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PROF. DR. MURAT ATAN

ASSOC. PROF. DR. FURKAN EMIRMAHMUTOGLU

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ANKARA
HACI BAYRAM VELİ
UNIVERSITY

Examination of Countries in terms of Sustainable Development Goals

Mehmet CAGLAR[1], Cem GURLER[2]

Abstract

In this study, it is aimed to examine the countries in terms of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For this purpose, firstly, it was tried to determine how the countries are clustered in terms of SDGs, and then the sustainable development scores of the countries were examined according to their income levels.

There are a total of 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations. In line with these sustainable development goals, the independent expert teams at the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and Bertelsmann Stiftung have been calculating countries' Sustainable Development Index since 2016. The data used in the data analysis stage was obtained from the Sustainable Development Report 2019. This report covers 162 countries. After subtracting the countries whose indicator values are missing, a total of 110 countries and 17 sustainable development goal indexes of these countries are included in the analysis. Cluster analysis is applied using k-means method to determine how the countries are grouped. After the cluster analysis, multidimensional scaling analysis is used to provide the representation of countries in two dimensional space. ANOVA test was used to test whether the sustainable development index scores of the countries vary according to their income levels.

The elbow method was used to determine the number of clusters of 110 countries and as a result of the analysis it was decided that the countries would be divided into 5 clusters. Then, cluster analysis was performed using k-means method. The numbers of countries in the clusters are as follows; 24, 29, 16, 24, 17. The average Sustainable Development Index values of the clusters were calculated as 69.12, 77.80, 63.91, 52.12 and 69.78 respectively. Of the 29 countries in Cluster 2, which has the highest sustainable development index, 28 have high income levels and 1 have upper-middle income level. In addition, this cluster has the highest score in 13 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Of the 24 countries in Cluster 4, which has the lowest sustainable development index, 13 are low-income and 11 are lower-middle income countries. All the low-income countries (13 countries) in the data set are included in this cluster. Cluster 4 is the cluster with the lowest score in 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the cluster with the highest score in 2 of them. The World Bank divides countries into 4 groups as low, lower-middle, upper-middle and high income groups according to their income levels. The average sustainable development index scores according to income level were calculated as 51.30, 61.14, 68.64 and 77.20 respectively. ANOVA test was used to test whether the sustainable development index scores of the countries vary according to their income levels. As a result of this test, it was found that sustainable development index scores differ according to income level.

Sustainable Development Goals are defined as calls for universal action to eradicate poverty, protect our planet and ensure that all people live in peace and prosperity. In this study, it is aimed to examine the countries in terms of Sustainable Development Goals. For this purpose, cluster analysis was performed to determine how countries are grouped. As a result of cluster analysis, countries were divided into 5 clusters. ANOVA test was used to test whether the sustainable development index scores of the countries vary according to their income levels. As a result of this test, it was found that as the income levels of the countries increase, the sustainable development index scores increase as well.

Keywords: *Sustainable Development, Cluster Analysis, Multidimensional Scaling*

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[1] mcaglar@yildiz.edu.tr, Yildiz Technical University, Department of Business Administration, Istanbul/Turkey
[2] cem.gurler@yalova.edu.tr, Yalova University, Department of Business Administration, Yalova/Turkey