

The Relationship and Effect between Lifelong Learning Tendencies and Social Entrepreneurship Characteristics of Prospective Teachers*

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ABSTRACT Lifelong learning and entrepreneurship concepts are proposed in a similar way by large-scale organizations such as the EU and OECD. In an information and technology-driven economy, “innovation, flexibility, entrepreneurship and creativity” is a necessity for lifelong learning commitment. The aim of this research is to determine the relation between prospective teachers’ lifelong learning tendency and social entrepreneurship characteristics, and the effect of social entrepreneurship on lifelong learning tendency. Within the scope of the study, Lifelong Learning Tendencies Scale and Prospective Teachers’ Social Entrepreneurship Characteristics Scale was applied to the students. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that there is a relationship between lifelong learning tendencies and social entrepreneurship characteristics of the Faculty of Education students. According to the study findings, it was found a positive and meaningful relationship in .74 level between their lifelong learning tendencies and social entrepreneurship characteristics.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is often seen as a way of life (Gibb 1998). The term of entrepreneurship is generally characterized by volunteer work, risk-taking, development, implementation, promotion skill, administration of innovative ideas successfully concepts (Turner 2005; Cit. Gur-Erdogan 2014). However, in terms of social aspect, entrepreneurship can be defined in terms of sets of behaviors, attributes and skills that allow individuals and groups to create change and innovation cope with and even enjoy higher levels of uncertainty and complexity (Gibb 2007).

It is a new concept in social terms although the concept of entrepreneurship is used in business and economy for long years. Within the past decade as a new phenomenon of global stage, social entrepreneurship has reshaped for us to think about creating social values (Mair et al. 2006: 1; Cit. Gur-Erdogan et al. 2014). Social entrepreneurship is defined by Thompson (2002) as a process consisting of making the social change, creating social value or using the resources innovatively in order to satisfy the needs of the society (cit. Konakli and Gogus 2013). Social entrepreneurship has been increasingly catalyzing the interest of academics, companies, and the business debate for about a decade (Perrini and Vurro 2006).

Previous researches have paid attention to identifying areas on development of entrepreneurship. They have put forward such competencies as creativity, ambiguity tolerance, networking, opportunistic thinking, motivation, autonomy, independence, originality, taking initiation, risk taking, leadership, oral-written communication, human relations, commitment, posing challenging objectives, self-confidence, internal locus of control and endurance (Onstenk 2003; Izquierdo et al. 2005). These competencies stated for entrepreneurship have parallels with the lifelong learning competencies which are personal competence emotions, goal-orientation, active approach to problem solving, perseverance in overcoming obstacles, self-motivating, planning and evaluating self-learning, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, decision making and research, self-awareness, self-control, self-management and self-evaluation, communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, social and civic competences and personal enterprise (Association for the Development of Education in Africa 2012; Candy 1991; Duffy 2003; Cit. Kara and Kurum 2007; Figel 2007; Heinrich 2007; Cit. Heinrich et al. 2007; Knapper and Cropley 2000; Knapper 2006; Ponton 1999).

Lifelong Learning and Social Entrepreneurship

Lifelong learning and entrepreneurship concepts are proposed in a similar way by large organizations like the EU and OECD. In an information and technology driven economy, “innovation, flexibility, entrepreneurship and creativity” is a necessity for lifelong learning commitment. In these respects, it can be said that entrepreneurship and lifelong learning is linked to each other (Garsten 2008; Gopinathan 2007; Cit. Gur-Erdogan 2014). Therefore entrepreneurship education can be counted as part of lifelong learning because it is complemented at various stages of an individual’s learning from early to higher education and beyond in the world of work (Finland Ministry of Education and Culture 2009).

Entrepreneurship has been understood to be more and more important in order for each country to succeed in the tough competition brought on by today’s globalized “knowledge-based society” (Dahlstedt and Hertzberg 2013). Entrepreneurship education is massively provided in higher education for the last decades, both in the U.S. and Europe (Fayolle 2007; Fayolle and Gailly 2008; Fayolle and Klandt 2006; Fayolle and Kyrö 2008; Gibb 1987, 1993, 2002, 2005; Katz 2003; Kuratko 2005; Oslo Agenda 2006; European Commission 2008; Cit. Kakouris 2015). However, it is claimed that in terms of its wider definition and development of competence (accepting the better about changes, strengthening readiness to act, seeking and putting energy into reality, etc.), entrepreneurship education idea is new for education systems of a majority of European countries (Labour Market Reform and Workforce Development 2008).

In the narrow sense, entrepreneurial education will be limited to the existing schools, colleges, universities involved in economic education, but they should not be limited to the traditional places of formal learning (Alfirevic 2015). Because it is not possible to access both entrepreneurship and lifelong learning aims through regulations to be made in only education and improvements to provided (Ministry of Turkish National Education 2009). Essentially, there is considerable scope for the educational system to foster a culture that is open to and encourages entrepreneurial activity by its staff which is reflected on to students and to encourage the

inclusion of owner/managers in the design and learning process (Raudsar and Kaseorg 2012).

Entrepreneurship learning which include an introduction to the ‘active’ teaching methods required to develop entrepreneurial skills among students can be thought as a basic element of teacher training in both school and university level (Labour Market Reform and Workforce Development 2008). Thus, it is important that prospective teachers should be engaged in such types of entrepreneurship learning activities and its effects on the education system. It is also expected that teachers and prospective teachers who will train entrepreneur individuals in the next generation are themselves social entrepreneurs and lifelong learner. Within this scope, some studies have been found in the literature about entrepreneurship of teachers and prospective teachers (Gur-Erdogan et al. 2014; Akyurek and Sahin 2013; Bacanak and Ulkudur 2012; Bayrak and Terzi 2004) and about lifelong learner tendency of the teachers and prospective teachers (Gur-Erdogan et al. 2015; Garipoglu 2013; Arsal 2011; Meerah et al. 2011; Kirby et al. 2010; Coskun 2009).

Individuals should develop knowledge, skills and abilities, providing them with better chances in a changing economic and social environment, while institutions – providers of lifelong education are assumed to change, as well (Alfirevic 2015). In particular, rules and understanding of business life should be capable of facilitating their access to the learning of individuals. Accordingly, school life must provide the skills (entrepreneurship, ability to work in groups, being responsible, ability to use the experience, creativity, long-term thinking, etc.) needed for individuals in business (Ministry of Turkish National Education 2009). Entrepreneurship education should be based on lifelong learning and a networked operating model (Finland Ministry of Education and Culture 2009). Because the increased interest in entrepreneurship education, training and lifelong learning can also be attributed to the changing structure of the each state economy (Raudsaar and Kaseorg 2012).

Objectives

Based on the literature, any research conducted in order to identify the relation between prospective teachers’ lifelong learning tendency and social entrepreneurship characteristics could not be found. Therefore, the aim of this

research is to determine the relation between prospective teachers' lifelong learning tendency and social entrepreneurship characteristics, and the effect of social entrepreneurship variables on lifelong learning tendency.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, correlation research design which is performed by the application of data collection tools at a time and applied in predictive or relationship researches (Buyukozturk et al. 2008; Balci 2004) was used to determine the data belonging to two or more variables on the same subjects. Correlation approach shows covariance in the real sense rather than cause-effect relationship (Balci 2004). The study sample is composed of the students (N=328) studying at Sakarya University Faculty of Education. In the study, Lifelong Learning Tendencies Scale developed by Gur-Erdogan (2014) and Prospective Teachers' Social Entrepreneurship Characteristics Scale developed by Konakli and Gogus (2013) were applied to the students. Voluntary participation of students was relied on during the data collection process. Product-moment correlation technique revealing relationships between two continuous variables (Balci 2004) was applied in the data analysis stage.

RESULTS

In this section the findings and the comments about them are presented. In this context, first of all, the relationship between prospective teachers' lifelong learning tendencies and their social entrepreneurship characteristics was interrogated. After then, a multiple linear regression analysis was performed to demonstrate how risk taking, self-reliance and personal creativity variables

predict lifelong learning tendencies. The findings are given as below.

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that there is a relationship between prospective teachers' lifelong learning tendencies and their social entrepreneurship characteristics [r= 0.74, p<0.01]. When Pearson correlation coefficient (r² = 0.57) was considered, it can be said that 57 percent of the total variance in the lifelong learning tendencies stems from the social entrepreneurship characteristics. As a result, it is seen that there is a high positive significant relationship between prospective teachers' lifelong learning tendencies and their social entrepreneurship characteristics.

As a result of multiple linear regression analysis performed to demonstrate how risk taking, self-reliance and personal creativity variables predict lifelong learning tendencies, it is seen that all the independent variables have an impact on lifelong learning tendencies [Total model: F3-324=137.942, p<0.01, Adjusted R²=0.56]. The three variables altogether explain 56 percent of lifelong learning tendencies (Table 2).

According to standardized regression coefficients, the relative order of importance of the predictor variables on lifelong learning tendencies is respectively personal creativity (β= 0.394),

Table 2: The results of multiple linear regression for social entrepreneurship's sub-dimensions' prediction of Lifelong Learning Tendency (LLT)

Model	LLT			
	B	SS	<i>a</i>	p
(CONSTANT)	17.122	2.494		0.00
Personal				
Creativity	1.058	0.146	0.394	0.00**
Self-reliance	0.224	0.117	0.112	0.57
Risk Taking	0.716	0.116	0.333	0.00**

*p<0.05, **p<0.01 R²= 0.56

Table 1: Pearson's correlation result of the relationship between Lifelong Learning Tendencies (LLT) and Social Entrepreneurship Characteristics (SEC) of prospective teachers

	LLT	Openness to learning	Openness to development	SEC	Risk taking	Self-reliance	Personal creativity
LLT	1						
Openness to learning	.95*	1					
Openness to development	.90*	.72*	1				
SEC	.74*	.73*	.62*	1			
Risk taking	.66*	.56*	.55*	.88*	1		
Self-reliance	.62*	.51*	.51*	.91*	.64*	1	
Personal creativity	.68*	.67*	.59*	.86*	.64*	.70*	1

p<0.01 there is a significant relation

risk taking ($\beta = 0.333$) and self-reliance ($\beta = 0.112$). When considering the regression coefficients significance tests, it is found that personal creativity and risk-taking variables are significant predictors on lifelong learning tendencies at ($p < 0.01$) level while the self-reliance variable is not a significant predictor on lifelong learning tendencies at ($p > 0.05$) level. Considering the results, it is seen that the best predictor of lifelong learning trends is personal creativity among the predictive variables.

DISCUSSION

In this study, a very high positive and significant relationship between lifelong learning tendencies and social entrepreneurship characteristics of prospective teachers was determined. According to Sullivan (2000), entrepreneurial learning can also be conceived as a lifelong learning process, where knowledge is continuously shaped and revised as new experience takes place. van der Heijden and his colleagues (2015) claim that lifelong learning and entrepreneurship, besides mastery and collaboration, are closely related and mutually reinforce each other for teachers' being a change agents. In this context, Raudsaar and Kaseorg (2012) state that any entrepreneurial competency is highly dependent on ongoing (or lifelong) learning and experience, being largely acquired on an individual basis. Furthermore, a moderate positive and significant relationship was found between lifelong learning tendencies and personal creativity, self-reliance and risk taking which are the sub-dimensions of social entrepreneurship in this study. When these relationships are analyzed through multiple linear regressions, it was seen that personal creativity, risk taking and self-reliance variables altogether explain fifty six percent of lifelong learning tendencies. Thus, it can be claimed that these results support Briggs and Sommefeldt's (2002) idea which says that lifelong learning skills compose a lifelong learning culture including students' flexible behaviors and thoughts, creativity and responsibility. Therefore, it is important to develop a culture of learning to build assist in the creation of personal independence of learning, encourage human creativity and innovation and a united learning society (Briggs and Sommefeldt 2002; Cit. Selvi 2006: 488). Also according to Walberg (1988), typical educational environments that foster creativity

reflect attributes of "cooperation, critical thinking, constructive attitudes, lifelong learning and self-reliance" (Daugherty et al. 2003). As a result, lifelong learning, creativity, self-reliance and risk taking are relevant concepts, they affect each other and they are crucial competencies for teacher leaders which are getting more important nowadays. These statements are supported by Krisko's (2001) study which states that teacher leaders had greater creativity, humor, flexibility, risk taking, and lifelong learning than other teachers (Cit. Waidelich 2012). This study claims that the relationship between lifelong learning tendencies and social entrepreneurship characteristics has a crucial importance for from the very first degree to all the lifespan in education systems. Thus, Titrek, Zafer Gunes and Sezen (2013) connote that higher education systems should serve the society through lifelong learning and develop a model supporting this idea. In that vein, Volles (2016) states that the European Union perceives lifelong learning as a means to modernize national education and training systems and cure the lack of entrepreneurship.

CONCLUSION

In this study, a very high positive and significant relationship between lifelong learning tendencies and social entrepreneurship characteristics of prospective teachers was found. Furthermore, a moderate positive and significant relationship was found between lifelong learning tendencies and personal creativity, self-reliance and risk taking which are the sub-dimensions of social entrepreneurship. When these relationships are analyzed through multiple linear regressions, it was seen that personal creativity, risk taking and self-reliance variables altogether explain fifty six percent of lifelong learning tendencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The related literature reveals the importance of the relationship between lifelong education and entrepreneurship. Therefore, lifelong learning and entrepreneurial skills should be supported in educational life. In addition, lifelong learning institutions, higher education institutions and other relevant educational institutions should interoperate to develop individuals' entrepreneurial characteristics and lifelong learning ten-

dencies in a positive direction. However, this cooperation should be made permanent rather than for a limited time.

NOTE

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