

Women's Cooperatives Contributions to Local Region Economy: Seferihisar Agricultural Cooperative Development Model-Turkey

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Abstract

The cooperative movement have played a very important role over the social and economic development of all countries since 19th century's second half. Cooperatives provide health, housing and banking services; they promote education and gender equality; they protect the environment and workers' rights. According to 2014, data the total number of cooperatives is 79.486 in Turkey, while the total number of partners of cooperatives is approximately 7.8 million.

The research's sample group "Hıdırlık Agricultural Development Cooperative" was founded by the wife of the Seferihisar mayor and six women. It has been a subject of curiosity that what the contributions of the cooperative which has developed the economy of the region since 2010. Therefore, various questions asked to the president and members of the cooperative, and significant results were obtained.

The fact that within the boundaries of local governments, the establishment of "women's cooperatives" and their active management can be supported with 10 basic criteria for the regional and national development can be predictable. These dimensions; ecological balance and sensitivity, the revival of the tourism sector, the mobility of logistics activities, new investments and increase of land value, the increase of women employment, the increase of healthy living standards, increase of competitiveness and trade earnings, the creation of new brands, widespread of the agricultural sector and the increase of social and educational level of women.

The similiar implementation of "Seferihisar Women's Cooperatives Model" in the research is considered form an important enterprenurship model not only for our country but also for all countries.

Key words: Women's Cooperative, Local region economics, Enterprenurship Model.

JEL Codes:O-Q-R

1. Introduction

Cooperatives emerged as economic organizations in the world during the middle of the 19th century. Rapid changes and transformation as a result of the Industrial Revolution, unemployment, domestic migration, urbanization, economic and social problems such as the inequalities in income distribution contributed much to the emergence of cooperatives and cooperatives were introduced as a flow of consumers' cooperatives by the workers in England which was the centre of the Industrial Revolution. During the recent years, France has followed England with the producers' cooperatives and Germany with artisans' and agricultural credit cooperatives.

In accordance with the Cooperatives Law No. 1163, a cooperative is defined in Turkey as follows (after an amendment in 2004): "Cooperatives are bodies with variable members, variable capital, and legal identity that are established by natural and public legal entities and private administrations, municipalities, villages, societies and associations in order to ensure and maintain certain economic interests and especially the needs of their members toward professional life and living standards by means of mutual assistance, solidarity and service as trustees to each other.

Agricultural cooperatives are groups of farmers who brings together resources that a used to effectively capture the best product. Resources are, sought marketing channels for seed during product cultivation, provide agricultural machinery, the moral and financial support of the members, provide better and more fair prices in here. The purpose creating cooperatives is that to create a secure environment in terms of food safety and to improve the living standards among the other members of the society (Michael 1999; Ortmann and King 2007).

Obstacles faced by women where in the most important condition for economic empowerment in the labor force participation and, taking place gender inequality in economic power-sharing are to impoverished women day after day.

Existing examples of "loan application" in the world and in our country are widespread in order to prevent women's poverty. On the other hand, there's needed education, counseling, guidance, studies including providing fund-financing issues for women entrepreneurs who they need.

Women's cooperative movement has started to be founded with demands of female entrepreneurs movement which comes from the base for bring into economy of the female

labor force, protection, support and development of social and cultural activities of women, provision of better health and improved environment in the early 2000s in Turkey. This kind of cooperatives partnerships are 80-100% women.

Among the main aims of the Women's Cooperatives establishment

- By providing training to its partners to develop the right skills, needed,
- To provide the necessary inputs and equipment for the production of Partners goods and services
- By providing social and cultural needs to its partners, preparing the ground where healthy and an improved environment for its partners living.

2. Objective of the study

The objective of the research; determine that what the contributions of the "Hidirlik Cooperative Agricultural Development" to develop the economy of the region where Seferihisar district of İzmir in Turkey since 2010.

3. Sample of the Study

The research's sample group; consist of six board member and chairman of the cooperative.

4. Research Method

In this research "Interview technique" were used. Chairman and board member of the cooperative were asked that "when and with whom they started first cooperatives work, they consulted to whom, what kind of problems they faced, and how they reached this stage."

As a result of the research; it has been found that women's cooperatives is contributing to the region with the 10 basic criteria.

5. Results of the Study

As stated in the research, research questions consisted of questions were completely prepared by the researchers considering "cooperative literature".

The main problematics of the research, determine that what problems women who established cooperative faced after the establishment stage and established, moreover observe that women entrepreneurship have more impact on the local development.

10 main criteria taken into consideration in the research. This is transferring completely the thoughts of women participating in speech. Therefore, criteria has tried to describe formed from the resulting title.

5.1. Ecological Balance and Sensibility

All individuals and organizations have their own responsibilities towards the environment they are living in. For example, a company has the responsibilities not only for its employees and the shareholders but also the external environment.

Aktan (2008:103), described organization's inner responsibility towards employees, shareholders and executive, along with this responsibility there is six other type of responsibility is organization's external responsibility.

Accordingly, the main responsibilities of the company are nine. These are; 1.Responsibility towards employees, 2.Responsibility for the shareholders, 3.Responsibility towards managers, 4.Responsibility for the customers, 5.Responsibility for the opponents, 6. Responsibility towards nature and the environment, 7. Responsibility towards suppliers, 8. Responsibility towards government, 9. Responsibility towards society.

On the other hand, Uydacı (2011:129) underlined social responsibility companies as a subsystem of the extended social responsibility in marketing and, he stated that if desire, sustainable development can be harmonized with those of social responsibility.

Social marketing issue is marketing practice that the benefit of individual, group or entire community and affect the target audience. So social marketing issues are usually related to society (Eser ve Özdoğan, 2006: 4; Korkmaz et al., 2009: 40; Engin ve Türk, 2004; Velioglu ve Çoknaz, 2010: 474).

Maintaining the ecological balance; Nowadays, environment, air and water pollution have become the topics to be considered by all people in society. Environment, air, water and soil pollution, seriously affects the balance of flora. Therefore, in the step of using the nutrients taken by people from the soil, these products are required to produce under natural conditions without adding harmful substances to the soil where habitat and the goods produced (Yıldız and et al., 2008: 14; Uydacı, 2011: 25; Akdur, 2005: 14-15; Karaca, 2008: 20 ; Düren, 2000; 160, Kurgun and et al., 2008: 28; Keleş ve Hamamcı, 2005: 110; Üstünay, 2008: 16; Kalburan, 2013:976; Akolur, 2005:16-17).

5.2. Revival of the tourism sector

Tourism is one of the sectors who impellent to local economic development tanesidir (Özelçi-Eceral and Altinkaya-Özmen, 2009:46). The development of the local economy depend on the tourism maybe in three ways (Rogerson, 2002:95).

Firstly; especially fields intended "Coastal tourism" is discovered by entrepreneurs who detect opportunities about improvement in these regions. Secondly, the small tourist towns are becoming tourist areas with the development of personal mobility, outside the initiative of local people. Finally, It is being developed in order to create employment and create new job opportunitie (Inskeep, 1999:10; Tosun, 2005:336).

In the scope of the research, according to data received by the chairman and members of the Cooperative; after completing the restoration of Seferihisar-Kaleiçi project, Izmir Metropolitan Municipality also has been providing support especially in terms of "Financing" about the city's development topics and it has undertaken the huge costs that make the whole structure. Photographers have been started coming from all over the Turkey because of the visual presentation and aesthetics of these structures. Increased interest in the recently opened boutique hotel. This situation has caused new jobs and increased the work force and field about "pensioning" in the district.. All of these activities have helped to be town's "preferred" town.

5.3. The mobility of logistics activities

Essential situation for development of a country; It is investment, trade and healthy operation of transport chain. Sustainable development depends on it. Ensuring the same level of transport and communications infrastructure all over the country, spreading wealth centers all over the country have great importance the development of the country's industry.

Development and growth of the form of the national economy integrated into the region can only be achieved through improved transportation infrastructure (Logistics Industry Report, 2013, TUSIAD, 2005 Research Report 87).

According to the survey, women have started to sell grapes produced by them in their homes and gardens, by "e-commerce". Naturally, the significant increase in the amount of ordering, have been affected logistics mobility in town.

Products, which make women, offered to customers living in İzmir and İstanbul, through packages every day, have increased the number of "Cargo Business". Women in production,

they have began to advertise their product on "WEB Page" and they have started to sell "daily soilage" to Istanbul and "breakfast ingredients" to Izmir. In general "Producer Market" founded tuesday has also started to sell similar products. This situation has provided a new revenue opportunity for women. Customers from the surrounding towns and Izmir to buy natural products have led women to make more sales and production. Thus, more production and sales causing an increase in the earnings of women and this situtaion has increased their self-confidence. Members have brought a certain standard for packaged products which counted in the cooperative. The cooperative has provided stronger because of the fact that women put a small commission such as 2%, on the products they produce,

5.4. New investments and increase of land value

Women's employment known is a fact that important in the development of a country. Today, women's employment has not reached the desired rate due to reasons, such as the pressures created by the gender roles and as a consequence of this within the family responsibilities to be undertaken largely by women, lack of education level and limiting of women's employment owing to some results. Employment participation has a meaning beyond to earn money for a woman. Participation in employment is a prerequisite for stand on one's own two feet and self confidence of women (Publications of women and men equal opportunities commission No. 12).

"Revolutionary Movement" which make women living in the district, have done about five years, has led to arrival of new investors. For example; "boutique hotel" and "pansioning" concept, created by residents of the district in the touristic area, has been attractive people from outside the city. This, naturally, has led to an increase of "land value" and, land prices in the district.

5.5. Increase of Women Employment

A reason for not being at the desired level of female employment is that women can't benefit from enough educational opportunities. According to data from the year 2012; While labor force participation rate was 16.7% in non-literate women in the country, this ratio increased 30.6% in high school graduates, 38.1% in vocational and technical high school graduates, 70.9% in higher education graduates. These data suggest that the level of education is important because it shows the relationship between labor force participation.

"Women's cooperatives" idea of the mayor, which women should participate to production in this city, is integrated with the question "what can we do" of female members. Firstly, reached the elderly of the city, It was asked what they were traditional dishes during the past year, but now making. For example, between meals "gummy tarhana" is no longer appeared to be done. After that, it was decided to make again the forgotten dishes. Thus, "demanded and popular new flavors" (noodles, jam, soap, olives, olive oil), have become among the demanded products for customers coming to shopping arcade.

Six years ago (2000), small market stalls, which began operating with 10 , has become a place visited by hundreds of customers in today. Having more visitors coming to take "Organic Products" with various crafts made by women have also led to activation of their husband. Formerly, Men usually were sitting "coffee in" but, now they support their wives, and they have started to take order. This situation, increase of "women's cooperatives" or "women producers", maybe become the largest output for the country's economy. This sector is the only effective sector in which women mobilized men.

5.6. Increase of Healthy Living Standards

Recent years. health criteria have been thrown into the background in the environmental balance and the product quality, because of being high amount per unit area in conventional production and priority of economic product. As a result of this, both plants and animal production have begun to harm to the environment, animal and human health.

In contrast, organic production protect the environment and health, reduce global warming in 37% (Ünal S., [http:// orgprints.org/25212](http://orgprints.org/25212)). In 2000, it was carried out on 8 million hectares of organic farming in the world, But today, organic production is carried out in more than 110 countries over 31.8 million hectares with 623 174 certified manufacturer. Organic agriculture has begun in 1984-85 in Turkey with demand from abroad. Raisins, dried figs and dried apricots are the first organic product.

Especially, in the last 10 years, production method also known as "organic agriculture" and "good farming" is caused to have a more active action in this region. An interesting development behind this change has been realized with "seed swap rules". When purchases of local seeds were banned in the country, the villagers compulsorily began to take seed imported from abroad. But these seeds began to not preferred, because of both unhealthy and not the desired product quality. More importantly, even the villagers have begun to move away from agriculture because of this negative atmosphere.

Therefore, a method have been developed for increasing the production and sale of "organic agriculture" products. Organic seeds stored in previous years, changing hands, have begun to find new owners with "clearing procedure". Thus manufacturer, getting seeds produced the "seed centers", produce more healthy and high quality fruit and vegetables. These products haven't sold in "Bazaar" formed only on Sundays. Also, selling has been started in "producer bazaar" (spices, fruits, vegetables, honey, herbs, pickles, bread, cheese, eggs, etc.) on Tuesday. This situation has caused customers to come from neighboring districts. This means that the products produced have enabled easier sales.

"Agriculture Panel" has been established by the Council, because of providing "self-control" among people in the city about both the quality as well as sales. Manufacturer who don't comply with "declaration of food" has been punished. Firstly, every manufacturer, wishing to sell, must take the "Health Card" from municipality. Otherwise, they will not sale anything. For example, It is forbidden to put "glucose" instead of sugar in sweet products such as jam and so on. If they don't comply, they are punished immediately.

5.7. Increase of Competitiveness and Trade Earnings

Support of entrepreneurship in Turkey, is phenomenon that began with the accession process European Union (Eren and et al., 2000: 369). In terms of improving the distribution of income, entrepreneurship is encouraged, especially in rural areas and less developed regions.

Cooperative is a kind of partnerships, which cooperation with economic and social opportunities for achieve a common goal, by bringing together solidarity and bail. As a Turkey goal is that not included in the economic potential of women is to be activated for increase prosperity. It is important that, ensuring cooperation between women entrepreneurs own, creating national, regional and international levels in the organization and collaboration.

According to the Government Policy in 2010, approximately 100 establishment of "Women, Environment, Culture and Business Cooperative" is desirable in the country each year. Thereby, women will be able to find opportunity about working, producing and gain economic income in cooperatives established from them. Turkey Cooperative Strategy and Action Plan, prepared under the coordination of the Ministry, emphasis on women's cooperatives; studies were conducted about organizing under the roof of cooperatives for provision of female entrepreneurship and enhancing the ability of the economy to take part as an actor . (Cooperatives and women's cooperatives booklet, 2012: Ministry of Customs and Commerce)

5.8. Creation of new brands

Cooperative members, having affluent fields in terms of vineyards (Kavacık Üzüm Karası) surrounding of the city, wrote a project about to start “wine production ” to Development Agency (institutions supported by the state). However, they could not get any positive response in this regard, changing the scope of the project, they produced "Molasses" and tried to create new "brand". Also, they used grapes in "pastry industry", and they have created opportunity as a secondary market.

5.9. Widespread of the agricultural sector

People living in Seferihisar realized that money earned from agriculture. So that, the number of wish to migrate to big cities with children have been decreased. People, seed in the field with "uniform product" (for example, only tomato), in the past, nowadays planting easier and quicker product like a fruits and vegetables, in the area which they found empty. So that, they are looking for a way to increase their income.

5.10. Increase of social and educational level of women

The expansion of trade activities in the city has expanded economic level of women participated in production, thereby visibility of women in social life has been increased. The increase of earnings has increased to desire of women about to educate their children or grandchildren. To be Seferihisar district close to Izmir has begun to encourage female students go to "university". This situation has begun to cause increasing number of highly educated women in the district.

6. Conclusion

There are some reasons why women's cooperative is so successful in Seferihisar district which is quite close İzmir. The first and perhaps the most important is district mayor. Mayor's the most important project for contribute to development of women is "Slow-City Project" . So, He has done a serious work in advance for Seferihisar in order that "brand city".

Second is that wife of the mayor who is founding president of the women's cooperative and giving seriously support to spouse. In research in Turkey, the most important issues to be taken into consideration for create city brand in local municipalities is that it is very important the role of the local authorities.

According to the outcomes of the study, "women's cooperatives" acceptable to be "sustainable major source" for a country's economy. Also, particularly in terms of women and children, it is social policy and important formation that increases the level of development.

Therefore, this research has shown that all "added value products", "from agriculture" and "derived from agricultural products" in the development phase of the development level of countries, will be able to serious "leading force" both local and regional development of the country.

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