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Examples of Social Enterprises in the Context of Turkey and Their Evaluation in Terms of Social Mission**Türkiye Bağlamında Sosyal Girişim Örnekleri ve Sosyal Misyon Açısından Değerlendirilmesi**Esin Bengü Ceran ¹ ¹ Res. Assist. Phd., Istanbul University, Faculty of Business Administration, Department of Business Administration, Istanbul, Turkey**ABSTRACT**

It is important to reveal the difference between social entrepreneurship, which has increasing amount in the business world day by day and which is the subject of many studies in the academic community, from other business models. Social enterprises have a different place from other enterprises in the business world and literature with their mechanism that puts the social mission in the center. In this direction, this study aims to verify the positioning of the social mission dimension, which is thought to be the central dimension in the academic literature, by examining its positioning in local examples from Turkey. It has been seen that the social missions at the center of the examples evaluated within the scope of the study are like bringing solutions to social problems and these initiatives continue their activities as business models that focus on their social missions. In line with the examples examined, each initiative's solution to at least one of the problems of "children with special needs, disabilities, education, poverty, information and communication technologies (ICT) exclusion, chemical dependency, environment, sustainable energy, unemployment, women's equality, rural community development, nature" has been demonstrated. It is thought that the examples discussed in the study are valuable in terms of providing local contributions to literature from the context of Turkey.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship, Social Mission, Entrepreneurship**ÖZET**

İş dünyasında sayısı her geçen gün artmakta olan ve akademik camiada da çok sayıda çalışmaya konu olan sosyal girişimciliğin diğer iş modellerinden farkının ortaya konulması önem teşkil etmektedir. İş dünyasında var olan toplumsal sorunlara ilişkin farkındalığın sosyal misyonu iş modelinin neresinde konumlandığı pek çok açıdan sorgulanmaktadır. Sosyal girişimler sosyal misyonu merkeze alan mekanizması ile iş dünyasında ve literatürde diğer girişimlerden farklı bir yere sahiptir. Bu doğrultuda yapılan çalışma ile akademik literatürde merkezi bileşen olduğu düşünülen sosyal misyon bileşeninin yerel örneklerdeki konumlandırmasının incelenmesi ile doğrulanması amaçlanmıştır. Çalışma kapsamında değerlendirilen örneklerin merkezinde bulunan sosyal misyonlarının toplumsal sorunlara çözüm getirme niteliğinde olduğu ve bu girişimlerin sosyal misyonlarına odaklanan iş modelleri olarak faaliyetlerini sürdürdükleri görülmüştür. İncelenen örnekler doğrultusunda her bir girişimin "özel gereksinimli çocuklar, engelliler, eğitim, yoksulluk, bilgi ve iletişim teknolojileri dışlanması, kimyasal bağımlılık, çevre, sürdürülebilir enerji, işsizlik, cinsiyet eşitliği, kırsal toplum gelişimi" sorunlarından en az birine çözüm üretme niteliği taşıdığı ortaya konulmuştur. Çalışmanın ele alınan örneklerin Türkiye bağlamından yerel katkı sağlaması açısından değerli olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Girişimcilik, Sosyal Misyon, Girişimcilik**1. INTRODUCTION**

With the understanding that global problems cause irreversible damages, the business world, where competition is prioritized, has to transform its focus. With the increase in the number of sustainable business models and the long-term survival of successful enterprises with high social awareness, the idea that a transformation in this direction is possible is becoming widespread. More importantly, with the increase in social awareness, it can be seen that all business models with or without profit expectations can serve a social mission. At the same time in business life and academic literature, many types of entrepreneurship such as intrapreneurship, women entrepreneurs, techno-startups, and e-entrepreneurship also attract attention (Hisrich, 1990; Hisrich & O'Brien, 1981; Gandhi et al., 2008, Matlay, 2004). In this direction, it is seen that many studies have been carried out to create the conceptual framework of social enterprises that focus on social mission and prioritize the concern of creating social value. The concept of social entrepreneurship, which attracts attention in the academic literature as well as in business life, has been the subject of many academic studies (Alvord et al. 2004, Mair & Marti, 2006; Peredo & McLean, 2006).

Various definitions have been made within the scope of social entrepreneurship studies in the literature, and few systematic review studies have been included. The dimensions of the concept have been put forward within the scope of different studies, but there is still no consensus on what the dimensions are. Studies on the dimensions of the concept of social entrepreneurship continue, but the social mission dimension is kept at the center in almost every study (Dees, 1998; Weerawardena & Sullivan Mort, 2006; Austin et al. 2006; Hervieux et al., 2010).

Within the scope of this study, it is thought that supporting the social mission and social value creation dimensions, which are the focus of social entrepreneurship, with local examples to contribute to the literature and an evaluation has been made in this direction. With the study, first of all, the definition of the concept, what its dimensions are, and the importance of the social mission dimension was revealed, and various examples in the context of Turkey were evaluated in terms of their social missions. In this way, it is aimed to present a confirmatory study on the social mission dimension of the concept of social entrepreneurship. It is thought that the study is valuable in terms of contributing to the formation of the conceptual framework of the concept of social entrepreneurship with a confirmatory evaluation from the local context.

2. DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The concept of social entrepreneurship, which includes social and entrepreneurial terms differs from the commercial entrepreneurs which are defined as “innovative and developer people who see opportunities and can turn them into marketable ideas, add value to them with effort, money and talent, take risks and expect rewards accordingly” (Ülgen Aydınlik, 2016). Since social entrepreneurship is carried out within the framework of a business model other than the purpose it serves, it should also be separated from associationism, volunteering and philanthropy. ASHOKA, the first social entrepreneurship platform in the world, defines social entrepreneurs as change agents who develop solutions to social problems and transform systems with their innovative ideas (AHOKA). Social entrepreneurs handle a social problem from a different perspective than everyone else, they put forward innovative ideas for the solution of this problem, and become the pioneers of change within the framework of the business model they have designed.

Social entrepreneurship is a process in which new institutions are established or institutional transformations are carried out to find solutions to social problems such as poverty, incurable diseases, lack of literacy, environmental destruction, human rights violations and corruption (Borenstein et al., 2010). The solutions brought by social enterprises are not instant and current solutions, but long-term, sustainable solutions, and at the same time, they have a much larger scale of influence than seems by domino effect.

Dees (1998), who is accepted as the father of the concept of social entrepreneurship in the academic literature, mentions several concepts while defining the social entrepreneurship concept; It brings together value creation by Say, innovation and change by Schumpeter, and opportunity view by Drucker, and defines social entrepreneurship as the harmony of those three. This definition, which is the most comprehensive and accepted in the academic literature, is as follows (Dees, 1998);

“Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector, by:

- ✓ *Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),*
- ✓ *Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission,*
- ✓ *Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,*
- ✓ *Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and*
- ✓ *Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.”*

Dees describes social entrepreneurs as change agents; In the definition, it refers to social value creation, ability to seize opportunities, constant innovation and willingness to learn, not satisfaction with what they have and striving for more. Many definitions of social entrepreneurship have been examined through the years, and some of the social entrepreneurship definitions from 1987 to 2003 have been compiled within the scope of the study "Investigating social entrepreneurship: A multidimensional model" by Weerawardena and Mort . When the definitions in this study are examined, it is seen that Dees's (1998) definition of social entrepreneurship still preserves its feature of being the most comprehensive and detailed definition of social entrepreneurship with its elements.

The concept of social entrepreneurship is closely followed by many academicians in Turkey, and the theoretical development of the concept is tried to be supported in line with local examples. In this direction, many definitions of the concept of social entrepreneurship are made in the context of Turkey. Besler, who presents a detailed theoretical framework on the conceptual foundations of social entrepreneurship, defines social entrepreneurship as “a sustainable, innovative and social process in which opportunities are pursued to create social value or change and/or meet social needs in almost every sector, a certain amount of risk is taken to use these opportunities, resources are used creatively” (Besler, 2010). This definition can be also considered as a very comprehensive one that it includes a large number of social entrepreneurship dimensions.

2.1. Components of the Concept of Social Entrepreneurship

It is important to distinguish social enterprises from other enterprises, to create the conceptual framework and add this title to enterprises in business life. To distinguish a social enterprise from a commercial enterprise or a philanthropic act, it must meet the elements in the definition of the concept of social enterprise, as well as cover the dimensions of this concept not completely but to a certain extent.

The dimensions that make up the concept of social entrepreneurship are defined under five headings by Praszkiar and Novak (2012), who have made an important contribution to determining the framework of the concept of social entrepreneurship. According to the authors, for an enterprise to be defined as a social enterprise, it should be evaluated in terms of "social mission, social innovation, social change, entrepreneurial spirit, personality" variables. If the initiative is suitable for the definitions put forward within the scope of these dimensions, it can be said that the initiative has the feature of being a social enterprise. Within the scope of another study that contributed to the theoretical framework of the concept, Weerawardena and Sullivan Mort (2006) present the dimensions of social entrepreneurship with a formulation, and the dimensions determined according to this formula have the potential to create social value. In other words, for an enterprise to be a social enterprise, it is expected to include definitions of social value creation, innovativeness, proactiveness, risk management, sustainability, social mission and environment dimensions (Weerawardena & Sullivan Mort, 2006). Within the scope of the study titled "The legitimization of social entrepreneurship", many valuable studies on the concept of social entrepreneurship were analyzed in depth with discourse analysis. As the result of this study, it has been revealed that social entrepreneurship, whose theory has been examined in detail, consists of eight dimensions (Hervieux et al., 2010). The dimensions of social entrepreneurship are listed in the result as; social mission, socio-economic organization, innovation, sustainability, social change, opportunities, autonomy, and risk.

Based on the studies on the dimensions of the concept, the importance of the social mission dimension, which should be at the center of social entrepreneurship, is easily revealed. In this direction, the social mission dimension and its importance will be mentioned in the next part of the study.

2.2. Social Mission Dimension of Social Entrepreneurship

The central role of social mission in social enterprises is emphasized by most researchers (Dees, 1998; Weerawardena & Sullivan Mort, 2006; Austin et al. 2006; Hervieux et al., 2010). While defining social entrepreneurship, Dees emphasizes that social enterprises can be successful as long as they serve their social missions. Social entrepreneurs seek the most effective way to realize their social missions and establish their business models accordingly (Dees, 1998). The main reason why the social mission dimension has an important place in terms of the concept of social entrepreneurship is that this dimension distinguishes social enterprises from other enterprises. Components such as innovation, risk-taking potential and proactivity are among the dimensions of commercial ventures as well as other dimensions in social entrepreneurship. For this reason, social mission emerges as a critical feature that is specific to social enterprises and makes them different from commercial enterprises. Austin et al. (2006) emphasize the importance of social mission for a social enterprise with the following statement; "Common across all definitions of social entrepreneurship is the fact that the underlying drive for social entrepreneurship is to create social value, rather than personal and shareholder wealth". Creating social value in line with the social mission comes first for social enterprises.

For an enterprise to be mentioned as having a social mission, it is expected to aim to produce solutions to various social problems. For an enterprise to be defined as a social enterprise, it must have the potential to solve at least one social problem and make it the focus of all its processes. A social mission should focus on at least one of these; "aging, chemical dependency, children with special needs, disabilities, discrimination against minorities, education, information and communication technologies (ICT) exclusion, energy production and distribution, environment, health, homelessness, peace and conflict resolution, poverty, rural community development sanitation, street children, sustainable energy, trafficking of women and children, unemployment, women's equality" problems (Praszkiar and Novak, 2012).

In line with the inferences obtained from the comprehensive studies, it is seen that having a social mission is the primary condition for an enterprise to be a social enterprise. All of the researchers who could not agree on issues such as whether social enterprises are for-profit or not concerned about making a profit, all mention that a social enterprise should be focused on a social mission. The fact that every study on social enterprises in the literature accepts the dimension of having a social mission as a premise reveals the importance of this variable. In this

direction, it is aimed to evaluate the examples from the context of Turkey in terms of their social missions. With the study, it will be ensured that the social mission dimension is enriched with examples in the local context.

3. Social Entrepreneurship Examples in the Context of Turkey and Evaluation in Terms of Their Social Missions

3.1. Hasan Zafer Elcik-Otsimo

Hasan Zafer Elcik-Otsimo has provided home education opportunities to approximately 75000 children with special needs in Turkey and around the world, with the mobile application project he developed for children in need of special education in the pre-school period. With the help of the developed mobile application, children with autism and other special needs, who do not have the opportunity to access the astronomically priced education of private schools and do not have the chance to receive government-supported education, have had the chance to develop their abilities at home with the help of their families. The most important factor in the emergence of this initiative is the insufficient level of free education for children with special needs in Turkey and the high cost of comprehensive education. Being the pioneer of social enterprise, Elcik's realization of this deficiency was in line with his search for education for his brother with autism. With the help of this initiative, it is aimed to strengthen the social skills, muscle development and academic basis of children by transferring the world's leading education methodologies to mobile phones.

3.2. Mesut Keskin – e-bursum

The e-scholarship initiative, which advances with the vision of enabling every individual to receive education without financial difficulties, was established as a digital platform. The pioneer of the initiative, Mesut Keskin, has provided scholarships to 250 thousand of people since the establishment of the scholarship platform. The emergence of the e-scholarship system was due to the financial difficulties of the founder Mesut Keskin during his university education. The social entrepreneur, who had difficulties in obtaining a scholarship and continuing his education during his studentship, established a platform so that other students in need would not experience the problems he experienced, and succeeded in bringing together those who volunteered to give scholarships and those in need.

3.3. Mehmet Atakan Foça teyit.org

With the introduction of social media into our lives, the spread of many true and false news has accelerated. Mehmet Atakan Foça has established a verification program, teyit.org, to spread true information as quickly as false information and to distinguish the true from the false. Teyit.org is on the way to increasing media literacy by involving users in the process for the purpose of analysis, validation, and dissemination of critical thinking through its website. Foça expresses the vision of the initiative as “to reach an information age where information is spread more democratically and equally, and where reaching the truth is possible without misunderstanding”. With the help of the share of analyzes, it is also possible for the readers to learn the techniques to confirm the information they have obtained and to be included in the system, while the teyit.org initiative raises awareness about the existence of fake news.

3.4. Uygur Özemesi - Good4Trust

Uygur Özemesi, who strives for social change, realized the harms of the consumption economy during bird watching, where he noticed the harm to nature. Setting out with this awareness, the social entrepreneur first developed the data sharing system in the field of bird watching and established the Good4Trust initiative, which can bring together businesses that want to produce alternatives to the consumption economy. Generators, communicating with each other through the developed platform, make nature-friendly production without harming nature, and become stronger day by day by supporting each other with the system they have established within themselves. In other words, the production of sustainability-oriented businesses by supporting each other is on the way to creating a new world by leaving the consumption economy. With the help of this initiative, the producers who can come together have the chance to lead in the establishment of a new alternative system to the consumption economy with the awareness of not harming nature while producing.

3.5. Serra Titiz- GelecekDahaNet

It is known that in Turkey, half of the country's population is under the age of 30 and youth unemployment is at a significant rate. In this respect, young people need to make the right choices regarding their career choices and path. On the other hand, it is known that the managers of leading companies in the world and professionals need young mindsets. The GelecekDahaNet platform, founded by Serra Titiz, brings these two disconnected sides

together. While volunteer mentors share information with young people through this platform, young people receive mentorship about the sector and profession. The GDN initiative aims to be a platform where they can share their knowledge and experience without space and time constraints. With the help of this platform, while young people create their career goals, leaders in business life can make a more qualified sharing other than donating to various organizations. In addition to one-on-one meetings, various informative videos, webinars, seminars, and conferences guide young people in designing their career paths. The social enterprise's founders think this initiative is a universal investment because it contains the quality of guiding the youth. The pioneer of the GDN initiative Serra Titiz, and her team believe the return on this investment has the potential to save the world.

3.6. Bedriye Hülya- Bfit

The Bfit initiative, it is tried to create areas where women in the middle and lower income levels can do sports. Bfit sports areas not only offer women the opportunity to do sports, but also create working opportunities for women with franchises that are given only to women entrepreneurs. The fact that there are only female employees within Bfit also provides employment opportunities for female employees other than entrepreneurs. This initiative, which aims to liberate women in every aspect and to make space for them, enables to separate the concepts of sports and entrepreneurship from the male-dominated understanding. Social entrepreneur Bedriye Hülya has succeeded in offering hundreds of women the opportunity to do sports, start a business and work with the Bfit franchise system across Turkey. With this project, the active participation of women in life is being supported.

3.7. Mine Ekinci- KODA

The Village Schools Exchange Network (KODA), which set out to ensure social justice and to create equality of opportunity in education by increasing the quality of education in village schools, aims to eliminate inequality in rural and urban education. With the studies carried out within KODA, efforts are made to eliminate the factors that make education poor such as problems caused by families, physical problems, child labor, seasonal labor, language differences between teachers and students. In line with these purposes, Volunteer trainer communities were formed to increase the motivation and qualifications of village teachers, and village teachers were provided to come together and produce lots of solutions. With the help of the communities created, it was ensured that the teachers did not feel alone and that they created sustainable solutions together. It is aimed to design a model village school that will set an example for all village schools in the long run through activities such as teacher communities and children's workshops. Social entrepreneur Mine Ekinci's dream with this initiative is; "To contribute to a world where every child can realize itself without getting away from nature, whether in the village or the city".

3.8. Mert Fırat and Ali Ercan – İhtiyaç Haritası

The İhtiyaç Haritası system, which was implemented by Mert Fırat and Ali Ercan in 2015, brings together needies and supporters. With the help of this platform, parties can communicate without intermediaries and their needs can be met in a transparent and non-hierarchical manner. This initiative was established due to reasons such as the loss of trust in NGOs due to transparency problems in Turkey, the increase in problems regarding donation management, and the formation of hierarchy while giving support. The needy and supporters for social development have been provided to meet on an online platform, and the needs map system has managed to reach over 100 thousand users in 6 years since its establishment. The system operates in the form of meeting the emergency needs in disasters and meeting instant needs, as well as constantly meeting routine needs and creating need maps for a specific issue. İhtiyaç Haritası can also be defined as a new generation social cooperative system that brings the parts together without intermediaries.

When the examples detailed above are examined in terms of social entrepreneurship dimensions, it is seen that the purpose of each of them includes a social mission and has the potential to create social value. The founding purpose of Otsimo is to provide accessible and quality education opportunities for children with special needs; e-bursum strives to enable individuals to receive education without financial difficulties; teyit.org has set out with the intention of eliminating information pollution caused by developing technology and the widespread use of social media, and increasing media literacy; Good4Trust was established as a platform that supports environmentally friendly production without harming the nature; GelecekDahaNet strives to find solutions to youth employment and career planning problems; Bfit aims to increase women's employment and create opportunities for women to do sports, KODA tries to produce solutions for the problems in village schools; İhtiyaç Haritası aims to make it possible for t to reach donors without the need for an intermediary. All these

efforts and goals meet the social mission-oriented dimension of social entrepreneurship and its potential to create social value.

When the social enterprise examples discussed within the scope of the study are evaluated in terms of the social problems that the social mission put forward by Praszkiar and Novak (2012), it is seen that each of them has the potential to create social value. In line with its social mission, Otsimo provides solutions to the problems of children with special needs, disabilities and education; e-bursum, education, poverty; teyit.org, information and communication technologies (ICT) exclusion; Good4Trust, chemical dependency, environment, sustainable energy; GelecekDahaNet, unemployment; Bfit, women's equality; KODA continues its activities to solve the problems of rural community development, education; İhtiyaç Haritası touches on many social problems more comprehensively and strives to find solutions to these problems. From this point of view, it is seen that each of the examples discussed can solve problems in different fields with the help of the social value they create separately. Each social enterprise is recognized as unique and valuable in this respect.

The argument that emphasized in the literature which the initiatives focusing on the social mission, can be called social enterprises, is confirmed with this study in the light of the examples considered as important social enterprises in Turkey. These examples, examined in the local context, are initiatives that succeed in creating social value by keeping their social missions both as the purpose of establishment and at the center of all their processes. In this direction, it has been seen through the examples examined at the end of the study that for an enterprise to be a successful social enterprise, it must solve a social problem. In addition to being the central component of the social mission, the other components of social entrepreneurship, such as innovation, proactivity, risk-taking, and seeing opportunities, are also included in these initiatives. However, these components can serve social value creation to the extent that they are shaped around the social mission focus.

4. CONCLUSION

Businesses can't survive without being aware of the environment they are in. As with every living organism, businesses need to continue their activities without harming their system. In this direction, it is expected that commercial or social enterprises will have social awareness. Business models with high social awareness, which have become increasingly important in the last century, have led to the emergence of the concept of social entrepreneurship. The number of social mission-oriented initiatives that have existed for centuries but are not defined as social enterprises are increasing day by day. In this direction, the theoretical framework of the concept of social entrepreneurship, whose importance is increasing every day in the academic sense, is tried to be established. Within the scope of this study, examples from the local context were examined in order to contribute to the conceptual framework of social entrepreneurship and the central dimension of social entrepreneurship was evaluated in terms of social mission.

In terms of the examples evaluated within the scope of the study, it was seen that the purpose of each of them was to bring a solution to a social problem, their business models were created in this direction, and this mission was at the center of all activities. It has been revealed that each initiative, in line with its focus, is capable of solving at least one of the problems of those; children with special needs, disabilities, education, poverty, information and communication technologies (ICT) exclusion, chemical dependency, environment, sustainable energy, unemployment, women's equality, rural community development. With the study, the argument that a social enterprise should have a social mission and create value in this direction was supported by examples in the local context. In addition, it has been seen that other dimensions in the literature exist within the scope of examples, but these dimensions cannot distinguish social enterprises from commercial enterprises without a social mission focus in the center.

To shape the conceptual framework of social entrepreneurship in the literature, it is important to determine its dimensions more clearly and to carry out studies in this direction. It is possible to create dimensions related to the concept by various methods. It is thought that examining the organizations accepted as social enterprises in this direction will contribute to the formation of the conceptual framework. Within the scope of the study conducted in this direction, various initiatives accepted as social enterprises within ASHOKA Turkey were evaluated in terms of the social mission, which emphasized the key feature of the social enterprise dimensions in the literature. The study aims to examine the social enterprises in the context of Turkey in line with the social mission and to reach a confirming conclusion regarding this dimension. It is thought that the study is valuable in terms of presenting a local evaluation from the Turkish context regarding the social mission and social value creation dimension.

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