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The investigation of the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers in terms of various variables (gender, defining oneself as a social entrepreneur and grade). The data of the research were obtained on a volunteer basis from 253 pre-service teachers studying at the departments of social studies education in elementary education departments at the faculties of education at Çukurova University and Nigde University. Descriptive survey model was used in the study and the data collection tools used in the study consist of a “Personal Information Form” prepared by the researchers themselves and “Entrepreneurship Scale Towards Student Teachers”. The data were analyzed through IBM SPSS 21.0 Program using *t*-test for independent sampling and one-way variance analysis. As a result of the study, it was seen that the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers were positive and high level mostly in terms of self-confidence. The results of the analysis conducted according to independent variables showed that the entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service Teachers differ according to the defining oneself as a social entrepreneur and grade variables while no significant difference was observed in terms of gender.

Subjects: Education; Entrepreneurship; Primary Education – Teacher Education & Training; Social Entrepreneurship; Teacher Training; Teachers & Teacher Education

Keywords: social studies; social entrepreneurship; pre-service teachers

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Economic growth not only serves the purpose of increasing social welfare but it may also trigger a gap between social layers. In this sense, social entrepreneurship activities including social projects and community service practices are a kind of skill that is closely related to certain social values and that should be given to young generations during the education period. Social studies’ purpose of training efficient and effective citizens shows the necessity for the social studies teachers and the social studies pre-service teachers to have the knowledge, values, and skills related to the issue. That sufficient number of studies investigating the social entrepreneurship levels of social studies teachers and pre-service teachers do not exist in literature increases the importance of this study.

1. Introduction

Developments in both transportation and communication as from the twentieth century have resulted in business operations to go beyond region or border lines and to take on an international dimension, especially in countries governed with free market economy. This has led to a transition period to a new world order called globalization. Globalization, which has gained momentum as a result of the technological and economical developments, has increasingly affected many fields from education to health, bringing about a new period that will cause national boundaries stay on paper especially in economic field.

In consequence of such developments, many countries have put some measures into practice in order to improve and energize their economies. In this sense, the existence of entrepreneur individuals playing a role in the implementation of economical activities has gradually become more important (Ogundele & Abiola, 2012). Educational systems have focused on training individuals having enough entrepreneur characteristics to be able to compete with other countries at different times. However, a wide range of people from academicians to politicians have concentrated upon entrepreneurship education gradually for the last 10 years (Azim, 2013; Khan, 2011). It is seen that many countries including England (Jones & Iredale, 2010), French (Klapper, 2004), German, Poland (Jones et al., 2011; Packham, Jones, Miller, Pickernell, & Thomas, 2010), Spain (Lanero, Vázquez, Gutiérrez, & García, 2011), Italy (Dubini & Iacobucci, 2004) are trying to pursue entrepreneurship education especially at the level of bachelor's degree. Because, universities are considered as institutions playing a big role in obtaining both economic and social benefits thanks to their great capacity in both obtaining and disseminating knowledge (Vazquez, Lanero, Gutierrez, Garcia, Alves & Georgiev 2010).

The term entrepreneurship in literature, which is of Latin origin literally (Korkmaz, 2000, p. 165 cited at Yılmaz, 2014, p. 299), is originally based on the practices of French economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Dees, 1998). Although entrepreneurship was originally a concept which predominantly has economic meaning, today it is also accepted to have a social dimension (Chell, 2007). Gaining popularity worldwide, social entrepreneurship is being taught in many educational institutions including well-known colleges and universities (Brock & Kim, 2011). However, when the literature review is examined, it is seen that the studies focused on the economic dimensions and were mainly related to the students attending the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences and Entrepreneurship (see for case studies; Doğaner & Altunoğlu, 2010; Dubini & Iacobucci, 2004; İşcan & Kaygın, 2011; Kılıç, Keklik, & Çalı, 2012; Vázquez et al., 2010).

Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern (2006, p. 3) stated that the basic objective in social entrepreneurship was to create social value for the public interest while the main purpose is to perform operations resulted in earnings in commercial entrepreneurship. Konaklı and Göğüş (2013, p. 374) indicated that in a similar way the main difference observed between the individual economic entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship happened in the altruism of individuals and they emphasized that social entrepreneurship included qualities of social values rather than economic values.

When the literature about the issue is examined, although there are many definitions on the matter of what social entrepreneurship is, it is mostly stated that the contents of this concept are not adequately described in the definitions that have been made so far (Mair & Martí, 2006; Martin & Osberg, 2007; Noruzi, Westover, & Rahimi, 2010; Swanson & Zhang, 2012; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006; Yılmaz, 2014). In clear and understandable words, social entrepreneurship can be defined as “entrepreneurial activity in which a social purpose is embedded” (Austin et al., 2006, p. 1). In the focus of social entrepreneurship, the aim of developing appropriate solutions to social problems is located. Therefore, the creation and the sustainability of social values in individuals were recognized as an important consideration (Prasodjo, 2013, p. 207). With reference to this idea, it can be concluded that raising sensitive individuals to social problems who are equipped with skills necessary for the solution of these problems is among the primary duties of the education system.

Social entrepreneurship was first taught as a course in the mid-1990s in Harvard University. However, nowadays it is included in the master's programs in Tata social sciences institute in India and in some bachelor's degrees in the US and many European countries. On the other hand, in Turkey, the activities conducted in social entrepreneurship are mostly carried out through foundations and associations. But more recently, increasingly the universities have begun to take the initiative for the elimination of social problems by including various classes and activities into their curriculum such as entrepreneurship classes, community service classes, university projects, student clubs, etc. (Toplum Gönüllüleri, 2013).

Enabling young generation to face with the problems of the society they live in and to find solutions to those problems is an explicit objective of social studies courses which constitutes one of the dimensions of citizenship education considered as one of the common objectives and aims of the subjects taught at every grade of education starting from pre-school education. As Öztürk (2009, p. 2) indicated, "social studies class has the quality of being the only course that directly focuses on citizenship education." Michaelis and Garcia (1996, p. 4) explained this as one of the aims of social studies courses by developing responsibilities of citizenship through in-school and non-school civic activities. However, among the studies conducted, only one study was encountered about the social entrepreneurial level of social studies teachers and social studies pre-service teachers (see, Amos & Comfort, 2014).

This study, aiming at explaining the features of social entrepreneurship which is a part of citizenship education of social studies teachers investigates also these questions:

- Do the social studies pre-service teachers' average social entrepreneurship levels and the points they got from the subdimensions of social entrepreneurship show a significant change according to gender?
- Do the social studies pre-service teachers' average social entrepreneurship levels and the points they got from the subdimensions of social entrepreneurship show a significant change according to the "defining oneself as a social entrepreneur" variable?
- Do the social studies pre-service teachers' average social entrepreneurship levels and the points they got from the subdimensions of social entrepreneurship show a significant change according to the "grade" variable?

2. Method

2.1. Research model

The descriptive survey model helps describe complicated social processes and understand which factors to focus on for later explanatory and confirmatory studies (Punch, 2005, p. 16). For this reason, the descriptive survey model was used in this study.

2.2. Study group

The study group includes 253 pre-service teachers voluntarily involved in the data acquisition process from the Departments of Social Studies Education in the Faculties of Education in Çukurova University and Niğde University (Table 1).

Table 1. Data of the study group

Gender	Class				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Female	39	22	33	19	113
Male	39	39	35	27	140
Total	78	61	68	46	253

2.3. Data collection

The data of the study were collected through “The scale of social entrepreneur features of social pre-service teachers” developed by Konaklı and Göğüş (2013) and the “Self-description Form” by the researchers, which include the variables “gender,” “defining oneself as a social entrepreneur,” and “grade.” The study group of “The scale of social entrepreneur features of pre-service teachers” includes 323 pre-service teachers studying at the Faculty of Education in Kocaeli University. The data were analyzed through commentary and confirmatory factor analysis. The result of the commentary factor analysis showed that the scale includes three factors. The total variance from the factors was determined as 41%. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis verified the three-factor structure. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling and Cronbach alpha measurement of internal consistency were measured as .841 and .855, respectively (Konaklı & Göğüş, 2013). Cronbach alpha value obtained as a result of the implementation of the scale to the study group was calculated as .907.

2.4. The analysis of the data

In the analysis of the data obtained from the scale in the study, the level of significance was accepted as $p \leq .05$. The data were tested through SPSS 21.0 program using analysis techniques appropriate for the aim of the study. In line with the objectives of the study, *t*-test for independent samples and one-way variance analysis (ANOVA), which are among parametrical analysis techniques, were used in order to find out whether the total scores achieved from the scale differ according to independent variables. In case of the existence of a significant difference, the homogeneity of the variances was tested to identify which groups the difference was between. Bonferroni test, which is one of the multiple comparisons tests, was used in the event of homogeneity of variances.

3. Findings and interpretation

In this section of the study, the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers were examined in accordance with the variables “Gender,” “Grade,” and “Defining Oneself as a Social Entrepreneur,” and the data were interpreted through tables. Descriptive data related to the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers are given in Table 2.

In consideration of the data in Table 2, it can be stated that the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers are positive and high level and that they have social entrepreneurship characteristics in self-confidence factor most.

3.1. Findings related to the gender variable

t-Test was used to determine if there was difference between the social studies pre-service teachers’ genders and the average scores of their social entrepreneurship characteristics and the results are given in Table 3.

In Table 3, no significant difference is observed between the gender and social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers in the factors Risk Taking ($t_{(251)} = .898; p > .05$), Self-confidence ($t_{(251)} = 1.549; p > .05$), Personal Creativity ($t_{(251)} = 1.065; p > .05$), and in total scale ($t_{(251)} = 1.360; p > .05$), which may indicate that gender is not influential on the entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers.

Table 2. Descriptive data related to the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers

Factors	Arithmetic mean (\bar{X})	Standard deviation (SD)
Risk taking	3.83	1.061
Self-confidence	3.79	.995
Personal creativity	3.91	.935
Total	3.84	1.00

Table 3. t-Test results of the social studies pre-service teachers' social entrepreneurship characteristics according to gender

Factors	Gender	n	\bar{X}	SD	t	p
Risk taking	Female	113	26.51	5.53	.898	.370
	Male	140	27.11	5.08		
Self-confidence	Female	113	29.83	5.23	1.549	.123
	Male	140	30.83	5.03		
Personal creativity	Female	113	23.18	4.31	1.065	.288
	Male	140	23.73	3.88		
Total	Female	113	79.53	13.05	1.360	.175
	Male	140	81.68	12.08		

3.2. Findings related to the variable “defining oneself as a social entrepreneur”

t-Test was used to find out if there was difference between the social studies pre-service teachers' conditions in terms of defining themselves as social entrepreneurs and the average scores of their social entrepreneurship characteristics, and the results are given in Table 4.

When Table 4 is examined, a significant difference is observed between the variable “defining oneself as a social entrepreneur” and social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers in the factors Risk Taking ($t_{(251)} = 2.599$; $p < .05$), Self-confidence ($t_{(251)} = 4.287$; $p < .05$), Personal Creativity ($t_{(251)} = 2.308$; $p < .05$), and in the whole scale ($t_{(251)} = 3.642$; $p < .05$). Considering the arithmetic mean scores, the difference is seen to be in favor of social studies pre-service teachers who define themselves as social entrepreneurs. This may mean that the entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies teachers candidates who define themselves as social entrepreneurs in Risk taking and Self-confidence factors, as well as in the whole scale are more positive than those of the pre-service teachers who do not define themselves as social entrepreneurs.

3.3. Findings related to “gender”

One-way ANOVA test was used in order to discover if there was difference between the social studies pre-service teachers' entrepreneurship characteristics and grades, and the results are given in Table 5.

When Table 5 is examined, no significant difference is observed between the variable “grade” and social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers in the factors Self-confidence ($F_{(3-249)} = 1.463$, $p > .05$) and Personal Creativity ($F_{(3-249)} = 1.688$, $p > .05$). However, in Risk taking factor ($F_{(3-249)} = 3.780$, $p < .05$) and the whole scale ($F_{(3-249)} = 2.756$, $p < .05$), it is seen that social

Table 4. t-Test results of the social studies pre-service teachers' social entrepreneurship characteristics according to the variable “defining oneself as a social entrepreneur”

Factors	Social entrepreneur	n	\bar{X}	SD	t	p
Risk taking	Yes	188	27.35	5.21	2.599	.011*
	No	65	25.38	5.27		
Self-confidence	Yes	188	31.16	5.00	4.287	.000*
	No	65	28.13	4.86		
Personal creativity	Yes	188	23.84	4.01	2.308	.023*
	No	65	22.47	4.13		
Total	Yes	188	82.35	12.32	3.642	.000*
	No	65	76.00	12.05		

* $p < .05$.

Table 5. One-way ANOVA results of the social studies pre-service teachers' social entrepreneurship characteristics according to the variable "grade"

Factors	Grade	n	\bar{X}	SD	VK	KT	df	KO	F	p	Source of the difference (Bonferroni)
Risk taking	1. Grade	78	26.73	4.57	Between groups	307.042	3	102.347	3.780	.011*	2-4
	2. Grade	61	25.18	5.59	Within groups	6741.946	249	27.076			
	3. Grade	68	27.39	6.02	Total	7048.988	252				
	4. Grade	46	28.43	4.26							
	Total	253	26.84	5.28							
Self-confidence	1. Grade	78	30.51	4.32	Between groups	115.252	3	38.417	1.463	.225	
	2. Grade	61	29.49	5.30	Within groups	6536.787	249	26.252			
	3. Grade	68	30.25	6.25	Total	6652.040	252				
	4. Grade	46	31.56	4.17							
	Total	253	30.38	5.13							
Personal Creativity	1. Grade	78	23.29	3.46	Between groups	83.839	3	27.946	1.688	.170	
	2. Grade	61	23.06	3.96	Within groups	4121.386	249	16.552			
	3. Grade	68	23.27	5.12	Total	4205.225	252				
	4. Grade	46	24.69	3.31							
	Total	253	23.49	4.08							
Total	1. Grade	78	80.53	9.37	Between groups	1275.073	3	425.024	2.756	.043*	2-4
	2. Grade	61	77.73	12.99	Within groups	38401.559	249	154.223			
	3. Grade	68	80.92	15.81	Total	39676.632	252				
	4. Grade	46	84.69	10.26							
	Total	253	80.72	12.54							

*p < .05.

entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers differ significantly in terms of the grade variable.

A significant difference was found as a result of the one-way analysis of variance and the homogeneity of the variances was tested to find out which groups the difference existed between. Bonferroni test, one of the multiple comparisons tests, was used as the variances were homogenous. The results of the Bonferroni multiple comparisons test showed that, in terms of risk-taking factor, the social entrepreneurship characteristics of the fourth-grade social studies pre-service teachers were more positive than those of the social studies pre-service teachers studying at the second grade. It may be inferred from this finding that the "grade" variable has an influence on the social entrepreneurship characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers and that the social entrepreneurship characteristics of the fourth-grade social studies pre-service teachers are more positive than those of the ones studying in the second grade in terms of the risk-taking factor and the whole scale.

4. Conclusion and discussion

The increasing competition as a result of changing world conditions has led to focusing on educating individuals with entrepreneurial characteristics, who can take on an active role in such competitive environment experienced by the education system. It is stated that the major responsibility is to be taken by higher education institutions during the process of educating individuals, who can be regarded as social entrepreneur, in short, adopted struggling with social problems (Păunescu, Drăgan, Cantaragiu, & Filculescu, 2013). According to our point of view, faculties of education stand out among the higher education institutes. In fact, these faculties play a major role in determining both the roles of educating prospectus teachers and the social roles of individuals in the society educated by these teachers.

When it comes to increasing competence of citizenship and enabling students to take social roles in the society, the subjects related to social studies are among the most significant ones taken at elementary and secondary schools. As National Council for the Social Studies stated during the process of defining social studies, the increase in the competence of citizenship is to be included (National Council for the Social Studies, 2010).

In the current study, aiming to investigate following characteristics of social entrepreneurship of social studies pre-service teachers in terms of a general sense and different variables (gender types, describing oneself as a social entrepreneur and the grade of class):

It was concluded that the characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers had higher and positive standard of social entrepreneurship. The result obtained is parallel with the finding of the study conducted by Pan and Akay (2015) which aimed at determining the level of entrepreneurship of pre-service teachers. It was concluded that the level of students were sometimes high (Solmaz, Aksoy, Şengül, & Sarıışık, 2014) and sometimes low (Özden, Temurlenk, & Başar, 2008) in the studies related to determining the level of entrepreneurship of those students studying at different faculties and vocational colleges.

It was tested whether the characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers had a significant effect on the subdimension of the scale and the whole scale in terms of gender. According to the findings obtained, it was determined that gender variable does not have a significant effect on the characteristics of social studies pre-service teachers in the subdimension of the scale and as a whole. The result obtained is in line with the result of the study conducted by Amos and Comfort (2014) related to social studies pre-service teachers. Similarly, in the study conducted by Pines, Lerner, and Schwartz (2012), it was stated that the dominance of the male to the female observed in the commercial entrepreneurship did not exist in the social entrepreneurship. In the studies conducted by Majumdar and Varadarajan (2013) and Bilge and Bal (2012), it was stated that gender variable had no effect on the level of entrepreneurship. In some studies on the entrepreneurship issue, differences in favor of the female were observed while the differences were in favor of the male in some other studies (Doğaner & Altunoğlu, 2010; Kılıç et al., 2012; Solmaz et al., 2014).

Considering the findings obtained with regard to the variable “defining oneself as a social entrepreneur,” it was concluded that the average points of the social studies pre-service teachers defining themselves as socially entrepreneur were more positive in terms of Risk Taking, Self-confidence, and Personal Creativity. When the related literature was analyzed, no researches testing this variable were found. However, it is evident that in different studies regarding the same issue included the subdimensions of the scale used in the current study (Bozkurt & Erdurur, 2013; Çetinkaya Bozkurt & Alparslan, 2013; Gürol & Atsan, 2006; Kâhya & İmamoğlu, 2013; Talih Akkaya, Yıldız, & Koldere Akın, 2014; Zaman, 2013). Both the findings of this study and those stated in literature showed that, among the entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship features of individuals, Risk taking, Self-confidence, and Personal Creativity factors were important and they were among the characteristics which individuals should have.

No significant differences were observed between the grades of the social studies pre-service teachers, which constitutes another subdimension of the current study and the characteristics of social entrepreneurship. Also, there was no significant difference between the grades in which the social studies pre-service teachers study and their social entrepreneurship characteristics in terms of Self-confidence and Personal Creativity, while a significant difference between the grades and social entrepreneurship characteristics of pre-service teachers was found out with regard to the Risk-Taking dimension. However, the results of the research conducted by Kılıç et al. (2012) did not show a significant difference between the grade and entrepreneurship characteristics. It was seen that the study groups of several studies which aimed to measure the entrepreneurship levels of students studying at the level of bachelor's degree consisted of first and fourth grades in some studies (Doğaner & Altunoğlu, 2010; Fidan & Çiftçi, 2010), third and fourth grades (İrmiş, 2003) and only the fourth grade in others (Gürol & Atsan, 2006; Özden et al., 2008; Talih Akkaya et al., 2014).

5. Recommendations

Considering the results obtained from this study and similar ones, the recommendations below can be made both for improving the entrepreneurship levels of social studies pre-service teachers and leading further studies on this subject.

- Instead of restricting the content of the subjects such as Community Service Practices and Social Project Development, which are considered to contribute to the solution of social problems at the center of social entrepreneurship in the related literature (Saran, Coşkun, İnal Zorel, & Aksoy, 2011; Uğurlu & Kırıl, 2012) with only the implementation, contents and sample practices about how social studies candidates can train socially entrepreneur individuals as well as the theoretical knowledge told by Akar and Aydın (2015) may be added to the contents of those subjects.
- With reference to the finding that participation of social studies pre-service teachers in seminars and conferences on social entrepreneurship do not affect the improvement of their social entrepreneurship skills (Amos & Comfort, 2014), it may be suggested that further seminars and conferences on this subject pertain to the field.
- It is seen that studies on entrepreneurship are mostly conducted in business-related fields (see Eser & Yıldız, 2015) and that the numbers and contents of studies on the social entrepreneurship field are not sufficient. It is thought that the deficiency of academic studies on social entrepreneurship should be fulfilled by new studies.
- Including all grades as independent variables in further studies may be beneficial to determining the effect of grade variable on the social entrepreneurship levels of pre-service teachers.

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