sonra da sahaya çıkılır. Proje direktörü kurduğu ekibiyle birlikte sahada görüşmeler ve gözlemler yapar. Her görüşme için, görüşmeyi yapan araştırmacı 8-10 sayfalık bir rapor hazırlar. Proje direktörü kimi ara toplantılar yaparak sahanın nasıl bir veri sunduğunu anlamaya çalışır. Ayrıca bütün raporları okuyup, bu raporlardan daha sonra hazırlayacağı sunum için veri toplar.

Bütün görüşmeler bitirilip, raporlar okunduktan sonra sunum hazırlanır. Sunum hazırlama bir kaç gün ve gece boyunca sürer. Proje direktörü büyükçe bir veri yığınının içerisinden müşterinin en çok beklediği ve onlara en önemli yararları sunacak detayları çıkartmaya çalışır. Müşteriler faydasız bilgileri dinlemeyi istemezler; önemli olan şey sorunlarını çözecek veriyi görmek ve öneriler almaktır. Sunumlar 2-3 saat sürebilir. Bu sunumlarda müşteri şirketin temsilcileri pek çok soru sorarak meseleyi kendi bildikleri biçimiyle anlamaya çalışırlar. Sunumun sonunda da gelecekte gerçekleştirilebilecek öneriler sunulur. Böylece bir pazar araştırması projesi bitirilir.

Tüm bu süreçler boyunca müşteri şirketlerin talepleri, beklentileri ve hatta müdahaleleri araştırmanın yönünü belirlemektedir. Çalışmada bunlar üzerinde ayrıntıyla durulmuştur. Müşterilerin en dikkat çekici taleplerinin başında bazı derinlemesine görüşmelere birebir katılma isteği gelmektedir. Bundaki amaç görüşülen kişilerin görüşlerini ilk elden dinlemek ve projenin nasıl gerçekleştirildiğini görmektir. Bu konuda pazar araştırması şirketleri ve projeyi yürüten şirketler farklı tutumlar alabilmektedir. Kimi şirketler bu talebe karşı çıkmazken diğer bazıları müşterinin görüşmeleri gelmesinin görüşmenin sağlığı açısından sıkıntı doğurabileceğini düşünür. Bu çalışma için yaptığımız görüşmeler sırasında bazı araştırmacıların benzer sorunlar yaşadıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. Derinlemesine görüşmelerin nasıl yapılması gerektiğini ve dinamiklerini bilmeyen müşteri temsilcilerinin görüşmeleri sekteye uğrattıkları çokça ifade edilmiştir.

Benzer şekilde kimi müşteri temsilcileri araştırma ekibinin ara toplantılarına katılma talebinde bulunabilmektedir. Burada da yine esasen sürecin tamamına hakim olma isteği bulunmakla birlikte, projenin işleyişini sıkıntıya sokacak sonuçlar ortaya çıkabilmektedir. En büyük tehlike ise müşterilerin, henüz gelişmemiş halde bulunan bazı öngörüler ve ilksel bulguları araştırmanın sonucu gibi algılamaları olmaktadır. Dolayısıyla müşteriler sunum sırasında bu toplantılarda duyduklarından farklı sonuçlara ulaşıldığını gördüklerinde kafa karışıklığına ve tartışmalara neden olmaktadırlar.

Müşterilerin en ciddi müdahaleleri ise araştırmanın bulgularına dönük manipülasyon beklentileri olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Söz konusu manipülasyon beklentisi esasen müşteri şirketin kendi içerisindeki sorunlardan kaynaklanmaktadır. Şirketler içinde projeleri pazar araştırması şirketlerine veren birimler genel olarak müşteri deneyimi birimleri olmaktadır ve bu birimler de araştırma sonucu ortaya çıkan verileri kendi üstlerine sunmaktadırlar. Dolayısıyla araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulardaki belirli olumsuz durumların üstleri tarafından duyulmasını istememekte veya bu bulguların yumuşatılmasını istemektedir. Bu anlamda pazar araştırması şirketlerinden zaman zaman bu konuları sunuma yansıtmamalarını talep edebilmektedirler. Çok açıktır ki bu tür müdahaleler araştırmaların güvenilirliğini de ciddi derecede etkilemektedir. Ancak daha önce de değinildiği üzere, bu çalışma ortaya koymaktadır ki müşteriler için esas olan şey araştırmanın bulgularının beklentilerini karşılayıp karşılamadığıdır.

Buna koşut olarak pazar araştırması şirketleri ise bir yandan işe yarar verilere ulaşmaya çalışırken diğer yandan da müşterilerin ilerde yeniden kendileri ile çalışmasını sağlamaya uğraşmaktadırlar. Pazar araştırması şirketlerinin esasen iki şeyi pazarladıklarını söyleyebiliriz. Birincisi, sosyal bilimlerin teorik ve yöntemsel birikimini, ikincisi ise daha önceki müşterileri için gerçekleştirdikleri projelerde elde ettikleri başarıları. Bu çalışma için görüştüğümüz araştırmacılardan özellikle niteliksel yöntemle pazar araştırması yapan şirketlerde çalışanların sürekli ifade ettikleri bir nokta hem tekliflerde hem de sunumlarda bir çok teorik tartışmayı en çarpıcı ve basit haliyle müşterilerine sunuyor olmalarıydı. Esasen araştırmacıları yaptıkları işte en çok motive eden şeylerden bir tanesi de bu teorik tartışmaları pazar araştırması gibi bir alana entegre etmeleridir. Yani üniversitede eğitimini gördükleri toplumsal ve siyasal teori ve figürleri araştırmalarında kullanıyor olmak onlara bir “katkı sunuyor oldukları” hissini verirken, aynı zamanda iş tatminlerini de arttıran bir etken olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Müşterilerin de belki hiç bilmedikleri ve belki de sadece kulaktan dolma şekilde bildikleri bu teorileri araştırmanın içerisinde görmelerinin onları etkilediği söylenebilir. Görüştüğümüz kişilerin bir kısmı Marx, Bourdieu, Derrida gibi figürlerin teorilerini çeşitli araştırmalarda kullandıklarını ve bunların müşteriler üzerinde olumlu yönde etki yarattığını ifade etti.

Niceliksel araştırma yöntemleri kullanan pazar araştırması şirketlerinin araştırmalarını yaparken başka tür sorun alanlarıyla karşılaştıklarını söyleyebiliriz. Bunlardan en önemlisi, bazı pazar araştırması şirketlerinin yapılacak anketleri bir üçüncü şirkete, yani bazı veri toplama şirketlerine ihale etmesidir. Bu veri toplama şirketlerinin temel işlevi, kendi bünyesinde çalışan proje bazlı, anket başına ücretlendirdiği elemanlarıyla pazar araştırma şirketinin yapması gereken anketleri yapmak ve şirkete sonuçları göndermektir. Ancak söz konusu veri toplama şirketlerinin ne derece sağlıklı anketler uyguladığı sektörde büyük bir tartışma konusudur. Görüştüğümüz pek çok araştırmacı bu veri toplama şirketlerinin anket uygulamayı bilmeyen kimselere anketleri yaptırdığını, böylece işi ucuza getirdiğini ve daha kötüsü anketlerin kayda değer bir bölümünün anketör tarafından doldurulduğunu söylemektedir. Dolayısıyla datanın güvenilirliği niceliksel yöntemle yapılan pazar araştırmalarında daha da büyük bir sorunu teşkil etmektedir. Görüştüğümüz araştırmacılar açısından sektörün en büyük sorunu olarak bu "kirli data" meselesi ön plana çıkarılmıştır. Ellerindeki dataya güvenemeyen araştırmacılar analizlerini yaparken de sıkıntılar yaşamakta ve müşterileri karşısında sorumlu duruma düşmektedirler.

Bütün bu bulguların çözümlemesinden bazı sonuçlar karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bunlardan ilki daha önce de değindiğimiz gibi, pazar araştırma sektöründe bilginin konumuna ilişkindir. Bilgi (knowledge), pazar araştırmasında her şeyden önce belirli bir sorun alanına yönelmiş bir amaç doğrultusunda belirmektedir. Pazar araştırması sektörü her ne kadar bilimsel bir faaliyette bulunduğunu iddia etmese de bilimsel yöntemlerle araştırmalarını icra etmekte ve esasen yapılan işi de bu biçimiyle piyasaya pazarlamaktadır.

Karşımıza bu anlamda şu sorular çıkmaktadır. Pazar araştırmaları bilimsel bilgi niteliği taşımakta mıdır? Üniversitelerde yapılan araştırmalar ile pazar araştırması sektöründe yapılan projeleri birbirlerinden ayrılabilir mi? Eğer ayırabilirsek bunu hangi düzeyde yapabiliriz? Akademik araştırmalara bilimsel sıfatını rahatlıkla verebilirken, benzer yöntemlerle yapılmış pazar araştırmalarına bu sıfatı vermekten bizi alıkoyabilecek herhangi bir parametre var mıdır?

Bu soruları ile bir kaç düzlemde ele almak gerekmektedir. Birincisi, daha önce de belirtildiği üzere, yapılan araştırmaların amacına odaklanabiliriz. Akademi ideal düzlemde "bilgi için bilgi", yani özel olarak bir faydaya veya işe yararlılığa gönderme yapmadan araştırma faaliyetlerinin yürütüldüğü bir zemin sunduğunu iddia etmektedir. Ancak bu çalışmada (özellikle ikinci bölümde) ayrıntılarıyla üzerinde durulduğu gibi, akademi bu idealinden giderek uzaklaşmaktadır. Bilimsel alanın otonomisi olarak düşünebileceğimiz, akademisyenlerin belirli meseleleri dert edinerek, o mesele üzerine kime fayda sağlayacağını hesaplamaksızın çalıştığı bir üniversite ortamı son kırk yılda büyük bir dönüşüme uğramıştır. Bu dönüşüm akademinin piyasa aktörleri ile işbirliği ve ortaklıklar kurmasıyla mümkün hale gelmiştir. Bu anlamda bizatihi akademinin kendisi proje fonları, yayın yapma ilkeleri, yükselme kriterleri vb. göz önüne alındığında "fayda"yı ön plana çıkartmakta ve artan ölçüde piyasanın beklentilerine dönük araştırmalara yönelmektedir. Yani bilginin değişim değeri daha büyük ölçüde araştırmalara damga vurmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, söz konusu araştırma fonları geçmişte devletin kontrolünde ve bu anlamıyla kamusal bir faydaya dönük şekilde dağıtılıyor olsa da artık bu fonların özel sektör kuruluşlarından sağlandığı veya özel sektörün beklentilerine göre dağıtıldığı görülmektedir. Bu anlamda, müşterisi şirketler olan pazar araştırma sektörü ile akademi arasında giderek artan bir yakınlaşma gözlenmektedir. Bu biçimiyle bu iki alanda üretilen bilginin amaçsal değeri de birbirinden farklı görülemeyecektir.

Sorduğumuz soruları değerlendirebileceğimiz bir diğer düzlem, üretilen bilginin güvenilirliği (reliability) hususudur. Yukarıda da bahsedildiği üzere pazar araştırması projelerinde bilginin güvenilirliği sorunu, piyasanın hızlı işleyişi çerçevesinde önemli bir sorun olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Ancak diğer yandan akademi içerisinde gerçekleştirilen bilimsel faaliyetlerin de benzer sıkıntılardan azade olmadığı bilinmektedir. Akademik alanda yapılan çalışmaların güvenilirliğini denetlemek de her zaman kolay olmamaktadır. Bu balımdan ortaya çıkan bilginin güvenilirliği üzerinden bir karşıtlık oluşturmak da çok mümkün görünmemektedir.

Peki, akademide gerçekleştirilen faaliyeti bilimsel bir faaliyet kılan ve fakat pazar araştırmasını bu şekilde değerlendirmemizi zorlaştıran temel noktalar nelerdir. Bize göre burada akademik çalışmaların (her tekil çalışmanın olmasa bile, genel olarak akademi içerisinde yapılan akademik faaliyetlerin) bilimsel sıfatını korumasını sağlayan temelde iki mesele bulunmaktadır. Her şeyden önce akademik araştırmalar, akademinin büyük ölçüde piyasa ile eklemleniyor olduğu gerçeğine rağmen, bize hala kurulu ve yerleşik siyasal, toplumsal, ekonomik ve hatta ekonomik düzeni eleştirme ve sorgulama imkanını tanıyor olmasında dolayı bilimsel sıfatını korumaktadır. Yani pazar mantığına yaklaşmakla birlikte akademik bilgi hem kurulu düzenin çatlaklarından sızma imkanını taşımakta ve bu anlamda gerçek anlamda bir eleştirinin olanaklılığını sağlamaktadır. Bilimsel alan bu anlamda çeşitli güçlerin karşı karşıya geldiği ve çatıştığı bir alan olma özelliğini korumaktadır. Buna mukabil, pazar araştırmasında bu imkan bulunmamaktadır ve amacı açısından aslında hiç var olmamıştır. Baştan beri bahsettiğimiz üzere, pazar araştırmasını fonlayan ve hatta belirleyen yegane aktör müşteri şirketlerdir ve müşterilerin beklenti ve isteklerinin ötesinde bilimsel bir faaliyete dönüşebilecek bir alan söz konusu olmamaktadır. Pazar araştırması şirketleri eğer dilerlerse kendi imkanları ile bu tür bilimsel araştırmalara yönelebilirler; ancak bu da zaten "pazar araştırması sektörü" içerisinden biz düzlemden olmayacaktır.

İkincisi, akademik araştırmaların kamuya açık niteliği ve bu anlamda eleştirilebilir, sorgulanabilir olma durumu onu bilimsel bir faaliyet olarak anlamlandırmamızı olanaklı hale getiren durumlardan biridir. Her ne kadar bilimsel çalışmalar giderek artan düzeyde veri tabanları aracılığıyla alınır satılır bir meta haline dönüşmüş olsa da, çalışmayı gerçekleştiren aktörler tarafından başka yol ve yöntemlerle kamuya açık hale getirilebilir. Bu açıklık ve sorgulanabilirlik akademik çalışmaların bilimsel sıfatına yakınlaşması olanağını doğurmaktadır. Pazar araştırmalarında ise araştırmayı yaptıran müşterinin isteğine karşıt biçimde bir yayın faaliyeti mümkün görünmemektedir. Pazar araştırması içerisinde yapılan çalışmalar müşteri şirketin malıdır ve belirli gizlilik sözleşmeleri çerçevesinde korumaya alınmaktadır. Bu anlamda pazar araştırmaları eleştiri ve sorgulama olanağını içerisinde taşımamaktadır. Akademik alanda gösterilen faaliyetleri bilimsel adı altında anlamamızı olanaklı kılan da yine bu farktır.

D. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

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