

A Sustainable Global Strategy for Gizia: Local Artisan Partnerships

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the Report

This essay aims to assess the sustainability practices of Gizia, a Turkish brand, indicating areas that need improvement and strategic development. It suggests a practical way of working with artisans in which Gizia can enhance its competitive advantage in response to global objectives on sustainability and threats or opportunities that face the fashion industry.

1.2. Overview of the Fashion Industry in Turkey

The Turkish fashion industry is an important sector in its economy and is known for its, textile culture and craftsmanship. Turkey has around 59,000 companies in textile, footwear, and apparel manufacturing, and they all combined for an annual output worth over \$65 billion of garments and fashion goods (FashionUnited, 2024). Turkey is in the top 5 exporters of textiles around the world but currency fluctuations and increase in minimum labour cost has significantly reduced the exports of Turkey by an average of 10%. (Fashionating World, Thursday, 15 February 2024 09:27).

Expecting consumers to demand for greener products, Turkish brands are now investing in sustainability and traceability. Companies are using sustainability standards to become more sustainable and transparent. (Cochrane, 2023). Though competition has been fierce from Asian nations,

Turkey's exporters are determined to attract European and American brands. (Guinebault, 2024)



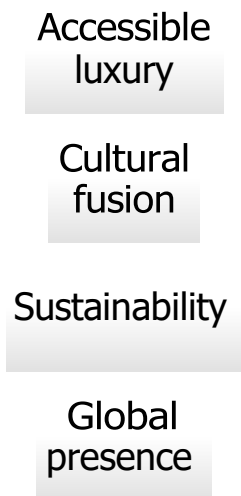
Figure 1 Source: Gizia.com

1.3. Introduction to Gizia

1.3.1. Brand Profile and Objectives

Gizia is a top Turkish fashion brand established over 30 years ago and specializing in high quality elegant, feminine designs. Merging haute couture and ready-to-wear fashion, Gizia is a pioneer of affordable luxury with iconic designs shaped to blend fashion of the moment with timeless collections (Gizia, n.d.). The brand operates one of the broad distribution networks consisting of a flagship store located in Nişantaşı, Istanbul, and another hundred and twenty stores in different countries in six continents (Gizia, n.d.)

Gizia describes itself as all-around sustainable and eco-friendly by adopting technology that helps local manufacturers (Alanya Go, n.d.). It aims at introducing international markets, design creativity, and sustainability practices to meet the new consumer needs. (Alanya Go, n.d.)

1.3.2. Brand Positioning1.3.3. Unique Selling Point1.3.4. Customer Profile**Demographic:**

- a) Gender – Primarily Female
- b) Age range- 25-40
- c) Income level- Middle to upper-middle class, with disposable income to invest in premium fashion.
- d) Geographical Location- Urban dwellers in metropolitan areas, both within Turkey and internationally, with a presence in cities like New York (Giziaofficial).

Psychographics:

- a) Lifestyle- Fashion forward individuals who keep up with latest trends and value exclusivity in their wardrobe choices.
- b) Values- Love for quality craftsmanship, innovative designs, and a mix of traditional and modern fashion components.
- c) Shopping Behavior- Towards premium brands that offer a balance between luxury and accessibility.

1.3.5. 4Ps

1) Product

Gizia's focus is on high-quality, ready-to-wear luxury fashion for women which designed contemporarily. It emphasizes on the seamless transition from formal to casual in a garment. (Gizia, n.d.). It looks into the intricate detailing, premium materials inspired by haute couture, adaptability of the collections catering to seasonal trends and being a classic wardrobe staple. (Gizia, n.d.)

2) Price

Gizia operates in the accessible luxury segment where quality is valued. The pricing is competitive yet premium due to the materials and craftsmanship (Gizia, n.d.). Here the perception of luxury and affordability is balanced. (Alanya Go, n.d.)



Figure 2 Source: Gizia.com



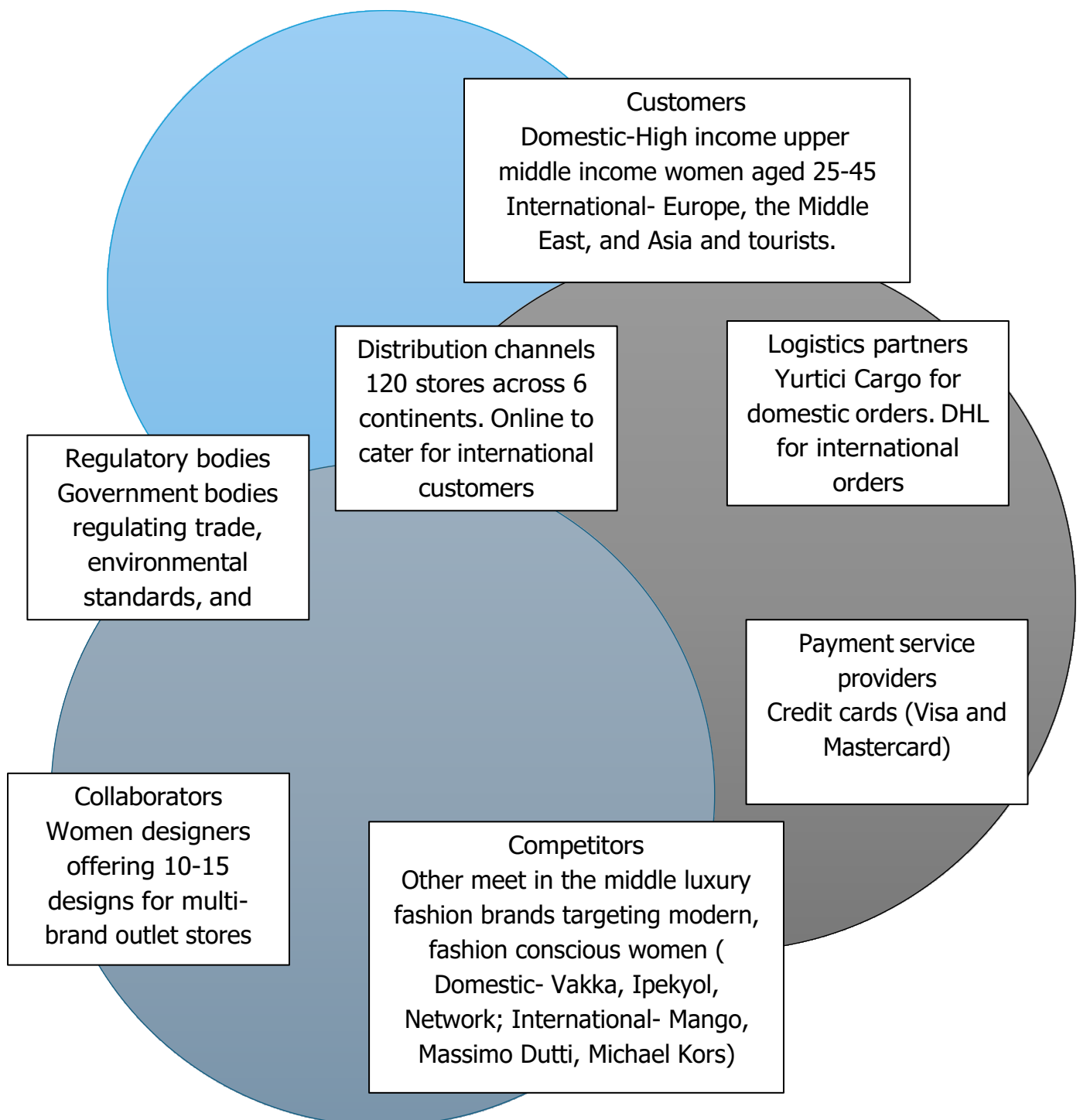
Figure 3 Source: Gizia.com

3) Promotion

Gizia uses both traditional and digital marketing. Brand identity focuses on storytelling that highlights Turkish heritage, craftsmanship, and sustainability (Gizia, n.d.). In addition to the web it is active in social media as well such as Instagram (Giziaofficial) and influencers are making arrangements and collaborations for brand awareness. (Alanya Go, n.d.)

4) Place

Gizia has 120 physical stores across 6 continents (Gizia, n.d.) and digital stores are operated through official website and Instagram with global shipping to cater international customers. (Giziaofficial)

1.3.6. Stakeholders

2. Current Sustainability Practices at Gizia

2.1. Analysis of Gizia's Current Sustainable Initiatives

Gizia claims to follow sustainable practices and being an influential brand in Turkey, but these practices are really disappointing. Many Turkish brands such as Gizia also received low scores for supply chain transparency and for the exposure of production practices according to the Fashion Transparency Index. (Fashion Revolution, 2023)

Even though Gizia says it produces locally, the current sustainability strategy does not clearly state crucial aspects such as carbon footprint reduction, waste management, or ethical labour practices. Turkey's textile industry generates approximately 2.8 million tons of textile waste annually with the majority ending up in landfills, increasing environmental degradation (Statista, 2022). Gizia can adopt waste reduction programs, implement circular economy protocols and collaborate with small entrepreneurs in order to guarantee transparency to the Gizia supply chain and enhance sustainability.

2.2. Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Practices in Turkey

Around 18% of apparel and textile companies in Turkey reveal the sustainability practices of their company about water management,

energy efficiency and employee rights. (Saygili, 2019).

2.2.1. Challenges

Energy being the key source for production, the textile industry in Turkey consumes 10% of the whole energy output resulting in carbon emissions (Ozturk, 2005). There are also hinderances to adopting circular economy models and achieving sustainable waste management due to the limits in recycling infrastructure (MAM, 2021). SMEs being dominant in Turkey, around 78% is said to have financial restrictions as the major barrier to sustainability. Water systems are severely contaminated due to the discharge of synthetic dyes and untreated wastewater, especially in industrial zones (Özer & Güven, 2021).

2.2.2. Opportunities

Turkey has also brought in plans such as the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP), to reduce the primary energy consumption from all sectors by 14%. (IEA, 2021). The Government of Turkey has initiated "Zero Waste Project" which aims to achieve 60% recycling rates (Remington, 02 August 2019). It also provide access to premium markets with price premiums of 20-30% with certificates such as GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) and Oeko-Tex (CMS law.tax.future, 2021). Sustainable products are set to grow in importance by 22% per year (Tan, September 8, 2021). Given that industrial mass production requires

significantly larger resources, Turkish luxury can have its competitive advantage on craftsmanship. (Tan, September 8, 2021)

2.3. Comparison of Gizia's Practices with Industry Benchmarks

Gizia's practices are not up to the while comparing because leading brands such as Stella McCartney and Patagonia have transparent supply chains and follows circular economy principles effectively, Gizia lacks comprehensive reports on it's production (Fashion Revolution) . Gizia can start to use Government initiatives like the "Zero Waste Project" and get certifications such as GOTS and Oeko-Tex, which provide market credibility (CMS law.tax.future, 2021).

3. Global Sustainability Issues in the Fashion Industry

3.1. Overview of Key Global Challenges

Fashion industry face major issues in the disposal of textile wates, overproduction and the inequalities in labour. Around 92million tons of fashion waste is produced annually which is dumped in landfills or burnt causing pollution in the environment. (Ellen Macarthur Foundation, 2017).Poor wages and unsafe conditions are another problem faced by labourers in developing countries. The fashion industry is responsible for around 10% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions (United Nations Environment Programme, 2019). Hence sustainable solutions like

circular economy models, renewable energy, and ethical labour standards are essential.

3.2. Unethical challenges in the industry

3.2.1. Labour

High levels of pollution and very low wages in some parts of the world are two major issues of the textile industry. With 29.1% of labourers in textile industry not being registered to social security, informal employment is increasing in the garment industry (Hisarli & Demir, June 2022). This results in no payments and no job security to the labourers and their families. Many workers in Istanbul do overtime to balance their financial difficulties or they'd not be able to pay their debt off (Hisarli & Demir, June 2022). Due to the unethical working conditions and the lack of knowledge the workers have, most of them aren't sure about their employment contracts, payroll, and what is actually stated on their payroll (Hisarli & Demir, June 2022). Overall most labourers are seen to have problems with their salary because it doesn't cover their expenses.

3.2.2. Environmental Impacts

The biggest threat from the garment industry to the world is the water pollution caused due to dyeing and finishing. Around 20% of global water pollution is caused by textile processing. This problem can be controlled by treating the water before

releasing using HCl or CO₂ for neutralization which might reduce the impact (Tüfekçi, Sivri, & Toroz, April 1, 2007).

4. Alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals

4.1. Strategy: Local Artisan Partnerships with SDGs

Many artisans around Turkey lose jobs with the upcoming high end and fast fashion. The initiative of partnering with local artisans can create stable jobs, give a income of their own, preserve culture, increase employment, develop skills and help the one's who are under the poverty line. Through this Gizia can support the UN SDG goals. Specifically. SDG1 (No Poverty) supports fair wages and local artisans; SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities) gives a fair share to all artisans irrespective of gender and supports fair trade; SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) is done by improved artisan skills and work. These goals not only focus on the sustainability of the brand but also helps with the well-being of the artisans.

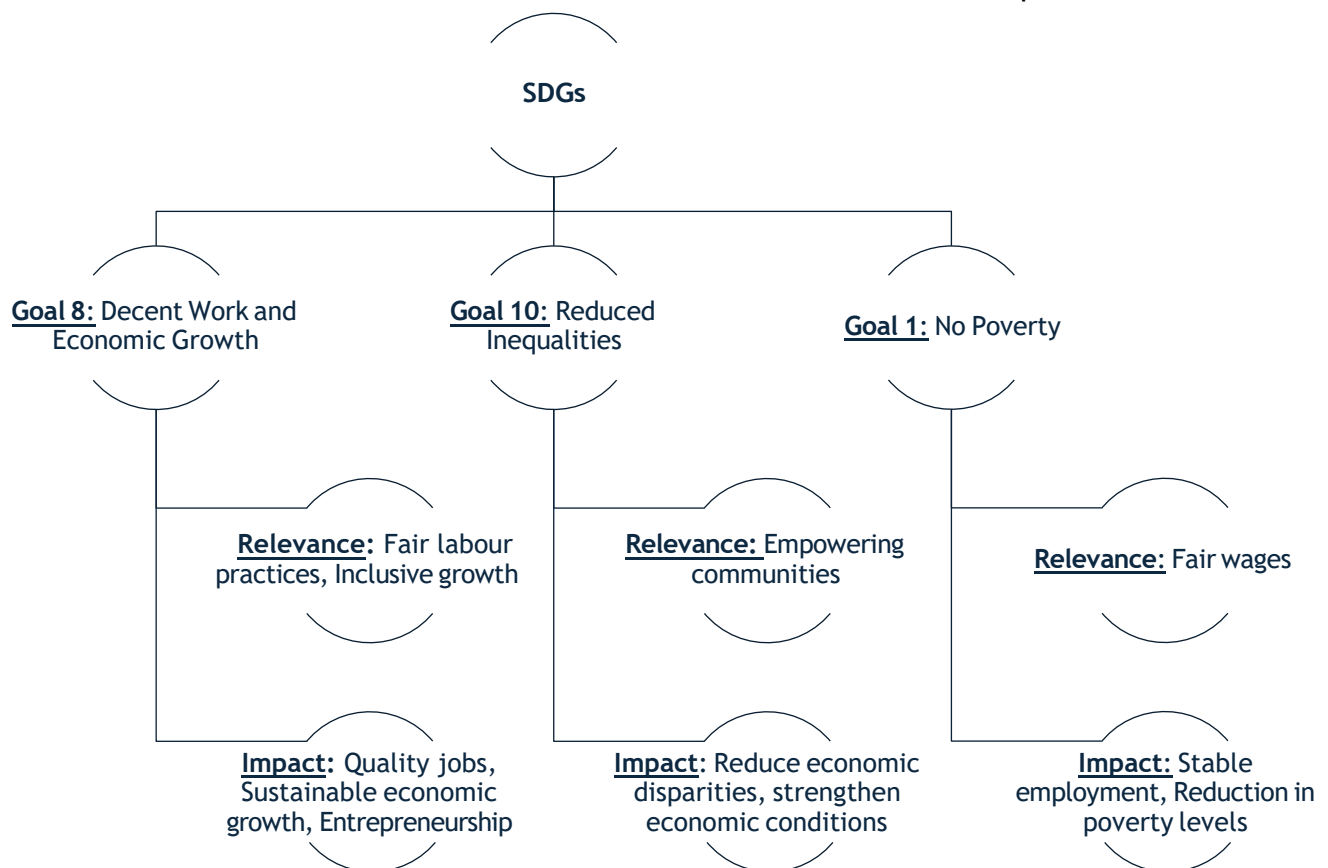


Figure 4 Source: <https://goturkiye.com/the-talented-hands-of-the-turkaegean-culture-the-artisan-towns-of-izmir>



Figure 5 Source: <https://goturkiye.com/the-talented-hands-of-the-turkaegean-culture-the-artisan-towns-of-izmir>

4.2. Selected SDGs: Their Relevance to Gizia and Forecasted Impact



5. Strategic Framework for Local Artisan Partnerships

5.1. Strategy Overview: Collaborating with Local Artisans

Gizia, by collaborating with local artisans can differentiate itself from its competitors while taking a sustainable path. This a pro for Gizia by combining traditional craftsmanship and contemporary designs, it can attract a new base of consumers. By bringing in artisans Gizia can preserve its cultural value while providing economic support.

The strategy explores fair wages, skill development, and long-term partnerships with artisans to foster ethical thinking in their work. Moving towards smaller production batches and eco-materials can also have a positive impact on the environmental footprint. These artisanal products use less and less resources, supporting the circular economy practices they employ which as a result helps to bolster the brand's sustainability credentials. Through this Gizia can strength it's brand with a unique touch of craftsmanship with luxury.

5.2. Strategic Analysis Tools

5.2.1. SWOT Analysis of Local Artisan Partnerships

- 1) Unique value proposition due to unique products compared with mass produced product
- 2) Connection to the cultural roots of Turkey
- 3) Sustainability through eco-conscious trends and slow fashion
- 4) Community empowerment by providing fair wages and consistent work
- 5) Reinforcement of brand image of Gizia

Strength

- 1) Scalability takes time due to small groups of artisans
- 2) Skill development needs are required since artisans take time to combine traditional and contemporary designs
- 3) Ensuring uniform quality control over all handmade products is challenging
- 4) Labour intensive and time consuming process hence production costs would also increase

Weakness

- 1) Globally consumers now prefer ethically sourced and handmade products
- 2) Cultural storytelling could be used as marketing by highlighting the stories of artisans and the heritage behind their work can add value.
- 3) Visibility can be brought through partnerships with NGOs and Institutions
- 4) Gizia can turn out to be sustainably innovative by bringing in limited edition fully crafted artisan collections
- 5) Obtaining sustainability credentials through this can increase market credibility and consumer trust.

Opportunities

- 1) Competition by other brands by replicating what Gizia has done
- 2) Fluctuations due to inflation and increase in raw material cost can increase the financial burden of the company.
- 3) Operational risks might increase due to change in trade barriers, regional conflicts or change in government policies.
- 4) The fast-moving consumer preferences might change.

Threats

5.2.2. PESTEL Analysis of Turkey's Fashion Industry

Political

- Comparing other countries, the recycling efforts of Turkey is said to lag. But the "Zero Waste Campaign" initiated in 2017 to cover textile waste as well. (Remington, 02 August 2019)

Economical

- Though the contribution of Turkey's textile sector towards its GDP has seen a steady decrease with 15.975% in 2014 (World Bank), it has continued to contribute an average 7% (United Nations Development Program).
- Turkey stands to be the 7th largest exporter of textiles in the world with \$36.7B (The Observation of Economic Complexity, 2022)and 16th largest importer of textiles with \$14.8B (The Observation of Economic Complexity, 2022)

Social

- The labour sector without job security and basic labour rights remains to be a concern. (Hisarli & Demir, June 2022)

Technological

- Textile manufacturing machinery are found to be made in Turkey like the polyurethane-coated rollers (Hartog, November 1,2024). Turkish machine suppliers have changed their consumer market from Europe to Turkey itself since European nations get their textiles from Turkey (Hartog, November 1,2024)

Environmental

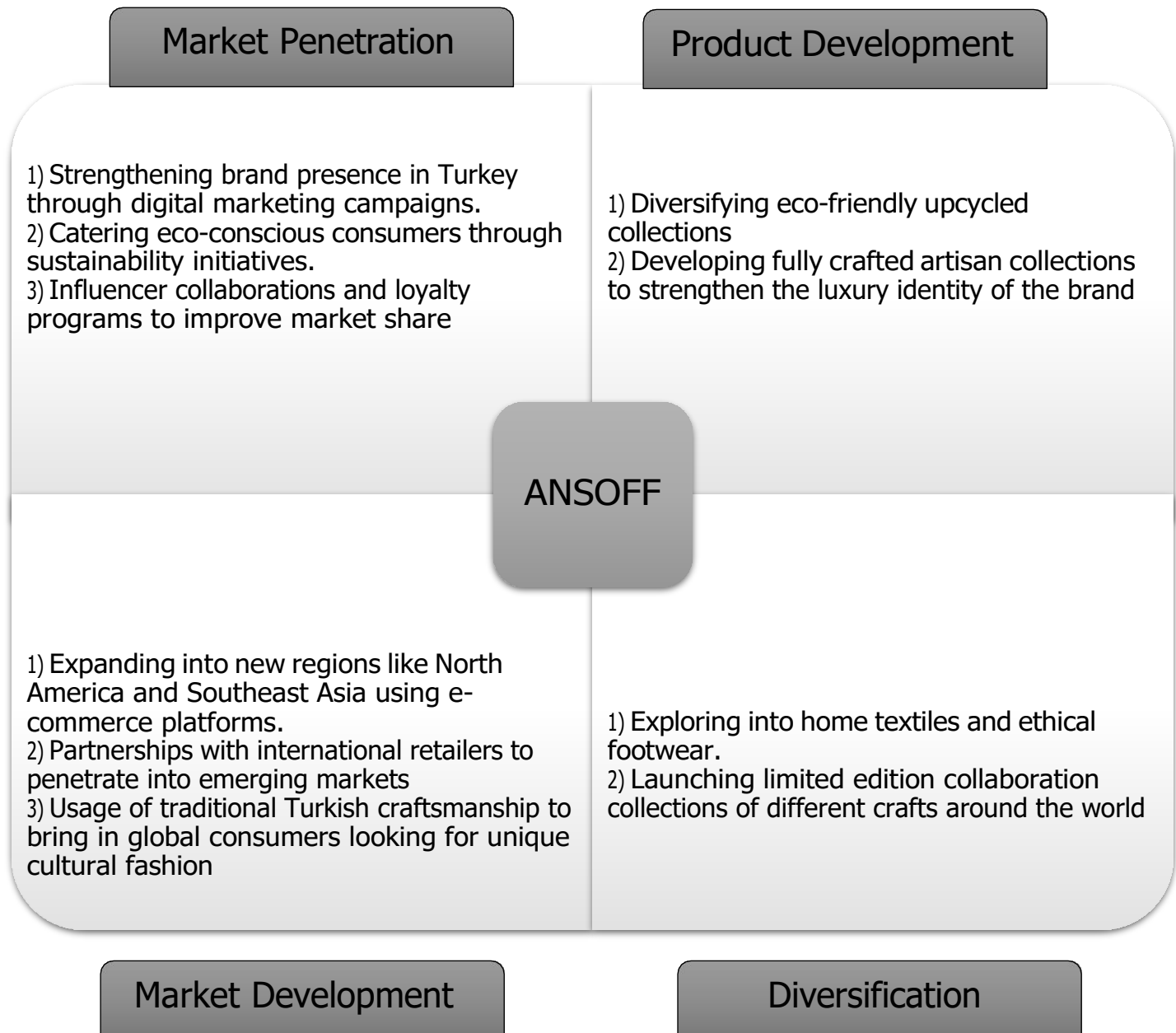
- Around 42% of average energy consumption is seen to be reduced in the years 2015-2018, but Turkey's textile sector still stands to be one of the major consumer of water and energy. (Özer & Güven, 2021)

Legal

- There is a gender pay gap of 15.6% and this is seen to increase with age in the textile industry. It is seen to start as low as 3.8% to 25.9% for women who are in their 40s. (Hisarli & Demir, June 2022)



Figure c Source: <https://cleanclothes.org/file-repository/turkeys-garment-industry-report.pdf/view>

5.2.3. Ansoff Matrix: Evaluating Growth Opportunities

6. Sustainable Growth Strategy for Gizia

6.1. Developing the Ecosystem for Local Artisan Collaborations

The ecosystem built for the collaboration adds the artisans to the Gizia value chain while also responding to the economic, social and environmental side of sustainability.

1. Artisan identification and engagement

- Conducting research to identify clusters specific to traditional crafts such as embroidery, weaving and quilting

2. Capacity building and Skill development

- Workshops to enhance artisan's skills in relation to modern designs
- Bridging traditional art and contemporary designs by introducing technical softwares
- Partnering artisans with industry professionals for exchange of knowledge and skill

3. Fair trade and Ethical practices

- Transparent pricing models by ensuring artisans receive fair wages
- Formalization of contracts between the brand and the artisans outlining fair working conditions, revenue-sharing, and mutual obligations.

4. Supply chain integration

- Establishment of small production hubs near artisan clusters to reduce logistical challenges
- Sourcing of eco-friendly raw materials locally
- Standardization of quality through quality control protocols for uniformity of products.

5. Marketing and story telling

- Highlighting heritage and craftsmanship in marketing campaigns to enhance product value
- Usage of e-commerce to showcase artisanal stories, reaching global consumers.

6. Financial and Social support

- Microfinancing through small loans so that the artisans can invest in tools
- Healthcare and insurance plans

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Collecting input from artisans to refine collaboration and address challenges
- Assessing of social, economic and environmental impacts such as income growth, artisan retention, and waste reduction.

6.2. Structure of local artisan collaboratioProduction:

- Optimizing production by reducing waste.
- Steady flow of production and quality standards.
- Engagement in designing, developing, and innovating designs.

Marketing:

- Marketing campaigns through local fairs, exhibitions, and digital platforms.
- Management of sales channels, distribution networks and customer interactions

Community Engagement:

- Developing and nurturing partnerships through local artisan communities.
- Tracking socio-economic impacts of collaboration on the community.

Logistics:

- Timely supply of raw materials. Order fulfilment, inventory management, shipping, transportation and product distribution

6.3. Strategies for Scaling and Sustainability

Turkey's Free trade agreements with the EFTA(European Free Trade Association) has been updated to facilitate trade including the textile sector (European Free Trade Association, 01 October 2021). Recently Turkey has expected to see lower tariffs from the US under Trump (Erkoyun & Devranoglu, November 7, 2024)

With these as acting as a strong base for Turkey's textile industry, the strategy of local Artisan collaborations can help Gizia expand it's market into Europe and the US for trial runs and then build a sold market globally.

7. Risk and Mitigation Strategies

HIGH

Financial Challenges

Risk: Financial risk in terms of investing into artisan clusters and management

Mitigation: Partnering with NGOs, seek for grants and co-funding with government can be looked into.

Artisan Training & Development

Risk: Uniformity of work might affect the quality, consistency and might ruin the brand name.

Mitigation: Standardized training programs can be established

Management Difficulties

Risk: Complexities in coordinating with the artisan community

Mitigation: Regional managers can be appointed for easy communication and task management

MEDIUM

Balancing Tradition & Modernity

Risk: Incorporation of contemporary designs with traditional crafts might bring conflicts

Mitigation: Bring in collaborative design session between artisans and modern designers to create hybrid styles

LOW

Market acceptance

Risk: Limited consumer interest in products

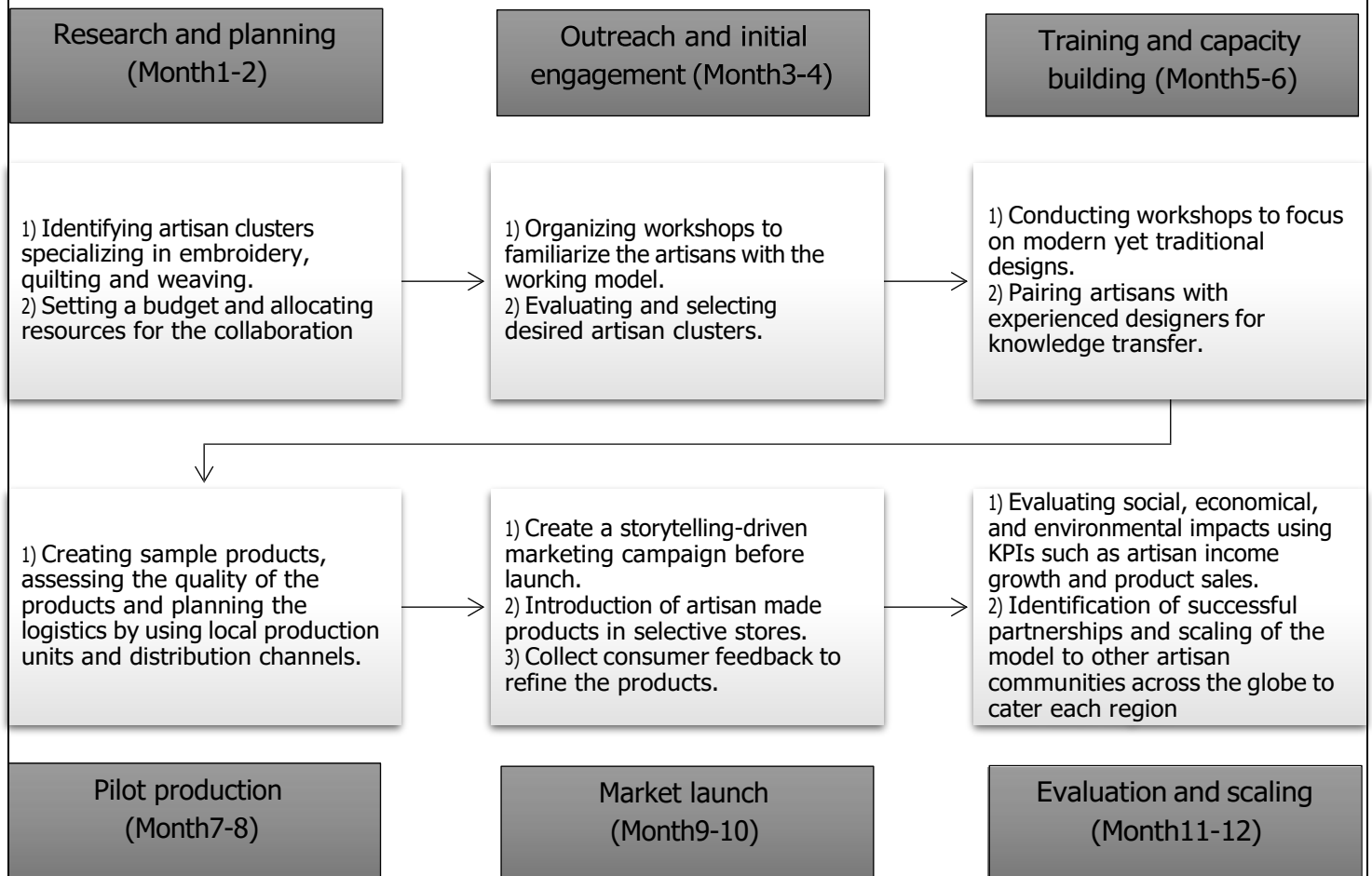
Mitigation: Using marketing and storytelling to show the uniqueness of cultural products

Expansion & scaling

Risk: Consumers might not want to pay high prices for ethically sourced goods

Mitigation: Launch a targeted marketing campaign emphasizing ethics, environment and quality of Gizia

8. Steps for Implementing Local Artisan Partnerships



9. Conclusion and Reflection

The report looks into the factors challenges and chances that Turkey’s fashion industry goes through along with the trade between countries, especially the effects of trade agreements, as well as their role in promoting sustainable growth opportunities. It also analyses the brand Gizia and uses three of the United Nation’s SDG’s concentrating on poverty eradication, reducing inequalities and economic empowerment. (SDG 1, 8, 10).

Though the report covers about the brand and the county it still has a few limitations in terms of collecting data about the brand and putting it in terms with the strategy. Overall, the report aims to achieve a sustainable global strategy in the fashion industry, demonstrating Gizia’s potential for inclusive growth, innovation and commitment to sustainable development.

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