



KADİR HAS UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES DISCIPLINE AREA

**DIFFUSION OF UNIVERSAL INSTITUTIONAL NORMS: A CASE STUDY  
OF INSTITUTIONAL ISOMORPHISM AND CATALYTIC EFFECT OF  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN TURKEY**

İREM ÖZKAN

SUPERVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. DR. LEVENT SOYSAL

MASTER'S THESIS

ISTANBUL, JANUARY, 2019

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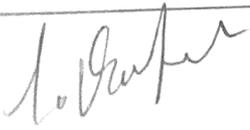
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's in the  
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ISTANBUL, JANUARY, 2019

I, İREM ÖZKAN;

Hereby declare that this Master's Thesis is my own original work and that due references have been appropriately provided on all supporting literature and resources.

İREM ÖZKAN



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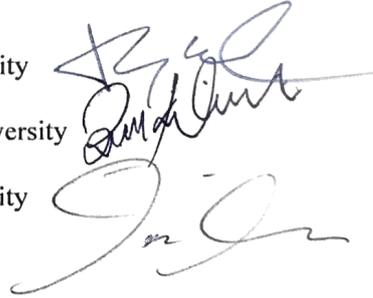
## ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This work entitled **DIFFUSION OF UNIVERSAL INSTITUTIONAL NORMS: A CASE STUDY OF INSTITUTIONAL ISOMORPHISM AND CATALYTIC EFFECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN TURKEY** prepared by **İREM ÖZKAN** has been judged to be successful at the defense exam held on **03.01.2019** and accepted by our jury as **MASTER'S THESIS**.

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## ABSTRACT

ÖZKAN, İREM. *DIFFUSION OF UNIVERSAL INSTITUTIONAL NORMS: A CASE STUDY OF INSTITUTIONAL ISOMORPHISM AND CATALYTIC EFFECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN TURKEY*, MASTER'S THESIS, İstanbul, 2019.

The research that I conducted is about the diffusion of universal institutional norms and creation of institutional isomorphism through investments of the international companies in other countries and role of the public affairs services that they provide from the consultancy firms in this context. International companies trigger the institutional transformation process in the countries that they invest. With the effect of foreign investment, governments start to make regulations and legal changes according to the global standards in order to make the market more convenient for investors. This transformation process brings the diffusion of universal institutional norms and leads to the creation of institutional isomorphism. In this sense, I address the isomorphic transformation process with the concepts of coercive, normative, and mimetic isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Moreover, during the market entrance process, the public affairs consultancy services which international companies provide from the consultancy firms, include significant activities like political monitoring and lobbying to maintain healthy and sustainable communication environment with the government. These consultancy processes composed of complex dynamics regarding institutional and organizational structures rather than intercultural communication elements. During the institutional transformation process, consultancy firms function as the catalyzer and make the adaptation easier. In this connection, I observed the specific public affairs consultancy firm as an insider and investigated a consultancy process as my case study. Through my observations and collected data during the participant observation process, interviews with diverse consultancy firms, and relevant literature with my topic, I examine how the investments of international companies and the catalytic effect of public affairs activities lead the diffusion of universal institutional norms and practices of the corporate world and create institutional isomorphism.

**Keywords:** institutional transformation, institutional isomorphism, public affairs.

## ÖZET

ÖZKAN, İREM. *EVRENSEL KURUMSAL NORMLARIN YAYILMASI: KURUMSAL İZOMORFİZM VE KAMU İLE İLİŞKİLERİN KATALİZÖR ETKİSİ HAKKINDA BİR TÜRKİYE ÖRNEĞİ İNCELEMESİ*, YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, İstanbul, 2019.

Yaptığım araştırma, evrensel kurumsal normların yayılmasını, uluslararası şirketlerin diğer ülkelerdeki yatırımları ile kurumsal izomorfizmin oluşmasını ve bu süreç içinde danışmanlık firmalarının sağladıkları kamu ilişkileri (public affairs) danışmanlık hizmetlerinin rolünü incelemektedir. Uluslararası şirketler yatırım yaptıkları ülkelerde kurumsal dönüşüm sürecini tetiklemektedir. Bu yatırımların etkisiyle, hükümetler piyasayı yatırımcılar için daha uygun hale getirmek amacıyla küresel standartlara uygun olarak düzenlemeler ve yasal değişiklikler yapmaktadır. Başlayan bu transformasyon süreci, evrensel kurumsal normların yayılmasını ve kurumsal izomorfizmin oluşmasını beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu bağlamda, tezimde, DiMaggio ve Powell (1983) tarafından tanımlanan zorlayıcı (coercive), normatif (normative) ve taklitçi (mimetic) izomorfizm kavramları ile izomorfik transformasyon sürecini ele almaktayım. Ayrıca, piyasaya giriş sürecinde, uluslararası şirketlerin danışmanlık firmalarından aldıkları kamu ilişkileri danışmanlık hizmetleri, hükümetle sağlıklı ve sürdürülebilir bir iletişim ortamı sağlamak amacıyla siyasi gözlemler ve lobicilik gibi önemli faaliyetleri içermektedir. Kamu ilişkileri danışmanlık süreçleri, kültürlerarası iletişim unsurlarından ziyade kurumsal ve organizasyonel yapılara ilişkin çeşitli dinamikleri bünyesinde barındırmaktadır. Kurumsal transformasyon sürecinde ise danışmanlık firmaları katalizör işlevi görmekte ve adaptasyonu kolaylaştırmaktadır. Konuyla ilgili, kamu ilişkileri alanında hizmet veren bir danışmanlık firmasında gözlem yaptım ve bu süreçte inceleme konum olarak da global bir e-ticaret şirketinin Türkiye pazarına girişinde aldığı danışmanlık sürecini araştırdım. Tezimde, gözlemlerimden, çeşitli danışmanlık şirketleriyle yaptığım mülakatlardan ve ilgili literatürlerden edindiğim veri ile evrensel kurumsal normların yayılmasını, izomorfizmin oluşmasını ve kamu ilişkileri danışmanlık hizmetlerinin bu süreçteki katalizör etkisini açıklamaktayım.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** kurumsal transformasyon, kurumsal izomorfizm, kamu ilişkileri.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. CONCEPTS OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND INSTITUTIONAL ISOMORPHISM

This thesis studies the concepts of institutional isomorphism and public affairs and also interaction between them in the creation of isomorphic structures through the diffusion of universal institutional norms. Public affairs refer the study area which considered as non-market strategies with the political focus and includes significant strategic communication processes with the aim of obtaining the benefit. Providing good and sustainable relations with the government and all the stakeholders constitute the core of the area. Because maintaining good relationships with the policymakers and the public retains not only prestige and good image but also the ability to be influential in the political sphere and decision-making processes. Companies make a considerable effort to be active in the public policy arena and decision-making processes to protect their interests and make sure that beneficial political conditions formed regarding their business operation areas. These public policy needs of the companies require specific strategies and communication processes which leads to the occurrence of public affairs consultancy services. International companies benefit from the public affairs consultancy services and give importance in this area through their market entrance processes to the other countries. Moreover, companies also apply public affairs strategies after the market entrance process to provide sustainable relations with their all stakeholders and profit for their operations. In this sense, public affairs consultancy firms are the bodies which facilitate and maintain intended interactions and communication processes with the government and other stakeholders by applying specific strategies which differ from the case by case.

Within the frame of public affairs, there are various tools and methods to achieve the objectives of client companies regarding the political and other stakeholders. Lobbying, political monitoring, media engagements, providing network and contacts, and organizing events may be considered as some of these methods and tools. Each sector and situation

require their unique strategy and method determination step in the consultancy process. Thus, doing research and obtaining sufficient data in both sectoral and political aspects are significant components for this study area.

The essential point that differs and makes public affairs more overarching from the intercultural communication concept is the political focus and objectives. In this regard, although providing a communication environment between separate parties may be understood within the intercultural communication, public affairs strategies are far beyond this context. Because public affairs have the aim of shape particular policy processes and perception or attitude of the stakeholders according to the business benefit of the clients. In addition to this, the uniqueness of each consultancy process because of different clients, situations, and business purposes carry the public affairs beyond the usual perception of intercultural communication. Moreover, specific focus on governmental relations and the purpose of providing sustainable and beneficial relations with political decision-makers are some of the points that differentiate the area of public affairs from usual understanding of public relations.

Institutional isomorphism is a result of the diffusion of universal institutional norms through investments and market entries of international companies to other countries. At this point, the expression of "norms" refers to the global corporate standards and ways of business operations that international companies implement. With the investments and market entries of the global companies, global institutional rules, business techniques, and corporate patterns also come with the investor company. In addition to this, countries that global companies invest tend to make institutional changes in regulations and policy strategies to make their marketplace more efficient and suitable for other investments. These changes influence both sectoral and structural dynamics which lead to the institutional transformation. The transformation process that occurs in line with universal institutional norms constitutes isomorphic structures and leads institutional isomorphism in the long-term process. At this point, the phase of the long-term process referred to the institutional transformation and related to this isomorphism process continues as long as international companies pursue their business operations in the other countries and make new investments which expand universal institutional norms. Isomorphic structure of the institutions may occur in diverse ways and manners such as the base of learning, the effect of forcing factors, and reproduction or imitation of universal institutional norms and

business practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Thus, the essential point to maintain institutional transformation and formation of isomorphic structures is to show the added-value and profit that will come with these universal institutional norms.

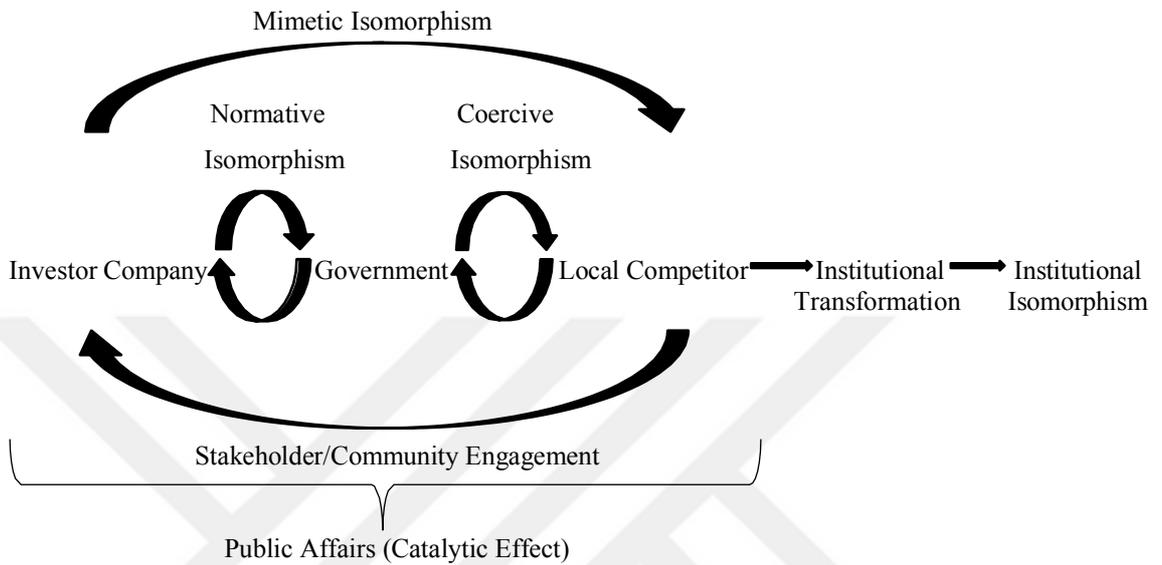
## **1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS, ARGUMENT, AND THE THEORETICAL MODEL**

In the process of approaching whether the concepts of public affairs and institutional isomorphism and relation between them, the essential research question that I asked and shaped this thesis is "Do international companies have an impact on the expansion of universal institutional norms with their investments in foreign countries?". After this question, my expanding research question emphasized the public affairs consultancy services. In this sense, I asked: "What is the role of public affairs consultancy firms in the market entrance of the international companies in the foreign countries and institutional transformation process that the companies created?". Within the frame of these two questions, my research explains that how the isomorphic structure of institutions gets shaped through activities of international companies and how the public affairs consultancy firms have the catalytic effect with their strategies in this process.

In this sense, I argue that even the investment possibility of the international companies in the foreign countries creates an institutional transformation process and provide diffusion of universal institutional norms in that country. Thus, institutional isomorphism becomes real on the global scale. Moreover, public affairs consultancy firms make the market entrance and adaptation process of the international companies easier with their strategies which I stated as the catalytic effect in this thesis. In this context, public affairs activities like political monitoring and lobbying are essential. Regarding the theoretical aspect, I explain the institutional isomorphism through the normative, coercive, and mimetic isomorphism concepts of DiMaggio and Powell (1983) which they stated in their article. According to the definitions of DiMaggio and Powell (1983), normative isomorphism refers to the information and learning-based process, coercive isomorphism realizes with the effect of outside forces to change and adapt the new conditions, and mimetic isomorphism means copying or imitating the institutional structures and norms.

Relatively to my argument, I developed the Theoretical Model which explains the interaction between different parties and isomorphism process as stated below.

***The Theoretical Model:***



This Theoretical Model not only visualizes my argument but also expresses clearly how the isomorphic structure formed through the diffusion of universal institutional norms and the role of public affairs activities in this process. In my model, I also used the normative, coercive, and mimetic isomorphism terms of DiMaggio and Powell (1983) to describe and explain the interactions between the parties. According to my Theoretical Model, there is a two-sided relation and interaction between the investor company and government, government and local competitors of the investor company, and also investor company and local competitors. These interactions and relations lead institutional transformation and isomorphism through different ways.

First of all, the interaction between the government and the international company leads to normative isomorphism because market entrance and policy expectations of the foreigner company require specific regulations and policy changes which will be formed by learning and adapting the universal institutional norms. Government changes certain rules and constitute new regulations according to the global standards and business techniques that learn through the market entrance process of the international company. Moreover, these normative institutional transformations may attract other investors which

means settlement of the universal institutional norms and creation of isomorphism. Secondly, in the process of institutional transformation, the interaction between the government and local competitors of the newcomer lead coercive isomorphism. Because the new regulations and political arrangements that the government made and apply according to the universal institutional norms become obligatory for the local competitors in the sector. These local companies have to operate their businesses according to new sectoral regulations which leads a forced transformation. Thirdly, relation and interaction between the international investor company and local competitor lead to mimetic isomorphism. With the market entrance of the foreigner company, local competitors copy and imitate the institutional structure of the newcomer and adapt the changing dynamics to survive in the marketplace. On the other hand, the interaction between the international company and local competitors requires community/stakeholder engagement strategies which is the part of the public affairs. Because when foreigner company provides support and acceptance of the local actors, their market entrance process, maintaining good relations with the government, and fulfillment of policy expectations become easier. Under these circumstances, public affairs activities have the catalytic effect regarding achieving business objectives and forming intended communication environment between the parties through diverse strategies and methods which determined according to the specific purpose and situation.

To sum up, global companies lead to the diffusion of universal institutional norms and creation of isomorphic institutional structures through their investments and market entrance to the other countries. In this process, with the catalytic effect of the public affairs activities, institutional isomorphism realizes in three ways as normative, coercive, and mimetic. In this thesis, I will explain how this process and the Theoretical Model emerge in the following chapters.

### **1.3. RESEARCH DESIGN**

With the aim of answer my research questions and substantiate my argument I conducted my research with the qualitative research strategy and collected my data through three different methods which are ethnography/participant observation, open-ended interviews, and review of the relevant literature. During the research design process, I considered my

previous contact regarding the specific public affairs consultancy firm that I observed in this thesis. Moreover, I did wide-scale research regarding the other consultancy companies that have competence in the field of public affairs. On the other hand, related to the concept of institutional isomorphism, construction of isomorphic structures, non-market strategies, and intercultural communication contexts I both benefit from the relevant literature and interviews that I made with the experts. In this thesis, I kept names of the public affairs consultancy firms and interviewees anonymous and used false names which stated in the Appendix A.

First of all, my primary research method was the ethnography/participant observation which I applied in the Alfa Strategy Consultancy firm for seven months (see Appendix A). In the seven months process, I worked as an intern for four days in a week and had the chance of observing as an insider. In addition to my observations regarding how a consultancy firm operates its business and forms strategies for their diverse clients, I also picked a case study to focus concerning public affairs consultancy services. My case study was the market entrance process of a global e-commerce company. During the entrance process to the Turkish marketplace, the consultancy firm provided the services of public affairs and strategic guidance for the e-commerce company. The participant observation method as an insider gave me the advantage of not only observe this significant market entrance process for Turkey and e-commerce sector but also have assignments through the consultancy process which is a significant opportunity to understand the quality of public affairs consultancy service.

Secondly, my other method is the open-ended interviews. In this term, I researched and determined seven consultancy firms including my case study firm. The research process was not easy because there were not too many consultancy firms that have competence in the public affairs area which requires political focus and governmental relations differently from the usual PR agents. Determining the people who I should make interviews also was the other step of this process. At this point, I used the data and contact information that firms shared on their website. In my case study consultancy firm, I interviewed with the founding and managing partners at the end of my observation process (see Appendix A). For the Beta and Delta Communication Consultancy firms, I called their offices and expressed my intention of doing interviews with their top executives (see Appendix A). Then, I e-mailed my cv, thesis topic, and information about

interview scope and timing to assistants of the two agent presidents. As a consequence of 2-3 weeks date determination and negotiation process, I had the opportunity to meet and making interviews with them who have significant experiences in the consultancy sector in Turkey for long years. These two communication consultancy agents both have competence in the fields of corporate communication and PR in addition to public affairs. The remaining firm that I had to chance to reach was the Turkey office of a global communication consultancy firm, Orion Consultancy, which gives services in diverse areas including public affairs (see Appendix A). I e-mailed my thesis topic and cv to the CEO of the Turkey office according to the contact information on their website and then called their office to accelerate the process. About the other three consultancy firms that I could not interview with, for two of them, although they accepted my demand, we could not determine a proper date because of their busy schedules through the process. There was only one consultancy firm that I could not receive any reflection to my interview demand. As the consequence of these, I made interviews with the five top executives of four communication consultancy firms which have competence in the area of public affairs and strategic communication (see Appendix A).

I determined 11 questions and classified them into three groups according to their focus. For example, the first group of questions aims to understand their approach about the public affairs activities and strategic communication; the second group tries to learn about their opinions and experiences regarding the institutional transformation and isomorphism concepts; and the last group of questions focuses on the changing sectoral conditions with the effect of the institutional transformation and formation of isomorphism among the local competitors of the investor companies. The length of the interviews were 45 to 60 minutes that differ depends on the conversation and interviewees. I did the first two interviews with the founder and managing partners of the Alfa Strategy Consultancy that I observed as an insider through participant observation process (see Appendix A). Differently than the others, these interviews have an extra part which composes of eight more questions for my e-commerce company case study. I tape-recorded with the permission and transcribed five interviews with four different companies. Thus, through the data of open-ended interviews, I do not only understand and evaluate sectoral dynamics regarding public affairs consultancy and institutional transformation process but also provide broader information about my case which is a

significant market entry for Turkey and creation of institutional isomorphism.

Thirdly, in addition to participant observation and interviews with the sectoral experts, I also use relevant literature to evaluate and make sense my data in accordance with the Theoretical Model. Thus, I focused on public affairs, institutional theory, institutional transformation, organizational transformation, and intercultural communication literature in this thesis.

### *Outline of the chapters*

Through the explaining diffusion of universal institutional norms and formation of isomorphic institutional structures with the Theoretical Model, following four chapters focus on the diverse elements and evaluate the issue regarding different manners. In this sense, Chapter 2 focuses on the theoretical foundation that shows and considers the literature findings regarding the areas of public affairs, institutional theory, organizational transformation, and intercultural communication. With this theoretical base, I both support my Theoretical Model and interpret my collected data through participant observation and interviews. In Chapter 3, I explain the ethnographic scope of the research and narrate my experiences from the participant observation process. In addition to this, in the second section of the chapter, I focus on my e-commerce company case and explore the process with the details. In Chapter 4, I discuss the data of open-ended interviews which contains opinions and approaches of the sectoral experts and consultancy companies regarding the public affairs, institutional transformation, and institutional isomorphism concept. Finally, in Chapter 5 which is the concluding chapter, I evaluate all the research findings. Within the scope of these findings, I re-evaluate my Theoretical Model and how the normative, coercive, and mimetic isomorphism realize with the catalytic effect of the public affairs.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FINDINGS ON ISOMORPHISM AND THE CATALYTIC EFFECT

#### 2.1. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The following literature findings attempt to demonstrate previous studies regarding the relevant areas and support the Theoretical Model and hypothesis that international companies lead the diffusion of universal institutional norms with their investments and market entrance to other countries. Moreover, in this institutional transformation and isomorphism process which stated as normative, coercive, and mimetic, public affairs activities also have the catalytic effect.

##### 2.1.1. Public Affairs

When we look at the literature and previous writings, we see that public affairs described as diverse activities which function between organizations and governments to maintain good relations with the stakeholders, prestige, and benefit to the organizations. In this sense, public affairs constitute an “interface” and function as a catalyzer with their strategies and activities (Meznar and Nigh 1993; 1995). When we look at the meaning of public affairs in previous periods we see that “By the 1970s and 1980s, the expression ‘public affairs’ came to refer to the function of enlisting the support and/or negating the opposition of non-market and non-economic players in a firm’s environment” (Griffin et al., 2001:10). Moreover, public affairs activities were more focused on the governmental relations, associations and organizations, and also public opinion and opinion makers in these years (Griffin et al., 2001). Griffin and other authors (2001) state that, in the 1990s, public affairs activities became more tactical and strategy oriented. In this sense, the literature of these years mentions the issues of political and competitive strategy which is the reflection of competitive advantage provider side of the public affairs (Griffin et al., 2001). In the recent era, the scope of the public affairs activities and research has expanded with the influence of changing roles of government, globalization, growth of

pressure groups, internet, and occurrence of influencers that create a more uncertain environment for both professionals and scholars regarding the public affairs (Griffin et al., 2001).

Changes in the business and political environment also brought the evolution of public affairs practices which provide the notion of public affairs not just for the crises situations or issue management affairs anymore; these activities constitute an ongoing process based on an institutional understanding in both internal and external affairs of the companies. In this sense, "The new PA model is strategic as opposed to tactical or technical. Being strategic, it is systematically and proactively focused on helping the organization compete more successfully in both the public policy and product marketplaces over the long term" (Goodwin, 2000 cited in Fleisher, 2000: 50). Moreover, in theoretical aspects, Schuler (2001) stated two points that should be completed in the studies of public affairs and political activities which are a ground theory to lead the research and diverse methods in addition to surveys and interviews or case studies. In reflection to this approach, Hillman (2001) stated that although public affairs and political activities areas need more sophisticated and multiple research methods, success and performance of the companies should be accepted as a dependent variable rather than adopting a ground theory.

Meznar and Nigh (1993: 30) emphasize the importance of public affairs strategies in their article as "the legitimization and ultimate survival of the firm may hinge on adequately managing the relationship between the organization and its social and political stakeholders". Because, obtaining profit is not to the only obligation for companies anymore and companies perceived as the social actors which responsible the way they conduct their activities operate their businesses (Meznar and Nigh, 1993). This understanding regarding the companies is the result of the social contract approach which determines factors of the legitimacy (Byrne, 1990:7 cited in Meznar and Nigh, 1993). Defining the scope of this responsibility, laws, regulations, and shared understandings are essential factors and, in this context, government plays an intermediary role between business organizations and society by forming statutes and regulations. (Carrol, 1989 cited in Meznar and Nigh, 1993).

In terms of the governmental issues, "in many industries the success of business in the public policy arena is no less important than business success in the marketplace; as a result it is critical for firms to develop political strategies as a part of their overall strategy"

(Hillman and Hitt, 1999: 826). Moreover, companies which conduct their business operations in the market and provide goods and services always influenced by actions and/or inactions of the government concerning policy issues (Harris and Fleisher, 2005). This situation leads to companies and international organizations to interact with public policy decision making processes. Interaction of organizations realizes via public affairs activities such as political monitoring, intelligence development, legal advising, and lobbying. In this context, there are four classifications of public affairs activities that the first type of the activity includes strategies and efforts of the businesses in order to influence government actions and legislation process such as, lobbying; the second one contains efforts to affect the perception of the society such as advocacy advertises; the third one covers applying the government regulations and rules in their business areas to comply with the social contract context; and the last one refers to "the responsibility for scanning the environment to identify actual or potential gaps between corporate actions and societal expectations and then promoting changes in organizational behavior to comply with social norms" (Meznar and Nigh, 1993: 31).

Regarding the political environment, public affairs activities may both constitute a bridge between the firms and socio-political environment or buffer the firms from that environment (Meznar and Nigh, 1995). This important dualistic function refers to the boundary-spanning conceptualization of public affairs activities (Meznar and Nigh, 1995). Application of buffering and bridging strategies differs according to the size, power, resource control ability, and visibility of the companies (Meznar and Nigh, 1995). According to the research results that Meznar and Nigh (1995) had conducted with diverse American firms, more powerful and more prominent companies have the tendency to applying buffer function of public affairs because they have the ability to control external environment, but smaller and less powerful companies prefer bridging activities and adopt external changes in their environment. At this point it is important to state that buffering and bridging activities are not mutually exclusive (Fennel and Alexander, 1987 cited in Meznar and Nigh, 1995). In addition to these factors, enterprise strategy and attitudes regarding the social and political stakeholders of the top managers also have a crucial role concerning the determination of the public affairs strategies (Meznar and Nigh, 1995). Regarding the influence of senior executives in the determination of public affairs strategies and stakeholder relations, "chief executives'

perceptions and understanding of the political system are crucial determinants of business posture in relating to government and other external groups” (Bartha, 1985: 204).

There are three objectives for the efforts of companies to influence the legislative process through public affairs strategies which are reducing uncertainty, eliminating perceived threats, and create opportunity in the market (Lord, 2000). When we evaluate the companies' efforts to involve in the political/legislative process within the frame of political science we see the interest group theory which may refer to stakeholders/community relations side of the public affairs (Meznar and Nigh, 1995). According to the theory, "the democratic public policy process is an attempt to reach a common compromise between the competing goals of a multitude of interest groups" (Dahl 1961; Lowi 1969; Schattschneider 1960 cited in Getz, 2001: 308). Interest groups, which formally constructed, transmit the concerns of their members to government legitimately (Mundo, 1992 cited in Getz, 2001). Thus, firms entering the political arena with the aim of preventing other politically active interest groups with different views to protect their interests (Getz, 2001). According to the manual of the Foundation of Public Affairs, the most influential public interest groups in the areas of civil human rights, community improvements, consumer and health, corporate and governmental accountability, environment, and energy (Lerbinger, 2006: 28). Thus, interest groups work as a structure between the individuals, governments, and organizations (Lerbinger, 2006: 28). In this term, stakeholder engagement/management is the part of public affairs which aims to provide the balance between all external groups and the company (Mahon, Heugens, and Lamertz, 2004). There are two objectives of stakeholder engagement; first, securing the business goal and achievement of the company and second, finding a common point with all stakeholders who have concerns about wealth outcomes of the company through its goal-oriented operations (Mahon, Heugens, and Lamertz, 2004).

Regarding conceptualization of public affairs, the non-market strategy is also another concept that covers activities of the companies outside of the market to maintain prestige and competitive advantage (Minor, 2015). The concept of non-market strategy defined as “a firm’s concerted pattern of actions to improve its performance by managing the institutional or societal context of economic competition” (Mellahi et al., 2016: 143 cited in Liedong, Rajwani, and Mellahi, 2017: 609). This concept includes both political strategies, which also named as corporate political activities (CPA), such as lobbying,

interactions with the regulators, and stakeholder engagement, and corporate social responsibility activities which may also provide an advantage in the case of lobby activities (Minor, 2015; Liedong, Rajwani, and Mellahi, 2017). According to Baron (1995), the non-market environment of the companies composes of four I's which are "issues" that they concerned, "institutions" that they interact, "interests" of the company and also all stakeholders, and "information" that refers knowledge and perception of all the interested parties about the relevant actions and their consequences.

On the other hand, companies may also change the impacts of the policies and regulations through their market actions in addition to the influencing legislative processes for their business operations with non-market strategies (Funk and Hirschman, 2017). With the strategic use of market actions, particular rules and regulations may re-shaped according to the actual practice of them in the market (Funk and Hirschman, 2017). This strategic use of market actions for policy benefit may expand the scope of non-market operations and corporate political activities which also include public affairs. In this sense, there are two forms of policy changes which are formal and interpretive (Funk and Hirschman, 2017). The formal policy change means the regulations and decisions that policymakers officially realized which CPA mainly focused on to influence (Funk and Hirschman, 2017). On the other hand, interpretive policy change refers to strategic evaluation and practice of the existing rules according to the actual market conditions which may re-form effect of the real policies (Funk and Hirschman, 2017).

Within the frame of the relevant literature, we may see that public affairs activities are the agenda of the companies for long years to maintain and protect their benefit and also the position in the marketplace. Through the companies interactions with the political and societal stakeholders such as public and sectoral associations, public affairs practices have worked on making the processes easier with various strategies and realized their catalytic effect in the diverse sense which stated and explained following chapters more detailed via the participant observation findings, e-commerce company case, and interviews with the sectoral experts.

### **2.1.2. Institutional Theory and Institutional Isomorphism**

In the article of DiMaggio and Powell (1983), *The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional*

Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Field, which the main question is the "Why there is such startling homogeneity of organizational forms and practices?" they argue that "rational actors make their organizations increasingly similar as they try to change them" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 147). They argue that once an organizational area settled well the isomorphism is the inevitable result (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Structuration and homogenization of the particular organizational area cause from activities of the organizations, homogenization of these organizations among themselves, and also the creation of the newcomers with the similar structure and way of action (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Moreover, there are four phases of structuration or "institutional definition" as expanding interactions among the organizations within the field, the constitution of inter-organizational dynamics and conditions of the coalition, creation of shared content of information, and mutual awareness of the participants regarding being the member of common enterprise (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). When the institutional structuration realized through these phases, business organizations within the field become similar in the process even they try to differentiate themselves (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

In this sense, DiMaggio and Powell use Hawley's (1968) description which says that "isomorphism is a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 149). Moreover, there are three forms of isomorphism as normative, coercive, and mimetic (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). In this regard, coercive isomorphism realize as the result of pressure of the other organizations both in formal or informal context such as policies, regulations, and changing to provide legitimacy; normative isomorphism refers to information and knowledge-based transformation such as professionalization of the organizations in their operation areas; and mimetic isomorphism means copying and imitating the actions and operation model of the other organizations to be successful which also outcome of the institutional uncertainty (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

Wahid and Sein (2013) also used the isomorphism concepts of DiMaggio and Powell, and they evaluated the Yogyakarta's, which is an Indonesian city, transition process to the e-procurement system as the case study in their article. They mentioned the concepts of institutional isomorphism, institutional logic, and institutional entrepreneurship through the process of institutionalization of a public system (Wahid and Sein, 2013). According

to the authors, "the main catalyst of the institutionalization process is the institutional entrepreneur who managed the institutional isomorphism and was instrumental in changing the institutional logic" (Wahid and Sein, 2013: 76). Regarding the definition of the institutionalism as the process of instilling values, the institutional transformation also requires the deinstitutionalization of the old organization system (Wahid and Sein, 2013). Deinstitutionalization is the concept that covers discontinuity and delegitimization of the existing system and practices (Oliver, 1992). There are several causes of deinstitutionalization as wide range of changes within the organization such as habits, the vulnerability of institutional values for reassessment under the particular conditions, and also unpredicted results or failure of the organizational practices to provide conformity and legitimacy (Oliver, 1992). Scott (2014) stated that Weber is the first theorist that emphasize the significance of legitimacy regarding social actions that directed the existing order and belief system of the society. Moreover, organizations are perceived as legitimate as much as they conform to laws and rules (Scott, 2014). In this regard, "To acquire legitimacy, every kind of institution needs a formula that found its rightness in reason and in nature" (Douglas, 1986: 45).

Douglas mentioned the Lewis' definition of institutions as "convention" which all the parties have common interest and desire for coordination (Lewis, 1968 cited in Douglas, 1986). North (1991) also stated that institutions are human created kind of order with formal and informal rules to reduce uncertainty. Moreover, "institutions, whether conceived as groups or practices, may be partially engineered but, they also have 'natural' dimension. They are products of interaction and adaptation; they become the receptacles of group idealism; they are less readily expendable" (Selznick, 1957: 21- 22 cited in Scott, 1987: 494). According to Peter Berger and Luckmann, nature and origin of the social order based on human activity which means social order exists and continues only the result of the repeated human actions so, "Institutionalization occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 54 cited in Scott, 1987: 495). In the process of institutionalization, Berger and Luckman stated three steps as externalization, objectivization, and internalization (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 54 cited in Scott, 1987). At this point, there is a kind of paradox in the institutional process because individuals may affect/change the process but also experience and apply the actions/habitus of others. Peters (2012) also stated important

elements of an institution as a formal or informal structure, stability, individual behaviors, and shared values and understanding. Moreover, in the institutional framework, it is stated that the power/influence of the individuals comes from their membership in institutions (Peters, 2012: 25). In this regard, Zucker stated that:

“Institutionalization is both a process and a property variable. It is the process by which individual actors transmit what is socially defined as real and, at the same time, at any point in the process the meaning of an act can be defined as more or less a taken-for-granted part of this social reality. Institutionalized acts, then, must be perceived as both objective and exterior” (Zucker, 1977: 728 cited in Scott, 1987: 496).

Concerning the institutional transformation, institutions may be perceived as durable and homogeneous social structures which can also transform too. Institutions are not passive actors that adopts every changes and pressure from the outside environment, but they are capable of responding strategically (Wahid and Sein, 2013). Moreover, Zucker stated that there are two defining components of the institutions as exterior rules and formal structure of the organizations (Zucker, 1977: 728 cited in Zucker, 1987). To the realization of institutional transformation, institutional logic which refer to the central mindset of all rules, operations, habits, and patterns need to change (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Wahid and Sein, 2013). Alexander (2005) stated that institutional transformation requires critical planning and there is only one way to create the continues change in the society; changing people who constitute the community. This change may realize changing the individuals and also institutions (Alexander, 2005). Effective planning for institutional transformation should include adequate information regarding both institutions generally and their particular context which covers “how and why ‘living’ institutions are born, grow, change, and die” (Alexander, 2005: 210). However, pressures for deinstitutionalization of the existing system may not lead a sudden change and institutions are the responsive structures firstly go into the “theorization” process which refers to evaluation regarding the failure of the old system and also the justification of new set of practices (Dacin, Goodstein, and Scott, 2002).

Regarding the isomorphism, Meyer and Rowan stated the role of modernization in rationalizing taken for granted actions lead to isomorphism because organizations had to fulfill requirements of the external environment to provide legitimacy (Meyer and Rowan, 1977 cited in Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) had also extended this concept with their definitions of normative, coercive, and mimetic isomorphism. In this sense, public sector organizations and government agencies are the

significant push factors that lead to institutional transformation and isomorphism of the nonprofit and business organizations (Frumkin and Galaskiewicz, 2004). Frumkin and Galaskiewicz (2004) also argue that institutional pressure factors do not influence all kinds of organizations which are governmental, business, and non-profit at the same level and also state that the government organizations are more vulnerable to legitimizing influence. Moreover, although government organizations are more structured and bureaucratized than the other types, expansion of coercive and normative influences make these agencies more likely to business and non-profit organizations (Frumkin and Galaskiewicz, 2004). In the case of mimetic isomorphism in the market, Shin-Kap Han (1994) argues that social dynamics between organizations is the essential factor. Organizations pursue what others do and evaluate their actions regarding conformability (Shin-Kap Han, 1994). Moreover, their actions shaped according to the social frame that they are part of it (Shin-Kap Han, 1994). In addition to this, Haunschild and Miner (1997) stated three modes of imitation as frequency-based imitation that refers applying the same operation model that a large number of big companies previously used; trait-based imitation which means copying actions of the organizations according to their certain features; and outcome-based imitation is applying the same way of operations according to their beneficial outcomes. According to their research results “all three selective imitation modes-frequency, trait, and outcome-can operate independently among organizations and that they are affected by outcome salience and uncertainty” (Haunschild and Miner, 1997: 491).

As the consequence of the relevant literature that stated, we see that institutions are the set of rules and practices which based on habitual human actions and practices (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 54 cited in Scott, 1987; Zucker, 1977: 728 cited in Scott, 1987). Moreover, institutions are not passive actors, and they reflect their outside environments and changes with the concern of legitimacy and conformity (Wahid and Sein, 2013). Moreover, institutions may also learn and transform with the deinstitutionalization of old patterns and justification of the new way of operations (Dacin, Goodstein, and Scott, 2002; Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Wahid and Sein, 2013). Moreover, regarding the creation of isomorphism which stated in the Theoretical Model, reducing the uncertainty and providing legitimacy are driving forces (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Shin-Kap Han, 1994; Haunschild and Miner, 1997).

### **2.1.3. Organizational Theory and Transformation**

An organization is a structure which consists of people who work together with a common goal by using the sources in their environment to achieve their specific tasks efficiently (Rainey, 2009). In this sense, “Within an organization, institutionalization operates to produce common understandings about what is appropriate and, fundamentally, meaningful behavior” (Zucker, 1983: 5). Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that the structure of the many organizations shaped according to their institutional environment which includes institutional rules that produced in the society instead of their actual technical work aspects. Another approach state that organizations are rational actors despite their complex institutional environments (Thompson, 1967; Blau and Schoenherr, 1971 cited in Tolbert and Zucker, 1983). According to these two approaches, the transformation of the organizations and the diffusion of innovation requires the factors of legitimacy and efficiency (Tolbert and Zucker, 1983). Moreover, organizations also seek for the equilibrium point as the reflection to the environmental disturbances (Rainey, 2009). In this context, "increasing flux and uncertainty in the political, social, economic, and technological settings in which organizations operate, and they discussed the influence on the internal operations of organizations of the degree of ‘turbulence’ in their environment. Thus the emphasis moved toward analysis of organizations as open systems facing the need to adapt to environmental variations" (Emery and Trust, 1965 cited in Rainey, 2009: 44).

Regarding the public organizations, these organizations both have similarities and differences with the business and non-profit kinds such as indifferently, public organizations are under the authority of the government and bureaucratic structure (Rainey, 2009). Moreover, “their effective organization and management is essential to the well-being of the nations and communities they serve” (Rainey, 2009: 6). Moussa, McMurray, and Muenjohn (2018) also stated that public organizations under the pressure of creating more values for their nations and people. However, in the private sector, business organizations may act much more flexible (Sims, Sauser, and Bias, 2016). Despite all, public sector organizations may also change and transform within the process of interpretation and adaptation of environmental conditions (Sims, 2010). Change/transform of the government organizations contains more variables than private

sector organizations. Because public organizations have the aim of sustaining constitutional principles and values that they present in the institutional context but private sector organizations may implement a changing after managers decisions according to their market interests. Moreover, the issue of political control creates a tendency to stability in public sector organizations (Sims, 2010).

In this sense, Pershing and Austin (2015) stated the factors that influence the actions of government organizations as the allocation of government resources, appropriateness to the constitution, legislative and judiciary decisions, social factors such as demands of the citizens, and providing efficiency and effectiveness. About the organizational change and transformation, Lewis (2011: 25) mentions the definition of change of Zorn et al. (1999) as "to any alteration or modification of organizational structures or processes". Moreover, there are various triggers for organizational change and transformation such as legal and regulatory requirements, customer demands, new technologies that developed regarding the operation areas, reallocation of financial resources, and changing dynamics in the workforce (Lewis, 2011). Personal development of the staff, coming across a new method or structure that works better for the organization, and stakeholder impacts are also considerable resources of the organizational transformation (Lewis, 2011). Concerning the effects and dynamics of the organizational change;

"Organizational change impacts organizational success. The ability to initiate and facilitate change is crucial to the sustainability of organizations, leaders and followers alike. Furthermore, the essence of change is choosing what not to do. This means leaders must know how well it is being implemented, whether it is generating performance success or failure, and if the change needs to be altered" (Sims, Sauser, and Bias, 2016: 199).

In addition to these, public sector organizations employees may apply several methods to realize complex transformation, which is more valuable and difficult to achieve than minor changes (Moussa, McMurray, and Muenjohn, 2018). These are "(a) developing their management competencies; (b) avoiding barriers by recognizing sources for innovation; and (c) developing conditions that can motivate all individuals in the organization to innovate" (Torugsa and Arundel, 2016 cited in Moussa, McMurray, and Muenjohn, 2018: 232).

To sum up, according to the relevant literature, although organizations are human devised structures in their complex institutional environment, they are not passive to adapt or determining strategies according to the changing conditions. The change and transform process may be triggered through different dynamics but as Tolbert and Zucker (1983)

stated as the result of their research when the transformation required by the government the adaptation process becomes considerably faster. On the other hand, the transformation of government organizations possible but depend on various dynamics such as political and societal benefits rather than market profits as business organizations focused (Sims, 2010; Sims, Sauser, and Bias, 2016; Moussa, McMurray, and Muenjohn, 2018).

#### **2.1.4. Intercultural Communication Context**

Within the frame of public affairs literature, we can see that public affairs activities have a very significant role regarding organizations and their survival in the marketplace. In this sense, providing legitimacy and profit requires efficient and effective public affairs strategies. Public affairs consultancy firms arrange their communication processes and determine the contents according to the benefit and aims of their clients. Moreover, these firms translate the rules, regulations, and laws and communicate with the political and social stakeholders in a bureaucratic context through their strategies. They do not (need to) use the cultural means because their communication processes are based on translation rules and monitoring political situations within the scope of their business aims. In this sense, we can consider their communication processes as strategic communication, instead of intercultural communication, because they have business objectives through achievements in the policy arena and relations with the stakeholders.

On the other hand, intercultural communication is a discipline that primarily focuses on how cultural differences which came from mainly national differences such as different grammatical and semantical structures influence the communication processes (Spencer-Oatey and Kotthoff, 2007; Luring, 2011; Paulstone, Kiesling, and Rangel, 2012). Moreover, Luring (2011) stated that most scholars in intercultural business communication argue that culture influence how people encode messages, what mediums they prefer, and how the messages perceived and also evaluated the culture as a 'disturbance' in the communication process. Moreover, learning the culture of the specific country which includes understanding their use of time and space, and their approach of business and teamwork are the things that international companies consider in their global investments (Goodman, 2013; Mehra, 2014). Hofstede and other scholars (2010) determined six dimensions of culture as nationality, ethnic or religious groups, gender

level, generation level, social class, and workplace or employment aspects. However, these different dimensions which argued that constituted individuals cultures might differ for every person easily even in the same community.

Regarding the scope of the intercultural as a concept, there are those for whom any interaction is always “intercultural” that is “embedded in national, political, economic, religious and historical interests, identities, and contexts” (Ganesh and Holmes 2011: 82 cited in Grillio, 2017: 45). Today we live in a social structure which individuals are the members of different cultures according to their interests and also international influences such as mass media, globalization, and communication technologies lead to the constitution of a common awareness of the people (Spencer-Oatey and Kotthoff, 2007). Under these circumstances, communication and interaction of people from different nationalities become easier and also business relations based on institutional contexts such as government rules and organizational structure which separate from cultural dynamics. Moreover, with the effect of personal cultures and the way of life individuals from the same community may not understand each other properly. Relatively to these conditions, “Even within the same culture, one can find variations” (Mehra, 2014: 9). Thus, in the globalized world, all the communication processes became intercultural (Holliday, 1999; Holliday et al., 2004 cited in Piller, 2011: 70). On the other hand, public affairs which are the particular strategies of governmental relations and stakeholder engagement show that with the conditions of common institutional understanding, organizational structure, and business or political benefit cultural differences may not be effective regarding “disturbing” the processes because means of the communication has already determined.

About the stakeholder relations of the companies, “In international business contexts, how competent and competitive firms are domestically and internationally as well as how they effectively communicate with their stakeholders will determine how successful a firm can be globally” (Beckers and Bsat, 2014: 143). Moreover, having information about social behaviors, attitudes, approach of morality, and patterns of the hierarchy may be beneficial to forming business interactions especially regarding the stakeholders (Varner, 2000). However, at this point, stakeholder engagement side of the public affairs come into place, and public affairs consulting firms provide a healthy communication environment with all stakeholders by finding the common point of benefit and

institutional understanding as their catalytic effect which beyond the intercultural communication context.

Regarding the cultural differences in the business communication area, Hooker emphasized Hall's (1976) classifications of low-context and high-context cultures which stated as the determinants of dynamics of business relations, negotiation processes, management of employees, and patterns of agreement in his chapter (Paulstone, Kiesling, and Rangel, 2012: 389). However, with the diffusion of universal institutional norms through actions of international companies and the transformation of the institutions according to these global business techniques and practices reduce these cultural differences elements as the consequence of the isomorphism. As DiMaggio and Powell (1983) stated that once an organizational area settled or institutionalized well, the isomorphism is the inevitable consequence which eliminates cultural differences. In this sense, Goodman (2013) emphasize a significant feature of the developing countries which in those countries companies mainly owned by prominent families or single proprietor that refers to the flexible structure and lack of bureaucracy. This noninstitutionalized structure may be considered a benefit to expanding and settled universal institutional norms, and to create institutional isomorphism in developing countries via proper public affairs strategies.

As the consequence of these, within the scope of relevant literature, we may say that public affairs activities and consultancy services are beyond the intercultural communication context and its classifications about the cultures with their political focus and unique strategies and processes for each case. In the following chapters, through approaches of sectoral experts in the interviews, I also explained how the scope of public affairs get widen and different from the intercultural communication elements.

## CHAPTER 3

### UNDERSTANDING THE CATALYTIC EFFECT ON SITE

#### 3.1. THE ETHNOGRAPHIC SCOPE: INSIDER OBSERVATIONS REGARDING CONSULTANCY PROCESSES

In this research, I apply the participant observation method as an insider and complete a seven-month internship process in a specific public affairs consultancy firm which stated as Alfa Strategy Consultancy through this thesis (see Appendix A). During the observation process, I collected data regarding both public affairs area, operations of consultancy processes and also my e-commerce company case. This ethnographic study is independent of the personal information and situations and only focus on the institutional data to substantiate my argument and the Theoretical Model. Thus the name of the consultancy firm and their employees will be anonymous. In this section, I explain and narrate my personal experiences and observations to understand the formation of institutional transformation and isomorphism and the catalytic effect of public affairs.

##### *Previous process from the internship and observation*

My first relation with the Alfa Strategy Consultancy has realized in August 2016 with the reference from my previous volunteer internship programme. Although we had a positive resulted interview with my boss, Ahmet Yurdum (see Appendix A), who is one of the managing partners of the consultancy firm and also interested in public affairs both in academy and consultancy services, we did not start to work together because of my MA courses and academic focus.

However, during our conversations regarding the MA thesis with my advisor professor, he gave me the idea of using this beneficial connection through my thesis. Thus, after determining my thesis subject, the research design process get shaped within the frame of this idea and I re-contacted Alfa Strategy Consultancy at the end of the January 2018 to express my intention to observe their public affairs consultancy processes through an internship. With the approval of the four partners of the consultancy firm, we had an

interview with Ahmet Yurdum again and discussed my thesis and scope of the internship process. During my internship, I was required to assist not only public affairs consultancy processes but also other services of the firm. At the end of the interview, we agreed on the date 26 February 2018, Monday for starting to work and four office days in a week. I kept the Fridays free according to the schedule of my advisor to evaluate the observation process and focus on the thesis. While my second visit to the office, I paid attention the details that I liked at the first time such as the library, the big red couch next to the bookshelf, and two hobbyhorses at the meeting room. The only thing had happened when I asked when they start to work in the morning because he thought a little bit longer and said “9.30 is enough.” which was the sign of there will be an unusual order.

*26 February 2018: first day notes of observation process*

On Sunday night, just before the first day of work, they added me to chat group of the firm. After a “Welcome!” ceremony I received a message from Ahmet Yurdum via the group which said there is a "firm tradition". According to the tradition, every newcomer to the firm prepare and bring bulgur salad on their first day, and all the team eats together the salad at lunch break. The time that I got the message and content felt suspicious, but I prepared the salad and also baked a cake because of my interest in cooking and sharing.

In the first day morning, I got ready as I planned and my father drove me to the work because he was more excited than me and I got a lot of food to carry. I was at the office right on time despite the traffic, but there was only one person at the office that I could see. In addition to four little rooms and one big meeting room at the entrance, there was a wide office area where lots of single seating tables and one big table like for ten people. I came into the wide area and said: "Good morning." to the only person who was the graphic designer of the firm and also started to work here just a week ago. I explained to her who I am and my intention to observe for my MA thesis. Then I put my stuff on the last seat of the big table where I will work for three months. I also brought the bulgur salad and cake to the kitchen of the office and said nothing about them because I was wondering about reflections of the people. About the time 10.30 to 11.00 almost all the personnel of the firm came, and I met them. This situation explained why my boss thought a little bit longer when I asked the time when they begin to work.

On my first day, I observed two things regarding the Alfa Strategy Consultancy and their work environment. First, they do not have an exact time to come to the office even you can work from home. Second, they have a firm tradition that is right, but this tradition did not about prepare food for the team. Ahmet Yurdum always requires some exciting things from the newcomers and all team continue this little joke including the partners of the firm and that is the tradition. We talked about this and also previous welcome jokes while eating the salad and cake. In addition to this, members of the team have close but respectful relations with each other, and this provides motivation and a pleasant working environment.

Regarding the work, I also had my first job which was preparing a brief for the renewal of the website of the firm. They required a comprehensive brief that includes the benchmark of the other essential consultancy firms. For this task, I needed to complete three steps which were researching website design criteria, determining weak sides of our website according to these criteria, and finding the sample websites among the international consultancy firms. These task requirements are the significant indicators regarding both the operation of the consultancy firm and their consultancy processes. Because even in their internal affairs they consider the global norms and criteria through the benchmarks and determine their steps according to these. Moreover, they also give importance to research and having information about diverse areas even completely independent from their professions which will be beneficial during relations with their clients in different sectors.

#### *About the firm and consultancy processes in general*

The consultancy firm that I observed for seven months as an insider is "an independent corporate and public affairs consultancy firm" as they defined themselves. The firm provided a wide range of consultancy services to multinational companies and also government organizations for more than 30 years. There are four partners of the firm, which one of them the founding partner and they have proficiencies in different areas. For example, while one of the partners has competence in public affairs and government relations, the other partners have a profession regarding strategic guidance, community engagement, and finance and administrative issues. Moreover, they categorize their services as governmental relations, community engagement, employee relations, crisis

management, strategy development & change management, and investment & divestment.

About the operation and organization of the consultancy firm, the team composed of twelve to fifteen people including the partners. According to the possible needs and requirements of the clients, there is a diversification in the specialization areas of the team members such as public and media relations, marketing communication, advertising, Agile methodology, stakeholder engagement, digital transformation, organizational behavior, graphic design, and social media monitoring. Moreover, their working and internal organization system is different from the usual order which refers there is no specific dress code for the office, people may work from the outside like home or library and leave the office early, and also may come late to the office for a reason as long as give information from the chat group. In return of these advantages which may be motivation provider for the personnel, all they asked for is the completion of the tasks properly on time. This kind of structure of the firm may be the reflection of Agile methodology which they learn with the significant training programmes from abroad, give consultancy in this term, and also making an effort to apply in their internal operations (Cunningham, 2001). In addition to these, the firm also gives importance to research, information, and publications. Thus, they produce publications about current social and political incidents and agenda and also publish book summaries through their website.

When we look at the consultancy processes and client relations, according to my observations and their statements, at the first meeting with the clients they express themselves and explain their working methods. Moreover, before the first meeting, they also provide significant information regarding the clients. After the meeting, they prepare the proposal according to the consultancy needs and expectations of the clients. They do not have a regular proposal template because every sector and clients are different. In this sense, different teams formed for each project and partners are in the position of project managers related to their profession areas. Within the frame of this structure and business operation of the consultancy firm, I observed and experienced diverse processes regarding both public affairs and strategic communication as stated in the next section.

*Significant stages and experiences regarding the consultancy and public affairs*

When I consider my experiences and observations regarding the catalytic effect of the public affairs and consultancy services, in my first week I had two tasks which one of them was significant to understand client relations and the beginning of the consultancy processes and I also participated a meeting regarding an internal affair. For the first meeting with the possible client which is a financial institution based on sharing credit information of their customers and composed of significant banks and financing companies, Ahmet Yurdum required a brief about the institution and its general manager. My first weekend in the internship process passed while working for this task as a minor reflection of the flexible working strategy. However, the requirement of this brief and other research tasks that they ask for regarding diverse areas indicate that research and information are essential base in the consultancy area even the meeting process with the clients.

On the other hand, when the consultancy firm started to provide services to one of the biggest law firms of Turkey which also has an international contact, the scope of the research has broadened. At this time, at the beginning of March, my boss wanted to research important global and local law firms and general developments in the law sector such as artificial intelligence use in law. The research report included operation areas, considerable and current works, publications, and media visibility of the other law firms. This situation shows that during the strategy determination process in the consultancy services, they consider activities of both global and local competitors and also global developments and norms regarding the related business area which may be a crucial point for the creation of isomorphism in normative and mimetic contexts (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

In addition to the public affairs processes, there was an ongoing consultancy process of one of the biggest market chains of Turkey regarding their social media marketing and the event preparation process that has started at the middle of the March. Through these processes, the meetings that we attended with the executives of the market chain and the progress regarding both the event preparation and social media moderation issues showed that even though consultants develop the specific strategy and recommend the way of action, the customer may reject the approach. In this case, consultancy service re-organized according to the requirements and attitudes of the customer.

Other considerable public affairs consultancy process has realized for a global floriculture company from Dutch. The floriculture company was an existing client of the consultancy firm in the process of market entry to Turkey. In the following process, regarding the aim of entering new marketplaces of the company, I required making floriculture market, trade relations, political conditions, and regulations such as customs and tariffs research for the specific countries. The requested scope of the study shows that which details and conditions an international company considers in the market entrance process.

My observation and internship process also came across with the June 24 Turkey's Election. This election process was significant because both general election and the first presidential election held on at the same time and bureaucratic structure such as ministries have changed completely. This kind of political uncertainty and crisis environment because of economic issues constituted perfect conditions for the public affairs consultancy because both local and international companies needed a guideline of economic and political authorities regarding further processes in Turkey. Thus, we acted regarding two aspects as a consultancy firm. Firstly, we prepared infographics to publish on the website and social media accounts of the firm about changing election and bureaucratic system and also the election results. In this case, I prepared the contents of the infographics, Ahmet Yurdum controlled and approved the materials, and our graphic designer designed them. Secondly, long meetings realized with the economic expert and political consultant of the consultancy firm from Ankara and a guideline formed to present our clients. In this sense, the founding partner Sinan Kaya wrote an article which explains the dynamics of the current political situation in Turkey and had presented this article to the clients in various meetings after the elections. This strategy not only created an opportunity for the business development of the consultancy firm but also sustained the catalytic effect of the public affairs activities for the companies even in changing conditions.

*At the end of the internship and participant observation process*

September, the last month of my observation and internship, elapsed resident and I had less office works to do during the month which was a chance to focus my thesis and previous remarks in the process. Through the seven months, I did various research regarding different sectors, political and corporate affairs, news and developments on the

agenda, and significant news that concern our clients. Moreover, I also attended various meetings with the possible and existing clients and prepared the meeting notes which were necessary to follow-up the process and progress.

Within the frame of these, when I evaluate the details that provide the catalytic effect of the public affairs services, I realized that research and obtaining information is an essential part of the consultancy service. Moreover, there are no certain work hours for a consultant because in the world of uncertainty crises or challenging political conditions may always occur and a consultant should be prepared for these possibilities to protect interests of the clients. In addition to these, using every opportunity and organized events for the business development of the clients and also providing necessary contacts and negotiation environment with both political and social stakeholders are the dynamics that maintain the catalytic effect. In the following section, I explain the concepts of institutional transformation and isomorphism through the e-commerce company case which contains data from the interviews with two partners of the Alfa Strategy Consultancy and my experiences in the observation process (see Appendix A).

### **3.2. E-COMMERCE COMPANY CASE**

E-commerce company case refers a significant market entrance process of a global e-commerce company which created added value for the Turkish marketplace and re-shape the dynamics and structures of the e-commerce sector in Turkey. Thus, e-commerce company case presents an outstanding example regarding the concepts of institutional transformation and isomorphism. The public affairs consultancy process of the e-commerce company has started at the beginning of the April 2018, and official market entrance launch of the company occurred in September 2018.

Regarding the beginning of the process, Sinan Kaya stated during his interview on September 20 that the e-commerce company has heard about them from other people by way of word of mouth (see Appendix A). Before the elimination process, the e-commerce company had a long list which composes of the names of candidate consultants. With the elimination according to specific criteria, which are corporate structure and understanding, previous consultancy works, compliance and anti-bribery standards, knowledge level, and the competence of the team, the candidate list became shorter.

Moreover, the e-commerce company also required a position paper from all the candidates to express their attitudes and strategies about a specific situation. After the lengthy negotiation process, the consultancy firm and e-commerce company agreed (Kaya, 2018). The other managing partner Ahmet Yurdum also stated that the e-commerce company was considering the Turkish market entrance for a long time and they followed acts of the e-commerce company in this sense (Yurdum, 2018).

Concerning public affairs consultancy expectations of the e-commerce company, Sinan Kaya expressed that the e-commerce company needed this kind of consultancy service until they settled and hired their public affairs consultant in the structure of the company (Kaya, 2018). Ahmet Yurdum also stated that they required insights regarding political affairs, economic conditions, regulations, especially about their business area to determine the position. Moreover, the e-commerce company also gave importance to the issue of stakeholder map to provide sectoral relations and connections and also assess their way to present themselves (Yurdum, 2018). In addition to basic public affairs expectations of the e-commerce company, when I asked during the interviews if they propose additional strategies to apply both of the partners answered positively. The founding partner defined this situation as over-servicing and stated that competition strategy regarding the other global e-commerce giant which was also considering the Turkish marketplace to invest at the same time and information about the attitudes of significant people from Ankara has provided for the e-commerce company (Kaya, 2018). The other managing partner expressed that they developed and recommended projects with the NGOs and other stakeholders in public to support public affairs activities that they conducted (Yurdum, 2018).

Within the frame of this agreement and strategy determination process, during my observation and internship, my first task for the e-commerce company was a translation of part of the official value proposition document of the e-commerce company from English to Turkish. After this, at the middle of April, I prepared long lists regarding sectoral stakeholders which include chambers of commerce from all the cities, industry councils from all sectors, and exporters' associations country-wide with the names and contact information of their presidents. Regarding the political aspect, at the end of the May, I translated a list which compares the structure of existing ministries and possible ministries after the election on June 24 if the ruling party win. This situation explains the

scope of the public affairs strategies which also refers to being prepared for all possible political conditions in advance to provide and protect the benefit of the client. I also observed how the political uncertainty due to early elections and changing system influence the steps of the e-commerce company as making the market entrance process longer to wait for a more stable environment. Moreover, the election results and the vote rates also summarized and explained to the e-commerce company as the part of public affairs consultancy.

At the first days of the June, Ahmet Yurdum required me to prepare the weekly round-up which sent to the e-commerce company regularly at the same day of the week and contains significant political, regulatory, economic, and e-commerce news. For this task, I analyzed all the news through the week and selected the most considerable developments for the e-commerce company. After revision and approval of the two partners of the consultancy firm and the consultant from Ankara, the weekly round-up delivered to the e-commerce company executives. In addition to regular documents of the informative side of the public affairs consultancy, there may be urgent situations and updates. For example, Ahmet Yurdum also wanted me to prepare backgrounder and translation immediately for two times about diverse news which covers a significant partnership regarding e-commerce logistics and statements of the Minister of Finance regarding the Turkish marketplace, global e-commerce companies that came into Turkey, and the negotiation process with them.

As the consequence of these kinds of and further services, when I asked in the interviews if expectations and demands of the e-commerce companies in institutional context fulfilled during the market entrance process, Ahmet Yurdum said that: “In reference to their investments, the opportunities seem to be more than the risks” (Yurdum,2018). Moreover, the founding partner of the consultancy firm stated that the expected institutional environment has formed at first place, but it will also progress. On the other hand, the needed conditions for the e-commerce company to convey their institutional and regulatory demands to Ankara and bureaucracy has maintained as he stated (Kaya, 2018).

In the case of institutional changes and transformation, that market entrance of the e-commerce company and public affairs activities lead, the founding partner of the consultancy firm said that:

"Market entrance of the second most valuable company of the world is significant for any country thus changes something. This transformation process has started in Turkey, but for now, there are no great changes in addition to usual lobby activities because we are at the very beginning of the process. This kind of works settled through a year-process" (Kaya,2018).

In addition to these, other managing partner emphasized the reflection of this market entry in the public through his answer and stated the e-commerce strategy of the government (Yurdum, 2018). In this sense, the institutional transformations that he mentioned as E-commerce Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2020 has formed, Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Customs has united as the Ministry of Commerce in the new presidential system, TOBB (The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey) organized the E-commerce Council, and PTT (General Directorate of Post and Telegraph Organization) has formed the E-AVM which is its own e-commerce platform. On the other hand, he also highlighted that these significant institutional transformations realized within the frame of common interests of both government and the e-commerce company and besides with the influence of the other global e-commerce giant that invested in Turkey too (Yurdum, 2018).

Regarding the creation of institutional isomorphism and the expansion of universal institutional norms with the influence of the e-commerce company case in Turkey, the founding partner of the consultancy firm approved the creation of institutional isomorphism and stated that with the investment of the other global e-commerce giant too, this transformation process will be more successful than previous experiences in Turkey (Kaya, 2018). In addition to these, I also asked the institutional adaptation process of the e-commerce company during the interviews regarding maintaining the common ground between the government, e-commerce company, and other stakeholders. About this issue, Sinan Kaya stated that adaptation process has not completed and so far, progress well, but there will be more challenging situations after this phase because if changes require the decision of the Council of Ministers or higher resolutions, those matters take more time (Kaya, 2018). Ahmet Yurdum also stated that the adaptation process was not strict because the e-commerce company is a big player and presence of this company provides an added-value for Turkey (Yurdum, 2018). However, evaluation of this process as the issue-based way and forming alliances according to this is more logical because it is an ongoing process and while in some cases common interest may be provided among all the stakeholders but some cases may not as he expressed.

Moreover, Yurdum (2018) emphasized that a big organization like the e-commerce company will always have public policy demands as long as business operations of the company continue in Turkey. Regarding this process, he also said that:

“So far, we have not done anything to provide accommodation to the e-commerce company and other players in the sector. However, in relations with the state more precisely, to harmonizing the approaches of the e-commerce company and state we did. Yes, there may be certain restrictions for international companies regarding understanding local values and demands due to being a foreigner, but these are not the limitations that may not be exceeded, these are the things that we are used to” (Yurdum, 2018).

This statement is significant because it highlighted the point which can be considered in the intercultural communication context in the sense of being foreigner and challenges due to this. But as he stated, this situation may be solved with the public affairs activities which go far beyond this context with a political focus and provided common interests of the sides.

In the case of institutional transformation and isomorphism of the local competitors with the influence of the e-commerce company specially in the mimetic term which refers to isomorphism through copying and imitating according to the concept of DiMaggio and Powell (1983), Sinan Kaya expressed their expectations of move from local competitors regarding this market entrance in his interview on September 20. In this context, the other managing partner said during his interview that: “If a big player is going to enter the sector from the outside, there may be consolidation between other players in the sector from time to time” (Yurdum, 2018). He also expressed that he may not follow the local competitors in that closeness, but these local companies should adopt the new sectoral environment and legal regulations to protect their competitive advantage and survive in the marketplace. Thus, local competitors also may transform like changing the CEO, making consolidation, purchase, going public or floating share (Yurdum, 2018). Moreover, regarding this issue, Yurdum also emphasized that the local competitors will adopt the institutional transformation or present an argument to the public against this transformation. In this sense, he gave the example of the other e-commerce giant that invested in Turkey too and important agreements and projects that this company made with the banks and logistics bodies to maintain its transformation in Turkey as the reflection to market entrance of my case study e-commerce company.

According to my argument and the Theoretical Model, public affairs activities have the catalytic effect in the process of institutional transformation and isomorphism. In this

sense, Sinan Kaya evaluated their effect and stated the time required for the formation of the negotiation environment between the government and e-commerce company had been shortened with their public affairs activities (Kaya, 2018). On the other hand, the other partner stated that providing public affairs consultancy service was one of the strategical decisions of the e-commerce company through market entrance process and said that:

“Now public affairs departments are also involved in the strategic decision- making processes of companies, such as HR and finance departments. The positions that manage all the external relations of the companies started to be opened. So, when an organization like the e-commerce company is investing in a country, which is a big decision, one of the components of these strategic decisions are the information regarding public affairs and public policy areas. Thus, we had the catalytic role regarding maintaining the proper data for these strategic decisions in my opinion” (Yurdum, 2018).

In addition to this, both of the founding and managing partners of the consultancy firm expressed in their interviews that the e-commerce company found its own public affairs consultant and the consultancy firm provides strategical and practical support to the new consultant for further public affairs activities of the e-commerce company (Kaya, 2018; Yurdum, 2018).

To sum up, during the seven-month internship and observation, the catalytic effect of the public affairs activities has provided through diverse strategies as I experienced and the partners of the consultancy firm have expressed in their open-ended interviews. In addition to these and e-commerce company case, I evaluate and explain the formation of institutional isomorphism with the opinions and experiences of other sectoral experts from different consultancy firms through the data from open-ended interviews in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONSULTANCY SECTOR: EXPERT VIEWS ON NON-MARKET STRATEGIES AND ISOMORPHISM

In this thesis, I used the interview method concerning two aspects. First one was to understand the details and main steps of my e-commerce company case which I mentioned in Chapter 3. The second one was to reaching the consultancy firms that able to provide public affairs consultancy services and understanding their approaches regarding the public affairs area, sectoral dynamics, and institutional transformation and isomorphism concepts to evaluate my argument and the Theoretical Model.

#### 4.1. CONTEXTUALIZATION OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS: UNDERSTANDING THE SECTORAL DYNAMICS

Although there is sufficient literature regarding public affairs, strategic communication, and non-market strategies, as the first step of my open-ended interviews I asked sectoral experts and obtain information about their both personal and corporate approaches in these strategies and their applications. In this sense, expressions of the top executives from diverse consultancy firms as stated below (see Appendix A).

According to the relevant literature, public affairs strategies are essential for the survival and benefit of the companies and also significant as much as the market strategies because companies usually affected the actions and inactions of the government especially regarding their business operation areas (Meznar and Nigh, 1993; Hillman and Hitt, 1999, and Harris and Fleisher, 2005). In this regard when I asked their perception of public affairs and strategic communication, Ahmet Yurдум from Alfa Strategy Consultancy defined as “A general name that covers to the relations of private companies or non-governmental organizations with the public” (Yurдум, 2018). He also stated that there are several names in the literature such as government relations, stakeholder engagements, and corporate political activity and all these activities aim to influence decisions of the public bodies (Yurдум, 2018). Sinan Kaya from the same consultancy firm emphasized that there are narrow and wide meanings of the public affairs activities,

and the wide sense of public affairs activities refer the ability to be proactive in their relations with the government and influencing the processes according to own competitive advantage of the company which they addressed with the term of strategic public affairs (Kaya, 2018).

Defne Karaman, who is the president of the Beta Communication Consultancy, stated that the concept of communication is an umbrella which contains public affairs, strategic communication, and all the other areas (Karaman, 2018). In this sense, being goal oriented, creating strategies according to these goals, and applying them with appropriate steps are the determinators of the communication process (Karaman, 2018). About the public affairs, Karaman emphasized that proper management of the governmental relations and sustainability of this communication environment is necessary. Selin Ekin, CEO of the Orion Consultancy, and Serdar Levent, president of the Delta Communication Consultancy, also emphasized the higher scope of communication and strategic communication concept in their interviews (see Appendix A). In this sense, Ekin said that:

"We define as the Orion Consultancy; strategic communication is a term which covers required strategies and practices for maintaining communication environment with all the stakeholders to realize operations of the companies in a specific market. Public affairs are one of the significant components in this term because the public also a stakeholder" (Ekin, 2018).

Ekin also stated that this is a 360-degree term and public affairs constitute one of the most significant parts to provide market operations of the companies. Levent also emphasized that the purpose orientation and intended changes of perception and actions of the stakeholders are the dynamics of the communication planning process which refer to strategic communication consultancy (Levent, 2018). At this point, public affairs strategies may include creating a social benefit or the collective mind of diverse stakeholders through their profits regarding a specific issue (Levent, 2018).

Moreover, I also asked about their evaluations non-market strategies and corporate political activities concepts that appear in the literature. According to the literature, the non-market strategy is a broad term which refers to the actions and interactions of the companies outside the market environment to gain prestige, and competitive advantage and these strategies may include both political and social stakeholders (Baron, 1995; Minor, 2015, and Liedong, Rajwani, and Mellahi, 2017). In this sense, Yurdum said that:

"When we look at the literature, the non-market strategy is the most covering part. The non-market strategy consists of two literature, one of these is corporate political activities that refer to relations and actions of the companies in the political area. The other one is corporate social responsibility that means relations of the companies in the social sphere. We describe all this as the non-market strategy. Why does it out of the market? Because the market is more interested in issues like customer relations, competition, supply, etc. Public affairs are also one of the non-market strategies that oriented to the political and state relations" (Yurdum, 2018).

Ekin also emphasized that non-market strategies are useful in an indirect way regarding operations and profit of the companies (Ekin, 2018). Thus, all practices regarding the indirect market benefit of the companies are in the scope of public affairs activities and communication operations. When we look at the aim of the corporate social responsibility activities, we see that the primary purpose is also to improve the prestige and role in the marketplace (Ekin, 2018). Regarding this issue, in his interview, Serdar Levent said that "Nothing is non-market. Even the corporate social responsibility practices have very serious on-market goals" (Levent, 2018).

On the other hand, Sinan Kaya gave the example of the Venn diagram and stated that there are both the common and separate points of public affairs and non-market strategies (Kaya, 2018). The separation points refer to strategic decisions of the high-level executives in the case of crises or issue management subjects because under these circumstances, although the public affairs may direct the process, decision makers are the C level managers of the companies (Kaya, 2018). Defne Karaman also emphasized the 360-degree structure of the strategic communication as Ekin mentioned in her interview and stated that without determining business goals, stakeholders, and the vision or reason of the company the non-market strategies like social responsibility will not work (Karaman, 2018).

In addition to these, when I asked their client-based strategies and relations with them in the consultancy processes, all interviewees stated that they provide further strategies and insights in addition to the demands of their clients. In this sense, Yurdum said that:

"The beginning of these processes usually goes as follows: ultimately you need to understand the demands of the customer first. At this point, perceiving the goals of the customer is necessary. Sometimes the customer expresses what the problem is, and sometimes you can see the symptoms and make the diagnosis" (Yurdum, 2018).

Ekin also stated that especially in the case of international companies that come in Turkey, they necessarily direct the companies beyond the action demands in the area of public affairs because these companies do not have sufficient information about the market-

place and structure (Ekin, 2018). She also stated that at this point re-shaping and adapting strategy demands of the clients to Turkey environment is significant and they create added-value in this context (Ekin, 2018).

Sinan Kaya (2018) expressed that the strategy determination process of public affairs activities has different dynamics according to the clients. Some of the clients give strict briefs and expect the application of these exactly, and some of them require to provide consultancy services about specific issues that they do not have information but in any case, the responsibility of the consultants giving insight about the situations which the clients may not aware but significant regarding their business goals and risks (Kaya, 2018). In this sense, Defne Karaman emphasized the importance of the research and providing information as the base and/or guide of their strategies. She also stated that sometimes other issues to solve might appear under the demands of the clients so, rather than fulfill the client demands, consultants should understand the expectations of the clients and determine their needs to constitute a proper plan in her interview (Karaman, 2018). Serdar Levent also highlighted the understanding the communication and strategy needs of the clients and prepare the strategic steps according to these but also stated that applying these steps is the decision of the clients (Levent, 2018).

As the final of this section, I asked the sectoral differences of their clients and how these differences affect their strategies. In this sense, Kaya said that “There is a difference in the relations of each sector with regulators and the government” (Kaya, 2018). He also stated that for each sector strategy determination, the people that they interact, and stakeholders are different (Kaya, 2018). According to Karaman, there are several expectations of clients about consultants and one of them is being expert in the related sector and required communication strategy. She also said that:

“Each sector is different. Two things are important here; sectoral specialization which refers to having knowing the sector that you will give consultancy; the second is you should have served and specialized in many areas of communication. Thus, we combine these two aspects. We bring together the most knowledgeable people regarding the sector and most experienced people in the specific communication field in our services” (Karaman, 2018).

In this context, both Selin Ekin and Serdar Levent emphasized the separation of B2B and B2C companies. Ekin (2018) stated that B2B companies have not direct connections with the last consumers and they want to conduct public affairs strategies according to their customer portfolio and governmental and sectoral stakeholders such as ministries, sectoral associations, and local administrations. On the other hand, B2C companies have

more market and consumer-oriented strategies (Ekin, 2018). Levent also expressed that in addition to strategy differences between B2B and B2C companies there are sectoral variables among them, but the significant thing for the consultancy companies is providing the supporting characteristics of diverse information about different sectors (Levent, 2018).

#### **4.2. SECTORAL APPROACHES REGARDING THE RELEVANT THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

In addition to expert opinions regarding public affairs, strategic communication, and non-market strategies, I also asked about theoretical issues that this thesis covers and changing sectoral dynamics with the influence of international companies investments as the second and third stages of my interviews. At this point approaches of the interviewees as mentioned below (see Appendix A).

According to my argument and the Theoretical Model market entrances of the international companies expand the universal institutional norms and lead the institutional transformation, when I asked their opinions and experiences or a case from their clients regarding this issue Yurdum stated that the government always perceived as a static and unchangeable organization from the outside and there is a static side of the state, but at the same time, the state is a learning organization (Yurdum, 2018). Thus an institutional transformation may occur within the state (Yurdum, 2018). Moreover, Yurdum (2018) also mentioned that according to their information from the consultancy sector improvement and transformation of the public institutions to provide efficiency and effectiveness are the issues that on the agenda.

Regarding public affairs, companies interact with diverse stakeholders in public to express themselves adequately (Yurdum, 2018). Through these interactions, companies introduce themselves by presenting brochures that they prepared and organizing meetings, workshops, and training events even in the abroad to show the standards and organization of other public institutions (Yurdum, 2018). Thus, they try to create the transformation of public institutions in a way (Yurdum, 2018). At this point, Yurdum gave the example of the report of a global petroleum company about the energy sector of Turkey and its future in the 2000s. He stated that bureaucrats and decision makers paid

attention to this report and made regulations according to it which may be considered as an institutional transformation (Yurdum,2018). This kind of change which based on information and universal standards refers to the normative isomorphism concept of DiMaggio and Powell (1983).

Regarding structural context, Yurdum stated that institutions consist of people and institutional transformation may realize through enhancing the knowledge level and awareness of these people about specific issues. Institutions may transform in the process as the learning bodies and market entrance, and regulation/policy demands of the companies about particular contexts may also trigger the transformation (Yurdum, 2018). However, the state or any public bodies will not transform themselves for just a company and its market entrance (Yurdum, 2018).

In this sense, Sinan Kaya gave the example of a floriculture company from Dutch which is one of their clients. When a big player like the floriculture company come in the marketplace, they may notice and express sectoral issues, market conditions, and regulatory aspects that required the change and apply public affairs strategies in this context. This situation leads to a significant change and transformation in the sector, and there may be several sectoral actors who resist the transformation (Kaya, 2018). He also said that: "Especially this is the area of public affairs because if the public is not accustomed to such big investments, then it needs to change its position and own laws and regulations" (Kaya, 2018). Moreover, regarding the Dutch floriculture company example, Kaya expressed that if the company perceived the market entrance as the part of being an international actor, they might take and use their cultural and structural experiences in Turkey to make specific changes in their own operations (Kaya, 2018). This situation may refer to a two-sided transformation and acceleration of the isomorphism process in the institutional structures. About the e-commerce company case and e-commerce sector in Turkey, Kaya mentioned that Turkey has deficient points and problems in e-commerce sector regarding adaptation of regulations, payment systems, and enactments but with the market entrance of the e-commerce company which I explained as my case study and other significant e-commerce investors these conditions will change and transform (Kaya, 2018). Regarding this issue, Kaya stated that:

“When the relations of production change in a country, every superstructure relation related to this area customer relations vs. also change. Thus, when these relations change, as the continuation the governmental relations and regulative issues transform too” (Kaya, 2018).

Regarding the market entrance of the international companies and realization of institutional transformation with this influence, Selin Ekin (2018) stated that she experienced this situation personally for multiple cases in her interview. She mentioned the example of a chemistry company which in between regarding investing in Turkey or Taiwan (Ekin, 2018). To attract the chemistry company and investment Turkish bureaucrats and decision makers gave significant incentives and she also stated that Turkey is very adaptive in this sense (Ekin, 2018). Ekin also said that "This institutional transformation continues because when you give incentives and realize the institutional transformation, other companies that come after benefit from this transformation" (Ekin, 2018). Regarding continuation of the institutional transformation, Ekin approved in her interview that big international companies always have requirements in the areas of policy and regulations as long as they pursue their operations in the country. Moreover, she expressed that bureaucracy has to transform itself to attract investors and bring them into the country (Ekin, 2018).

On the other hand, Karaman also mentioned two-sided transformation regarding the institutions and stated that international companies had influenced the diffusion of universal norms and corporate governance understanding in Turkey (Karaman, 2018). She also noted that this institutional transformation is the reflection of the global conditions which is more than the market entrance of the single company (Karaman, 2018). In addition to these, Serdar Levent mentioned that realization of institutional transformation and isomorphism is depend on the size of the market entrance and investor company (Levent, 2018). He also gave the example of two global automotive companies that made investments in Turkey long years ago and stated that these companies determined and constituted quality standards of the sector according to international norms and in the following years the other brands came into the Turkish market because of these standards and proper human resources (Levent, 2018). Moreover, he also mentioned that big international companies influence the transformation of subsidiary industries and units regarding their business area (Levent, 2018).

To have a better understanding about the catalytic effect of the public affairs activities that mentioned in my Theoretical Model, I asked efficiency and effectiveness of the public affairs strategies such as lobbying and stakeholder engagement regarding leading transformation and isomorphism processes and maintaining expected institutional

environment to the international companies. In this regard, Yurdum said that:

“There is always a balance in this point. As a result, a public institution has a point of view to provide more public benefit and to reach political and bureaucratic goals. Of course, companies are profit-making commercial structures. Therefore, mutual demands may be confronted in the first place. There is usually a point of convergence after this. If this point could not be provided, then the company has to make a decision which investment can be canceled, or operations may stop, but usually, there is a mutual compromise point” (Yurdum, 2018).

Defne Karaman also has emphasized providing the common interests of the sides and said that:

“Maintaining the common point is significant in this context. Finding the method that obtains the benefit to both sides is necessary. The only thing that determines the process is the contribution of the investor to the country and benefit of Turkey from this market entrance both concerning economically and politically. There is no sense to interact with bureaucracy without constituting the subtext. The important thing is providing win-win relation and support this with the data” (Karaman, 2018).

Regarding the issue, Sinan Kaya stated that so far international companies could not wholly provide the expected institutional environment and changes, but with the current transformation of the bureaucratic system in Turkey they will maintain required changes easier. According to his statement, this structure will be settled within 3 to 5 years, and we may see the results regarding institutional transformation (Kaya, 2018). Moreover, Kaya also said that:

“The reason for the institutional transformation will be a competitive advantage that the universal institutional values provide. With the increasing importance of regulations, these values become the provider of competitive advantage and those who do not adopt them may not survive” (Kaya, 2018).

Selin Ekin (2018) also approved the efficiency and effectiveness of the public affairs strategies regarding lobby activities and personal interactions of the two sides in her interview. Ekin (2018) stated that when she introduced her clients to the bureaucracy in a proper way, even there is no major investment Turkish bureaucrats approach the issue very positive and supportive way. However, the process and fulfillment of the policy expectations depend on the size of the investment and company (Ekin, 2018). There may be no expected results in the minor investments which Ekin stated according to her previous experiences (Ekin, 2018).

In addition to these, Levent stated that although their policy demands are not fulfilled completely, international companies come to the Turkish marketplace. He also summarized the essential expectations of the foreigner companies as profit maximization, the proper legal system, institutional structure, and also not finding any threat to their

existence in that country (Levent, 2018).

Moreover, I asked if they evaluate their roles as the “catalyzer” in the market entrance processes of the international companies and how they create this catalytic effect. Ahmet Yurdum approved the catalytic effect and said that:

“Public affairs consultancy firms like us are the structures which have significant experiences in this context, see diverse projects of clients from different sectors, and have the ability to envisage possible problems and prevent them. Thus, we have a serious added-value in this sense, so we earn money from these services. Clients also see this situation otherwise they would not pay for it. These are very significant issues because even a minor change in the regulations leads billion dollars profit or loss, so companies are open to investing in these spheres. They are not our client, but Uber is a very substantial example. Uber is a huge organization, but there are lots of points that they could not handle. Airbnb and PayPal also the companies which they could not agree with the regulatory issues and pull out of the market or stopped their operations” (Yurdum, 2018).

Sinan Kaya also mentioned that public affairs activities have a significant catalytic effect and we may even name these activities as “enabler” too. Moreover, public affairs strategies may be a driver in the case of settlement of the business model or institutional transformation of a highly regulated sector, but this situation is rare in comparison with the enable or catalytic effect (Kaya, 2018). He also emphasized that "If the risk factors are not considered, relations not managed properly, and the public does not see any profit, public affairs become a serious barrier" (Kaya, 2018).

Levent approved the catalytic effect of the public affairs activities too and mentioned the role of sectoral associations in this context. Sectoral associations are usually very active to conduct lobby activities and follow the regulatory processes (Levent, 2018). He also said that "Certain very big companies interact with the government on their own" (Levent, 2018).

About the issue, Defne Karaman said that in her interview: "What the consultant already has to do is to provide an added value. If you are providing it, you have the catalytic effect" (Karaman, 2018). In addition to these, Selin Ekin (2018) also approved the catalytic effect and gave an example in this context from one of her previous experiences about the client from Brussels which produced an energy efficiency technology for televisions. According to her statements, they conduct a lobby activity regarding this technology, and the aim was re-shape the regulation according to energy saving rate that the client achieved with its technology. They accomplished this, and the regulation has changed as the consequence of their public affairs activities not just regarding the decision makers but also with the other stakeholders like environmentalist associations mainly

(Ekin, 2018). She said that "We used 3rd parties to convince and transmit our message by emphasizing the social benefit. However, the actual purpose of the company was providing its own profit" (Ekin, 2018).

Regarding the adaptation processes of the international companies, Yurdum (2018) stated that companies should consider and analyze the non-market conditions such as institutional structure and legal system and prepare a risk map before they decide to invest in a country. To reduce these risks, they may conduct institutional adaptation and transformation strategies and interact with the decision makers in this context (Yurdum, 2018). In this sense, Defne Karaman stated that there are lots of global companies that continue their business operations in Turkey for long years. They apply their settled corporate governance system and strategies in here too with the local employees (Karaman, 2018). Moreover, local dynamics and conditions should be considered, and at this point, consultants become part of the process and companies that are foreign to management need more help in this regard. (Karaman, 2018). About the issue, Selin Ekin (2018) stated that the companies which do not have insight regarding the marketplace might have difficulties to adapt and compare here with the other countries. At this point, she mentioned the term of glocalization and stated that companies should adopt the conditions of the marketplace if they want to pursue their business operations (Ekin, 2018). However, Ekin (2018) also approved in her interview that this adaptation process becomes easier when the size of the investment and added value that the company creates increased.

In addition to these, about the scope of the international communication context and public affairs activities, Yurdum stated that there might be several restrictions of international companies to understand local values and structures. However, according to his statement, these are not the things that they may not solve, they accustomed to these issues (Yurdum, 2018). Selin Ekin emphasized the significance of the cultural differences regarding personal interactions and stated that managing the cultural differences and the process is one of the most critical parts of their job especially in the case of global companies. Introducing the cultural structure, profiles of people who subject of the communication practices, and proper way of behaving and interacting is also part of the consultancy (Ekin, 2018). On the other hand, Ekin approved that this is not the essential part of the public affairs consultancy and define this as an important "nuance" of the

process. Cultural differences which based on nationality and the intercultural communication context are considered to constitute the proper genre of communication to achieve strategic purposes (Ekin, 2018). She also stated that after finding the common point between the sides regarding the profit there is no other boundary to overcome (Ekin, 2018). Serdar Levent also stated in his interview that finding the common point and providing mutual benefit inhere in the structure of every business interactions. If you cannot ensure this condition, business relation will not continue even the sides are the members of the same culture (Levent, 2018).

As the third and final stage of my interview questions, I asked about their observations and experiences about local competitors of the international companies regarding the creation of mimetic isomorphism that DiMaggio and Powell defined as copying and imitating (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Ahmet Yurdum expressed that they especially follow the public affairs activities that competitors conduct. How they determine their positions, which associations they are the member of, and how to express themselves to the public are the issues that they pursue (Yurdum, 2018). Because understanding the actors and the interaction between them is crucial (Yurdum, 2018). However, commercially competitor companies may constitute alliances regarding public affairs activities in the sectoral issues such as common demand for tax regulation and in this sense, business associations and NGOs have a significant role (Yurdum, 2018). Especially in the case of international companies, providing support of the local actors about demanded institutional changes and interacting with the government in this way provide a huge advantage (Yurdum, 2018). In this context, Yurdum gave the example of Booking which stopped its operation in Turkey with the impact of TURSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies) and Uber which also influenced from the attitudes of taxi drivers as their stakeholders (Yurdum, 2018). In this sense, the significance of stakeholder/community engagement side regarding public affairs activities emerge and about the issue, Yurdum said that:

"International companies that invest in Turkey and have the intention of providing institutional transformation should demonstrate all the relations in the market and constitute required alliances among these relations before interacting with the government" (Yurdum, 2018).

In the case of mimetic isomorphism, He stated that if a big player comes from the outside and makes the entrance to the sector, this changes all dynamics so local competitors

should adopt this situation and define their position (Yurdum, 2018). He also stated that this situation occurs in every sector smart organizations take these changes and the others may not survive as the consequence of the market conditions (Yurdum, 2018). Moreover, Sinan Kaya also approved that they follow the activities and reflections of the local competitors regarding the e-commerce company case in his interview (Kaya, 2018). About the issue, Defne Karaman stated that they follow the actions of the competitors for their clients in their every service to design the proper strategies and create a difference in their communication actions (Karaman, 2018). Moreover, regarding the mimetic isomorphism, Karaman stated that this is the concept of “best practice”. Adopting the best practice and transform according to these standards are the necessities for every sector and every institutional structure may influence by this situation including the state (Karaman, 2018).

Selin Ekin also mentioned that they follow the public affairs strategies of the competitors especially from the same business operation area of their clients (Ekin, 2018). In addition to their general research about competitors, she also stated the "stakeholder mapping" which is very detailed research about all the stakeholders including the competitors, their interactions and connections with each other, and also strategic communication actions (Ekin, 2018). Ekin emphasized that international companies give high importation to this research. Regarding the mimetic isomorphism and institutional transformation of the local competitors, Ekin stated that this is a natural process and also said that:

"In terms of relations with both the government and public, it is necessary to apply public affairs strategies to protect their positions in the market and expand their business. They need to reshape their relationship with all the stakeholders because a new player comes to the market and become the part of it. Especially when the global firms come in, they attract more local institutions due to the size and higher company value. Because the international companies are strong competitors, very significant transformation process regarding the local actors occur" (Ekin, 2018).

As the consequence of these, through the interviews, I provide broad information from the top executives of the four consultancy firms regarding public affairs, strategic communication, dynamics of consultancy services and also theoretical concepts such as institutional isomorphism and the catalytic effect of the public affairs to substantiate my argument and Theoretical Model. In this regard, through the following chapter, I evaluate and interpret my research findings that I obtained from participant observation, open-ended interviews, and the literature within the frame of my Theoretical Model as the conclusion.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. EVALUATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Through this thesis, I used participant observation/ethnography and open-ended interview methods to explain my argument and the Theoretical Model regarding the diffusion of universal institutional norms and creation of institutional isomorphism via investments of the international companies to other countries and the catalytic effect of the public affairs activities in this process. Moreover, I also used the relevant literature to interpret my collected data.

In this sense, according to the relevant literature, public affairs are the diverse activities that evaluated within the frame of non-market strategies which refers to companies' actions to maintain prestige and a good image for their on-market and policy profits (Minor, 2015; Liedong, Rajwani, and Mellahi, 2017). Public affairs activities also function as an interface between the government and all the stakeholders which is essential for their ultimate survival (Meznar and Nigh, 1993; 1995). Companies tend to influence government decisions and legal processes to protect their interest or prevent the other organizations in the political sphere which their goals conflict (Lord, 2000; Getz, 2001). In this sense, public affair activities also provide community engagement which both protects business operations and relations with all stakeholders in public (Mahon, Heugens, and Lamertz, 2004). Moreover, public affairs strategies may both constitute buffer and bridge to protect the company from outside environment or to maintaining engagement with it (Meznar and Nigh, 1995). These functions of the public affairs reduce uncertainty and make the business and political goals more achievable as the catalytic effect.

On the other hand, regarding the institutional transformation and isomorphism, all the organizations became similar although they try to differentiate themselves because when an organizational area well settled the isomorphism is the inevitable result (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Isomorphic structure of the organizations occurs in three ways that

are normative as information based, coercive as outsider pressure to change, and mimetic as copying or imitating the legitimate structure (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Regarding formation of isomorphic structure in the specific area interactions of the organizations with each other and the establishment of common institutional understanding are significant dynamics (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Wahid and Sein (2013) emphasize the importance of the institutional entrepreneur who manages the institutional isomorphism. In their case study, the mayor stated as the institutional entrepreneur who changes the operation model and institutional logic, that refers central mindset of the organization, according to the universal institutional norms (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Wahid and Sein, 2013). Moreover, for settlement of the new practices and institutional understanding, deinstitutionalization is the necessary process which refers to discontinuity and delegitimization of the existing system (Oliver, 1992).

Institutions are human-directed structures and institutional rules shaped according to the habitual actions and interactions of the people that make institutional transformation possible by learning and accepting a different way of action in accordance with the environmental changes (Selznick, 1957: 21-22 and Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 54 cited in Scott, 1987). Moreover, isomorphism occurs to provide legitimacy and conformity of the organizations in their external environment and social frame (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 1977 cited in Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Shin-Kap Han, 1994). In this sense, government organizations are more vulnerable to the outside pressure regarding the legitimacy than the business and non-profit organizations (Frumkin and Galaskiewicz, 2004). With the aim of reducing uncertainty, imitation of the operation ways and actions may realize according to several dynamics such as application frequency, specific features of the favorable structure, and desirable outcomes (Haunschild and Miner, 1997).

Regarding organizational structure and transformation, organizations are the structures that consist of people with the same goals and common institutional understanding (Rainey, 2009). There are two approaches regarding the organizations, first one is Meyer and Rowan (1977) state that organizational structures shaped according to the outside environment. The second one is organizations are rational actors within their complex institutional environments (Thompson, 1967; Blau and Schoenherr, 1971 cited in Tolbert and Zucker, 1983). Moreover, transformation process of the organizations differs

according to their kinds as government, business, and non-profit (Sims, 2010; Sims, Sauser, and Bias, 2016). In this sense organizational transformation may be realized through interpretation and adaptation of changing environmental conditions such as technological development, customer requirements, personal development of the workforce, new laws and regulations, stakeholder influences, and occurrence of new methods in the operation area (Sims, 2010; Lewis, 2011).

About the intercultural communication context, two aspects considered in this thesis which are mean of the term “intercultural” and scope of the intercultural communication as a study area. Elements of the culture are stated as nationality, ethnic or religious group, gender, generation, social class, and employment (Hofstede et al., 2010). However, these elements differ from people to people even in the same community. Moreover, people are the members of various cultures according to their interested areas and ways of life, so these elements make every communication process ‘intercultural’ beyond the nations and cultural classifications. Today we are living in a globalized world and experience the technology, internet connection, mass media, etc. which create a shared sense between people from different countries. In addition to these, intercultural communication is the discipline that focuses on the how cultural variations that mainly based on nationality affect the communication processes (Spencer-Oatey and Kotthoff, 2007; Luring, 2011; Paulstone, Kiesling, and Rangel, 2012). In this sense, public affairs activities provide interactions of the government and international companies through their common profit and institutional understanding as beyond the intercultural communication context.

During my seven-month participant observation and internship process which also includes the e-commerce company case study, I obtained information about both the catalytic effect of public affairs activities and e-commerce company case regarding the institutional transformation and formation of isomorphism. In this sense, according to my observations and experiences, operation of public affairs activities and strategy determination process based on the research and information. Having sufficient information about the clients, sectors of the clients, legal and regulatory developments, stakeholders, and required communication methods are essential to maintaining the catalytic effect. Moreover, according to my observations in the Alfa Strategy Consultancy, regarding both the e-commerce company case and floriculture company from Dutch, clients give importance the insight and make their decisions considering

these insights of the consultants. Although consultants recommend specific strategies for the clients according to their experiences and research, clients may not approve these strategies and revision might be needed.

In the case of the e-commerce company case and its market entrance, according to the statements of Ahmet Yurdum and Sinan Kaya (2018) during their interviews and my experiences, strategic public affairs consultancy services had provided as political insight, stakeholder engagement, strategic guidance for lobby activities to company's own consultant, and competitor analysis. As the consequence of these services, the investment and market entry of the e-commerce company realized which leads significant institutional transformation both in the sector and regulatory issues such as e-commerce strategy of the government and the catalytic effect of the public affairs activities appeared as the formation of the required environment for the further policy demands of the e-commerce company (Kaya, 2018).

In addition to these, through the open-ended interviews with the sectoral experts, they defined the area of public affairs as a significant effort and interactions of the companies for influencing their political and societal stakeholders to maintain benefit as stated in the literature. Moreover, all the interviewees agreed on the recommending further strategies for their clients according to their communication needs and business goals, the catalytic effect of public affairs activities, and necessity of in-depth research and information both in different sectoral aspects and political developments. Concerning intercultural communication context, Yurdum (2018) stated that specific strengths that cause from being foreigner are general issues that they may overcome. Moreover, Ekin (2018) emphasize the importance of maintaining the proper communication process between the parties and defined the intercultural communication as a significant "nuance" in the public affairs process. Moreover, without providing mutual interest point and institutional base, managing cultural differences will not work for the business goals of the clients.

About the institutional transformation, isomorphism, and diffusion of universal institutional norms, Selin Ekin (2018) stated that she experienced the process of institutional transformation with the investment possibility of the international companies personally and gave the chemistry company example which Turkey gave significant incentives to attract the investment. Moreover, Yurdum (2018) expressed that institutional transformation of the public organizations with the efforts of international

companies is possible, but the government should be convinced to the added-value of adopting universal institutional norms and common point for the political and economic benefit, or the two sides should be provided. Otherwise, the state will not transform itself for just one market entrance (Yurdum, 2018). In addition to these, institutional adaptation processes of the international companies become more comfortable according to the size of the investment and also the company. Moreover, size of the investor company and amount of the investment are also essential dynamics which influence and determine the realization of institutional transformation and fulfillment of companies' policy demands. Regarding the local competitors and mimetic isomorphism, Karaman (2018) stated that this is the issue of best practice and adaptation of the best methods is a necessity. Yurdum (2018) also mentioned that entrance of the big player to the sector change all the dynamics and local competitors should adopt this situation. In this sense, Yurdum (2018) stated three possibilities which local competitors may adopt the changes, may not survive in the changing market environment, or produce a counter-argument against and prevent the market operations of the international company. Moreover, Ekin (2018) also stated that mimetic isomorphism is a kind of natural process of local competitors to protect their competitive advantage and position in the marketplace.

## **5.2. APPROVAL OF THE THEORETICAL MODEL: NORMATIVE, COERCIVE, AND MIMETIC ISOMORPHISM WITH THE CATALYTIC EFFECT OF THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

As the consequence of the research findings that summarized and evaluated through the previous section, my argument and the Theoretical Model has substantiated in terms of several aspects with its diverse components.

Regarding the public affairs activities and their catalytic effect within the interactions of the government, international companies that make investments, and local competitors, this catalytic effect supported by the relevant literature and approved through participant observation process, the e-commerce company case, and the statements of sectoral experts in the interviews. Moreover, they also explained how this catalytic effect maintained via activities like lobbying, sectoral and stakeholder engagement, political insights, and competitor analysis. In this sense, public affairs refer to various actions

which are the result of a unique strategy development process for every case and provide political benefit and sectoral engagement which make business goals of the companies more achievable as the catalytic effect.

Concerning the diffusion of universal institutional norms, institutional transformation, and formation of the isomorphic structure, market entries of international companies is a significant step. Even the possibility of a major investment leads the institutional change and transformation. There is only one variable in this context which is the size of the investment and investor company. In the case of big companies and significant investments, institutional transformation and isomorphism processes realize faster because the state should legitimize adaptation of universal institutional norms with the economic and also political benefit and related to this, adaptation process of the foreigner company become easier.

In addition to these, dimensions of the institutional isomorphism occur as DiMaggio and Powell (1983) stated in the structure of normative, coercive, and mimetic isomorphism. The market entrance of the e-commerce company and the other e-commerce giant that invested in Turkey led a significant institutional isomorphism in the normative context. Because the government formed new regulations by learning sectoral needs and policy demands of these international companies which in accordance with the universal institutional norms. Moreover, new regulations in the e-commerce sector that government did according to the universal institutional norms lead a coercive isomorphism, because every actor in the industry has to adapt their operations according to new regulations and sectoral conditions as long as they do not present a strong counter-argument. According to the sectoral experts and relevant literature, at this point, community/stakeholder engagement side of the public affairs activities come into place and prevent possible problems as stated on the Theoretical Model. As mentioned both in the literature and interviews of the top executives, mimetic isomorphism which based on copying and imitating is the natural process for the protection of the market positions, competitive advantage, and legitimacy of the other actors in the sector.

As the conclusion, through this thesis, diffusion of universal institutional norms and formation of institutional isomorphism via market entrance of international companies with the catalytic effect of the public affairs had analyzed. The Theoretical Model that developed according to this research argument and also explains the isomorphism process

had substantiated with its diverse aspects. In addition to this, broader data both in academic and sectoral had provided during the research process regarding the dynamics of public affairs activities and isomorphism process.



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## APPENDIX A

This list includes the four consultancy firms and five top executives of these firms whom I interviewed with. Their false names that I used in the thesis to protect the anonymity of both firms and persons as stated below. Interviews referenced according to the false names of the interviewees and firms.

### Alfa Strategy Consultancy (case study consultancy firm)

Interviewees: Sinan Kaya, Founding Partner and Ahmet Yurdum, Managing Partner

Kaya, S. 2018. open-ended interview, 20 September.

Yurdum, A. 2018. open-ended interview, 19 September.

### Beta Communication Consultancy

Interviewee: Defne Karaman, Agent President

Karaman, D. 2018. open-ended interview, 22 October.

### Delta Communication Consultancy

Interviewee: Serdar Levent, Agent President

Levent, S. .2018. open-ended interview, 07 November.

### Orion Consultancy

Interviewee: Selin Ekin, CEO

Ekin, S. 2018. open-ended interview, 02 November.

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