

From Makers to Maker Communities: A Survey on Turkish Makerspaces

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Abstract : Today, the maker movement is regarded as a socio-cultural movement that represents designing and building objects for innovations. In these creativity-based activities of the movement, individuals from different backgrounds such as; inventors, programmers, craftspeople, DIY'ers, tinkerers, engineers, designers, and hackers, form a community and work collaboratively for mutual, open-source innovations. Today, with the accessibility of recently emerged technologies and digital fabrication tools, the Maker Movement is continuously expanding its scope and has evolved into a new experience, and for many, it is now considered as new kind of industrial revolution. In this new experience, makers create new things within their community by using new digital tools and technologies in spots called makerspaces. In these makerspaces, activities of learning, experience sharing, and mentoring are evolved into maker events. Makers who share common interests in making benefit from makerspaces as meeting and working spots. In literature, there are many sources on Maker Movement, maker communities, and their activities, especially in the field of business administration. However, there is a gap in the literature about the maker communities in Turkey. This research aims to be an information source on the dynamics and process design of "making" activities in Turkish maker communities and also aims to provide insights to sustain and enhance local maker communities in the future. Within this aim, semi-structured interviews were conducted with founders and facilitators from selected Turkish maker communities. (1) The perception towards Maker Movement, makers, activity of making, and current situation of maker communities, (2) motivations of individuals who participate the maker communities, and (3) key drivers (collaboration and decision-making in design processes) of maker activities from the perspectives of main actors (founders, facilitators) are all examined deeply with question on personal experiences and perspectives. After a qualitative approached data analysis concerning the maker communities in Turkey, this research reveals that there are two main conclusions regarding (1) the foundation of the Turkish maker mindset and (2) emergence of self-sustaining communities.

Keywords : Maker Movement, maker community, makerspaces, open-source design, sustainability

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