The Effects of the Second World War on Wheat Production in Turkey: Cobweb Theorem*II. Dünya Savaşı´nın Türkiye´de Buğday Üretimine Etkisi: Örümcek Ağı Teorisi

Pakize ÇOBAN KARABULUT**

Öz

İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda buğday, en önemli temel tüketim maddelerinden birisiydi. Bu durumu tetikleyen en önemli unsurun, 1940 ve 1941 yıllarında yaşanan doğal afetlerden kaynaklandığı görülmüştür. Türkiye için ise hububat ürünleri en önemli ihracat kaynaklarını oluşturmaktaydı. Bu nedenle, ekmek fiyatlarındaki artışların önlenmesinde buğday üretimi ve tüketimi hakkında birçok kararlar alınmıştır. Bu kararlara rağmen olağanüstü arz-talep dağılımı uzun yıllar sürmüş ve bu durum örümcek ağı teorisi ile gösterilmiştir. Bu teori sayesinde İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ve doğal afetlerin buğday üretimini nasıl etkilediği detaylı olarak ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İkinci Dünya Savaşı, Buğday Üretimi, Örümcekağı Teoremi, Doğal Felaket.

Abstract

In World War II, wheat was one of the most important basic consumption items. The most important factor causing this situation was the natural disasters occurring in 1940-41. The grain production had constituted the most important export resources in Turkey. For this reason, many decisions about the production and the consumption of wheat were taken to prevent the increase in the bread price. Despite these decisions, supply-demand distributions had abnormally continued for many years. This case, in this study, was analyzed by using cobweb theory.

Keywords: Second World War, Wheat Production, Cobweb Theorem, Natural Disasters.

Introduction

Wheat was produced in almost all of Turkey, mostly in its Central Anatolia and Thrace regions. That's why; it was a variety of grain which is not needed to import. At that time, since agro-industry cooperation in Turkey depended mostly on grain, wheat prices was severely affected up to 1934 after 1929 World Economic Crisis¹. The laws of the Agricultural Credit Cooperatives and the Agricultural Sales Cooperatives and Associations were arranged by means of Ataturk's encouragement in 1935². Peasant that is a producer would easily have decided on the products to be produced because of these cooperatives. But, agricultural cooperatives failed to perform the expected operation since

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Makale Geliş Tarihi: 10.03.2017, Kabul Tarihi: 02.10.2017

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¹ Korkut Boratav, Türkiye İktisat Tarihi (1908-2002), İmge Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005, s. 78-79.

² O. Murat Koçtürk, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Hükümetlerin ve Siyasi Partilerin Tarım ve Çiftçi Örgütlenmesine Yaklaşımları", *Tarım Ekonomisi Dergisi*, Sayı: 15(2), 2008, s. 46-47; Erdinç Tokgöz, *Türkiye'nin İktisadi Gelişme Tarihi (1914-2009)* İmaj Yayınları, Ankara, 2009, s. 74.

agricultural credit cooperatives could not be recovered from the pressure of large landowners. In this term, the government had not directly intervened to keep the producer prices in agriculture and/or to prevent the welfare loss occurred in rural area. It was provided with the reasonable credit for peasants who had being encouraged to cooperatives, lowering down of producer costs, even if in limited extent. In this case farmers had been tried to be supported. However, since the market was not formed and the intervention of state was insufficient, the influence of the lenders on the peasants had not been reduced. To get rid of this negativity, especially to protect the grain producer the Turkish Grain Board (TGB) was founded in June 1938³. The works and the incentives made for more productions caused an effective production in 1938. As in other product, wheat was an abundant product in stock. It had been taken some prevention to reduce the negative effects experienced during wartime. In addition to the negative impact of the war, some prevention had also been taken for natural disasters affecting production in 1941 and 1945, but they could not prevent severe food shortages. In a very short time just after the war, these problems continued in Turkey.

In the part 2 of this study, decisions affecting wheat production, in wartime, wheat production and its cultivation have been studied in detail by taking into account to the production, the cultivation, and the prices of wheat from 1935 to 1950 years. If in section 3, the importance of wheat for the country was discussed with Cobweb Model by considering the supply-demand distribution during this period. Finally, results and discussions were specified in section 4.

Wheat Production in the Second World War

In the beginning of the war wheat production had been very effective. There were plenty of products in stock. For this reason, the distributions of wheat production and price in the provinces were rearranged with TGB established in 1938. The market of wheat was thus revived in 1939 since TGB wanted to buy products with a reasonable price in order to prevent money loss of the peasant⁴.

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By relying on available stock, wheat exports were abundantly made in 1940. But 1940 year was not an efficient year when compared with the production rate of 1939 year so, wheat production had decreased. Since this decline in the production was not in size which could prevent to the export, the government had not showed any action on wheat. Wheat in 1940 was exported more than predicted⁵. Also, Prime Minister Refik Saydam said that wheat ex-

³ Tevfik Çavdar, Türkiye Ekonomisinin Tarihi (1900-1960), Imge Yayınları, Ankara, 2003, s. 278; Tokgöz, a.g.e., s. 88; TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, 6. Dönem, 1. Yasama, 2. Cilt Fihristi, 15. İnikat, Ankara, 23 Mayıs 1939, s. 36; Kemal H. Karpat, Türk Demokrasi Tarihi, İmge Yayınları, İstanbul, 2008, s. 202.

⁴ Resmi Gazete, 10 Ağustos 1939; BCA, BBK, Fon Kodu: 030.18.01.02. Y. N. 88.91.5., BCA, BKK, Fon Kodu: 030.18.01.02. Y. N. 88.91.5.

⁵ Anadolu Gazetesi, 7 Ocak 1940; Resmi Gazete, 7 Mayıs 1940; Balıkesir Gazetesi, 5 Şubat 1940;

ports had to be stopped to meet the needs of the military⁶. He also said that wheat was needed to be stored to be met the needs of the army and institutions with reasonable prices by TGB⁷. After Turkey, exporting millions of pound when came to the end of 1940, consumed stocks to feed the thousands of young people who were kept away from production, some lawmakers did the warnings to be reduced exports. But, these warnings were not taken into consideration by B. Nazmi Topcuoğlu who was Trade Attorney in that period. For this reason, the price of wheat showed a new increase in November 1940⁸.

After 1940, due to reduction of wheat stocks located in cities, until imported goods come in, a decision was taken to be recorded of wheat sales by Prices Supervisory Commission⁹. Wheat exports had been prohibited from 1941 to any next time, and the import had been started due to the effect of flooding, drought and the increase in the needs¹⁰. The government considering situations such as War and World Economic Crisis showed an increase in the prices of the auxiliary substances used in the cultivation of the soil crops. The price of wheat was identified as 13.5 cent from the end of 1941 in order to increase the production in 1942 year¹¹. The government wanted to take the necessary measures to reduce the effect of the increase in the price of wheat on bread prices¹². Pastry and pretzel shopkeepers, who had to leave from their works due to the shortage of flour, did not get a result from applications they did to municipality. That is why, they complained to the president and the Prime Ministry via telegraph¹³. As a result of exhaustion of stocks - with respect to 21nd article of Turkish National Security Law (TNSL)¹⁴- production of other foods than bread, bakery, pasta, noodle, Rusk and biscuit made from flour of wheat had been prohibited¹⁵. Since 1941 was a shortage year, the imports had not been made at desired level in other countries that grow wheat¹⁶. Because of this, Wheat was not delivered to the stock room of the villages, and peas-

Anadolu Gazetesi, 16 Şubat 1940.

- 10 TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, 6. Dönem, 4. Yasama, 27. Cilt Fihristi, 77. İnikat, Ankara, 5 Ağustos 1942, s. 22; Zuhal İzmirli and Yücel İzmirli, Makedonya'dan Esen İmbat, Kırmızı Kedi Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010, s. 164.
- 11 Resmi Gazete, 7 Aralık 1941.
- 12 Aydın Halkın Dili Gazetesi, 18 Aralık 1941.
- 13 Aydın Halkın Dili Gazetesi, 14 Ekim 1941.
- 14 Resmi Gazete, 3 Şubat 1942.
- 15 Resmi Gazete, 27 Ekim 1941.
- 16 Aydın Gazetesi, 6 Ağustos 1941.

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TBMM, Zabıt Ceridesi, 6. Dönem, 3. Yasama, 18. Cilt Fihristi, 56. İnikat, Ankara 26 Mayıs 1941, 6

s. 166; Rahmi Akbaş, Mareşal Fevzi Çakmak (1876-1950), Ötüken Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011, s. 368.

⁷ Resmi Gazete, 5 Aralık 1940.

Resmi Gazete, 27 Ekim 1940; TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, 6. Dönem, 2. Yasama, 8. Cilt Fihristi, 8 20. İnikat, Ankara, 3 Ocak 1941, s. 10; Resmi Gazete, 15 Ocak 1940; Anadolu Gazetesi, 9 Ocak 1940; TBMM, Zabıt Ceridesi, 6. Dönem, 2. Yasama, 8. Cilt Fihristi, 22. İnikat, Ankara, 8 Ocak 1940, s. 27

⁰ Aydın Gazetesi, 10 Ocak 1941.

ant began to hide the available product. For this reason, Wheat Protection Tax was abolished on January 2, 1942, to supply to be delivered to these rooms of wheat¹⁷. That is why; TGB had to increase the price of wheat¹⁸. Daily bread consumptions with the new decisions were limited as 187.5 grams for children up to seven years old, 375 grams for those over seven years old and 750 grams for workers working at heavy duty such as mining¹⁹. In July 1942, Sukru Saracoğlu who is the prime minister changed to the price policies and released the prices of many products, especially in wheat, by abolishing to the limits determining the price of agriculture products by the government. The government had thus delegated municipalities to be met the food needs of all cities and towns. With the increasing of demand for wheat by municipalities, the price of wheat increased threefold and this case caused an increase in the prices of all food²⁰.

The increase in the price of wheat considerably caused to an increase in the price of bread. Thus, the daily amounts of bread that could be consumed per person, in 1942, were changed as 600 grams for workers in heavy duty, 300 grams for adults and 150 grams for children²¹. The kilo price of wheat has also reached 20 cents²².

The sale of flour and macaroni and their manufacture were be released by the Government since January 1943, and so the increase in the volume of import helped the market to breathe comfortably²³. Even a little export was made. Since the government made wheat imports with taxes obtained during the war in 1942 and 1943 years, a decline in the price of wheat was visibly happened in 1943. The price of wheat per kilo was 27 cents in January 1944²⁴. But, daily bread consumptions were 375 grams for children and 750 grams for persons who work in heavy duties since October 1, 1944²⁵.

The economy began to revive with both increasing in the needs of states participating in the war and being opened of export routes after the war. The economic conditions of the peasant entered a recovery path with increase of

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- 17 TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, 6. Dönem, 4. Yasama, 22. Cilt Fihristi, 20. İnikat, Ankara, 18 Aralık 1941, s. 44; Aydın Gazetesi, 11 Ocak 1942; Resmi Gazete, 2 Ocak 1942.
- 18 Resmi Gazete, 11 Şubat 1942.
- 19 Resmi Gazete, 19 Ocak 1942; Gönül Güneş, İkinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Ankara'da Günlük Yaşam, Alter Yayınları, Ankara, 2013, s. 67; Murat Metinsoy, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Türkiye Savaş ve Gündelik Yaşam, Homer Yayınları, İstanbul, 2007, s. 224.

22 Afyon Haber Gazetesi, 13 Ağustos 1942; Akdeniz Gazetesi, 18 Temmuz 1942.

- 24 Resmi Gazete, 3 Ocak 1944; Aydın Gazetesi, 7 Haziran 1944.
- 25 Resmi Gazete, 2 Ekim 1944.

²⁰ Irfan Bülbül, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın Türkiye'de Sosyal Hayata Olumsuz Yansımaları", İstanbul Üniversitesi Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları Dergisi, Sayı: 9, 2006, s. 8.

²¹ Kazım Karabekir, Günlükler (1906-1948), çev. Budak Kayabek, Heyamola Yayınları, İstanbul, 2009, Cilt: 2, s. 1265; İhsan Bayram, Değirmendağı, Heyemola Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011, s. 83.

²³ Sabri Yetkin- Erkan Serçe, *Kuruluştan Günümüze İzmir Ticaret Borsası Tarihi*, İzmir Ticaret Borsası Yayınları, İzmir, 1998, s. 181; Resmi Gazete, 19 Ocak 1943.

prices. The element which cause to recovery of peasant in end of the war was Land Crops Tax (LCT), which contains strict policies implemented by the government. The peasant suffering during war years had worked to keep the country's economy alive²⁶. This case also reflected to the import and export rates performed with European Countries. The exports to Germany during the war had continued more comfortable because of Clearing Agreement made just before the war, in January 1939. Turkey had provided food for their feeding and chromium that is raw material for weapons to the German army during and before the war. The government's policy and the need for agricultural products of European countries during the war years had caused to an increase in its export revenue of Turkey, which didn't enter into the war²⁷.

Cobweb Theory and Applications

Cobweb Theorem exhibits supply-demand distributions by taking into account the changes in quantity and price. This theory reflects to three different situations. First state called as Continuous Fluctuation constitutes a situation that next year's price is determined by the current supply and that the supply is determined by the previous price. Thus, the distribution of the price and production maintains the stability, which creates a closed loop. The second case called as Divergent Fluctuations constitutes the situation that distributions of production and price diverges from supply-demand balance. Finally, the third case called as Convergent Fluctuations constitutes a situation that distributions of the price and the production converge to supply-demand balance²⁸. The theory holds on important place in the economy on agricultural products. Similar works have been done recently on agricultural products. Xie and Wang have shown the changes in grain production in China, by considering the influence of agricultural product price fluctuation on grain production by using the title theory²⁹. Rohji and Adewumi have studied the supply response and demand for local rice in Nigeria between 1960 and 2004 considering the change of economic conditions³⁰. Marc Nerlove examined the effects which $\mathcal{G}_{\mathcal{H}}$ agricultural economist, had on developments in economic policies during the years 1910-1960 using cobweb theory with rational expectation³¹. Myers and

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²⁶ Metinsoy, *a.g.e.*, s. 136.

²⁷ Cemil Koçak, *Türkiye'de Milli Şef Dönemi (1938-1945)*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010, Cilt: 2, s. 369; İzmir Kültür Gazetesi, 1 Ocak 1943.

²⁸ Moerdecai Ezekiel, "The Cobweb Theorem", *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol:52, 1983, p. 255-280.

²⁹ Hualin Xie- Bohao Wang, An Empirical Analysis Of The Impact Of Agricultural Product Price Fluctuations On China's Grain Yield, sustainability 2017, Vol:9(6), p. 906.

³⁰ Rohji M. A. Y. –Adewumi M.O., Market Supply Response and Demand For Local Rice in Nigeria: Implications for self-sufficiency Policy, *Journal Of Central European Agriculture*, Vol:9, No:3, 2008.

³¹ Marc Nerlova, Agricultural Economics and Economics: Influence and Counter – Influence, 1910-1960, *Applied Economics Perspectives and Policy*, Vol:37, Issue:1, 2015, pp. 34-63.

coworkers researched on agricultural market structure and performance, vertical coordination arrangements, and institutions for producer collective action, Also, they discussed contributions to understanding market information systems and the functioning at market- based mechanisms for agricultural risk management³².

The following conditions were constructed based on the table1³³. **Table 1.** The Case Of Wheat In Turkey In 1935-1950 Years.

Years	Price (Cents)	Planting area(hectare)	Product amount (Kg)	Import (Turk. Lira)	Export (x1.000) (Turk. Lira)	Export (Ton)
1935	5.47	3,429,404	2,521,277	No data	No data	No data
1936	4.56	3,530,257	3,853,290	No data	No data	No data
1937	4.83	3,303,109	3,693,812	2	7,885	108,092
1938	4.55	3,830,341	4,278,815	36	5,631	101,502
1939	4.75	3,973,133	4,204,170	2	1,073	23,418
1940	6.50	4,381,420	4,067,950	~	8,131	63,877
1941	8.01	4,394,073	3,483,147	12,927	~	~
1942	20	4,369,455	4,263,282	5,676,258	~	~
1943	87.01	3,502,204	3,509,507	5,302,724	74	277
1944	27	3,740,452	3,148,396	1,638,415	56	200
1945	27	3,742,006	2,189,318	~	1,569	6,814
1946	24.53	3,830,504	3,648,383	No data	12,115	33,777
1947	23.03	4,176,913	3,245,904	No data	No data	No data
1948	26.50	4,538,190	4,867,093	No data	No data	No data
1949	29.03	4,007,810	2,516,523	No data	No data	No data
1950	29.40	4,477,191	3,871,926	No data	No data	No data

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Figure1 shows supply-demand distributions between 1935 and 1939 years which point out time before the war. While numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 contain distributions between 1935 and 1936 years, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 include distributions between 1937 and 1939 years. In general, the production of the next year occurs by depending on the price of the present year. This case before the war has separately been seen in 1935-1936 years and in 1937-1939 years. To be evaluated with the zero error of the calculated supply-demand curves, distributions between 1935 and 1939 years was described in two different situations as 1935-1936 and 1937-1939 years. The supply-demand curves was fitted as f(x) = ax+b with zero error in each two situations.



Figure 1. Supply-Demand Distributions Before The War.

Firstly, let's look at distributions of 1935-1936 years: x in D1 curve (demand) are between 2.51 and 3.85, and equation constants (a, b) are -0.679104 and 7.17455, respectively. x in S1 curve (supply) are between 3.65 and 3.85, and equation constants (a, b) are 5.6875 and -16.4269, respectively. According to these data, since the slope of D1 is lower than that of S1, it shows to prefer Convergent Fluctuations. Namely, the demand curve has a more flexible movement. The intersection point of D1 and S1 represents to E1 where the balance of the supply and the demand is, and also convergence is moving toward the balance.

Secondly, let's look at between 1937 and 1939 years: x in D2 curve (demand) are between 3.69 and 4.27, and equation constants (a, b) are -0.482759 Akademik Bakış 177 Cilt 11 Sayı 22 Yaz 2018

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and 6.61138, respectively. x in S2 curve (supply) are between 4.20 and 4.27, and equation constants (a, b) are 4 and -12.25, respectively. According to these data, the flexibility of the demand curve between 1935 and 1936 years had also continued between 1937 and 1939 years. That is, a convergent distribution has been seen. The intersection point of D2 and S2 represents to E2 where the supply and the demand balance are, and the convergence approaches to E2. When compared to the first case, it was seen that wheat was more supplied towards the beginning of the war. This case was a result of the decisions taken by TGB.

Figure 2 shows the distributions on the production and the price of wheat between 1939 and 1945. While numbers 1, 2, and 3 display to cases that belong to 1939 and 1940 years, number 4 emerges as a result of the natural disaster occurred in 1941. The X point is interpolated by looking at only planting in 1941 and at the planting and the harvesting of wheat in 1940 and 1942. If there was no natural disasters in 1941, X was the amount of the average product supposed. Thus, numbers 1, 2, 3 and X point would show a normal supply-demand distribution. That is, the more the price of a product increases. the more the amount requested decreases. Where, X represents to production, which is 4.18 Million Ton. Demand curve (D) and supply curve (S) were fitted by f(x) = ax+b function. a and b values, $x \in [4.06-4.20]$, for D are -12.5 and 57.25, respectively. "a" and "b" values, x ε [4.06-4.18], for S are -14.58 and -54.45, respectively. 3 and 4 points illustrate a loss of product occurred as a result of the natural disasters. Point 5 shows the average increase in price due to the loss of product. In the beginning of the war, since wheat had been abundantly in stocks, the economic uneasiness did not occur in this regard up to 1941. But, with increasing in the needs of the army, TGB had to increase the purchase of wheat. For this reason, prices in the bourse had also increased. This product was entirely stopped for export in 1941 and 1942. Because of these reasons, the value of the product increased and peasant thus obtained, in 1942, to the Gog best production during the war, as seen with number 6. But yet, the production of wheat was seen as insufficient and the increased price of the product was indicated in number 7. Having banned of export for wheat in 1941-42 caused the increase of this product in the stocks and so, peasant diminished the production by decreasing planting, as seen number 8. The markers of 5, 6, 7 and 8 don't show a normal supply-demand distribution. On the other words, the demand independently moves from the price of the product. The cause of this condition was intervening of the government to the market. Since July, 1942, the government recognized freedom to prices by changing the economic policy. Since then, wheat had opened to export. So, Peasant convinced that the earning obtained from wheat was quite less. The price of wheat significantly increased because of the decrease of production. Although the prices continued to increase, the production continued to decrease up to 1945. Supplydemand imbalance was dominant from 1941 up to 1945.

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Figure2. The Supply-Demand Distributions During The War.

Figure 3 shows supply-demand curve after the war, between 1946 and 1950. Because of the natural disasters occurring in the end of the war, the loss of product about almost 30% in the production consisted. External pressures occurring in the end of the war, as well as this natural disaster, also caused to continue of uneasiness of the war until 1948. The markers of 1, 2, 3 and 4 show the irregularity of supply-demand distributions. It was represented cases that are from 1948 to 1950 with the markers numbered with 5, 6, 7, and 8. Here is showed a normal supply-demand distribution. The intersection point, E4, is a balance point of the supply-demand. In Figure 3, demand curve, D, x ε [2.51-4.86], "a" and "b" are 1.86029 and 21.8307. All errors in the fit curves are zero.



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Figure3. Supply-Demand Distributions After The War.

Results and Discussions

Wheat, before the war, was a product which had abundantly been in stocks and TGB was established to prevent decreasing in its price. Thus, supply-demand distributions approach to certain balance. In the early years of the Second World War, the increase in the price of and planting of wheat had been observed as a result of steps produced by TGB despite the abundance in the production. Because of this policy followed by the Government in the first years of war, supply-demand balance had been tried to be protected. Due to the low production seen as a result of the natural disasters in 1941, the government was in a difficult position. The planting rate of 1941 was the best planting rate during the war. The government which changed the prices in a controlled manner until 1943 had released prices with new regulations. Thus, the prices of products significantly were increased. Peasant who thought that prices are low in 1943 was effectively withdrawn from production. Because of the natural disasters experienced in 1941 and 1945, external pressures experienced as a result of international political instability, after the war, supply-demand distribution that include from 1941 to 1948 years is abnormal. Wheat in these years was the feature of a giffen good. The supply-demand distributions occurred as expected with certain foreign policy after 1948 with the Marshall Plan.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my husband for drawing graphics.

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