SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TURKEY: SOCIAL SOLUTION FOR REFUGEE PROBLEM

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Abstract

The definition of social entrepreneurship includes systematic activities aimed at solving many social problems, from human rights, environment, development, social exclusion, poverty reduction. Social entrepreneurship makes an unlimited effort by focusing on social change, ignoring institutional and organizational norms and boundaries. In this sense, generally in the world; In particular, the refugee problem in Turkey has made the concept of social entrepreneurship even more important. In this study, the concept of social entrepreneurship will be discussed and the contribution of social entrepreneurship to solve the refugee problem in Turkey will be discussed.

Key Words; Social entrepreneur, Refugee, Social entrepreneurship

Jel Codes: L32, J6, L26

Introduction

The Syrian war and the humanitarian crisis, which lasted for more than six years, have faced Turkey with a massive refugee influx from the beginning. The fact that the war in the region gets more sophisticated and that it is understood Syrian immigrants coming to Turkey will not be temporary guests reveal the necessity of comprehensive adaptation programs for the ever-growing refugee problem. Long-term integration

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and placement of immigrants into social life requires much more detailed approaches considering the dimensions of the crisis and when it will end. In this sense, the decision-maker authorities should improve the international support and cooperation by cooperating with all non-governmental organizations regarding this problem (Orsam, 2016: 1).

According to the 2017 data of Ministry of Interior's General Directorate of Immigration Administration, more than 3.9 million refugees live in Turkey. This shows it is impossible to completely provide adaptation of refugees to the social life only through governmental policies. In this sense, the concept of social entrepreneurship will create social value and support refugees’ adaptation to the community life with more sustainable and nested solutions. Thus, it will be possible to bring this problem, which arises through the combination of state and social entrepreneurship, into controllable levels.

Social Entrepreneurship Phenomenon

When the literature on the social entrepreneurship is examined, it is seen that the academic perspective intensely focuses on the concept of social entrepreneurship and tries to establish the theoretical infrastructure. Aslan et al. (2012) argues that the reason is that the concept of social entrepreneurship varies regarding to how it creates value in what culture. In the context of this data, studies on the subject can be summarized as follows;

In his study on the non-profit organizations and non-governmental organizations in England Leadbeater (1997), mentions that social problems take precedence over macroeconomic policies day by day and they can not adequately respond to these problems, suggesting governments need a different approach to overcome this dilemma. The author defines this approach as an active welfare system designed to create social capital by encouraging people to take more control of their lives. In this sense, social entrepreneurs will be one of the most important sources of innovation. Social entrepreneurs find ways to use these resources to meet unmet social needs by identifying underused resources,
people, buildings and equipment. Lastly, the author suggests a series of measures to encourage social entrepreneurship to overcome this dilemma.

In his work Wallace (1999), examines whether or to what extent the institutions established with social purposes are effective in facilitating the efforts to revive the community and mentions the importance of extending social and profit-oriented institutions as an effective socio-political and economic link between government and free-market institutions.

In a study conducted in England, Smallbone et al. (2001), examine 20 social initiatives in a policy-based scope research to develop social entrepreneurship in their work in the UK. As a result of the study they mention the need to focus on the local and regional conditions for the development of the social economy and social enterprises and they conclude that there is no de facto social entrepreneurship policy for all conditions.

In a study conducted by Alvord et al. (2004), the researchers examine 7 cases comparatively related to social entrepreneurship. In the study, the authors aim to draw attention to the concept of social entrepreneurship, which would make a big difference in social development by investigating the social entrepreneurship factors needed to be able to achieve social transformation (Leadership, Innovation, and Growth).

In the study conducted by Craig V. VanSandt et al. (2009), the authors question the ability of social entrepreneurship alone to produce the solutions needed to address large-scale social issues. As a result, the authors conclude that it is not possible for social enterprises to solve social problems on their own for a variety of reasons.

**Refugee and Asylum Seeker Phenomenon**

In accordance with the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees (1951 Convention), "a person who as a result of events occurring in European countries and owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of
a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his
citizenship or is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail
himself or herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a
nationality and being outside of the country of his former residence as a
result of such events, is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to
return to it, shall be granted refugee status upon completion of the
refugee status determination process’’ (Law on Foreigners and
International Protection Article 61) Refugees are persons who are outside
of the countries where they come from, and request protection as a result
of cruelty, attack, conflicts and other issues which create social
unrest(http://www.unhcr.org.cy/fileadmin/user_upload/Images/UNHCR_
Refugees_Imrmigrants_Trk_FINAL.pdf).

The distinction between the concepts of refugee and asylum seeker
is as follows: the right to take sanctuary and to be a refugee mean
acquiring a legal status; the right to asylum and to be an asylum seeker
refer to actual and short-term accommodation rather than acquiring a
legal status. While refugee ‘refugee status’ means legally accepted
foreigner, asylum-seeker means a person whose refugee status is
investigated and to whom temporary protection is provided for this
reason. According to another theory, an asylum seeker is a person who
requests international protection either on the individual or a group basis.
The asylum-seeker is the person whose protection request has not yet
been finalized by the authorities of the country. For this reason, each
asylum seeker may not ultimately be accepted as a refugee, but each
refugee is initially an asylum seeker (Reçber, 2014: 251). Since 2011,
Turkey has considered Syrian immigrants who have been accepted under
temporary protection within ‘‘asylum seeker status’’ by following open
door policy. In addition to all these, it is useful to include the main
theories developed about the international immigration.

International Migration’s Dimension and Status of Refugees in
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Migration, as old as human history, is the settlement of people or social groups at a certain time and place to a place or a socio-cultural area for a short or long time or permanently (Türkyılmaz et al., 1998: 25). When we look at the history, it is known that the first massive immigration movement has come into existence with the phenomenon called "Migration of Tribes". "Migration of Tribes" lasted for years is a very important process in the foundation of today's European states (Kınık, 2010: 37). In this sense, immigration has led to a complete change of the history of mankind as a means of destroying the states, the construction of new empires, the unfolding of the new empire, even invention of the Wheel and invention of writing.

According to the United Nations to speak of international migration; the person who left his/her country and plans to live in another country is required to carry out this process for more than once in a year. (Aksoy, 2012: 294)

The mass arrival of individuals who are referred to as ‘foreigners’ rather than ‘immigrants’ in Turkey has changed the position of Turkey in the international migration regime and created a triple position by adding ‘immigrant receiving’ and country of transit’ to its single position of ‘emigrant country’. In this new position, international migration movements, especially from neighboring countries or from other neighboring countries to Turkey includes cross-border movements of various groups such as asylum seekers, refugees, transit migrants and illegal workers, etc. This movement of migration is highly related to Turkey’s geographical position. The economic, political and security problems in the neighboring countries are main factors leading to migration of people living in these places to Turkey. Moreover, Turkey’s role as a bridge between the Asian, European and African continents and the possession of important marine routes have led many migrants to choose Turkey as a transit place to immigrate to the developed countries of the West. In addition to these, it is a frequently confronted situation that foreign citizens have residence permit and work permit in Turkey as an international student or as retired if they find jobs in the country.
especially as a result of globalization and liberal economic developments after 1980 (İçduyg et al., 2014: 222).

Turkey has followed an 'open-door policy' against Syrian citizens and determined the status of citizens who took refuge in Turkey as temporary protection. This is a policy consistent with the principles of international laws, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1951 Geneva Convention. This situation, temporarily accepted at the beginning, has started to be permanent.

Syrians given "temporary protection" status will be entitled to temporary stay in Turkey unless it is terminated in whole or in part (m.11) or cancelled (m.8) by the decision of the Council of Ministers (m.25). Refugees and asylum seekers have been granted some rights with the conventions which Turkey has been a party to on the international arena. According to Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to safe asylum. However, the protection provided to persons is not limited to security of life. The refugees should be granted at least equal social and economic rights with other foreigners who are legally resident in the country. As is the case with everyone, the refugees’ basic needs such as benefiting from accommodation, nutrition, health and education services, and business opportunities should be responded. These rights are the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees that are thought to provide protection considering they would have additional problems regarding their fundamental human rights, as well as their asylum status. It has been arranged that in addition to nutrition and shelter (m.38), the Syrians with the status of "temporary protection" within the scope of the regulation can be given "health services" (m.27), "education services" (m.28), "labor market access services", "Social relief services" (m.30) and "translation services" (m.31). In addition to these services and facilities, it has been foreseen that "similar services" can be provided by public institutions and organizations separately within the bounds of possibility. (Article 26). In addition to all these, all kinds of assistance and support such as psycho-
social support, improvement, etc. will be given to Syrians with special needs within the bounds of possibility (m.48) (Long, 2015: 113).

80,742 thousand children have been reintegrated into education in the AFAD (Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency) Refugee centers. At the same time, as a result of the steps taken in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education it was ensured that a total of 508,846 thousand children from kindergarten to high school were taken from streets and they continued their education. A total of 225 thousand Syrian refugees attended training courses in various certificate programs such as foreign language, carpet weaving and computer literacy in the AFAD refuge centers. 197,948 thousand Syrian babies also opened their eyes in Turkey. All Syrian asylum seekers registered in Turkey are provided with health services and medicine free of charge thanks to the cooperation with Ministry of Health. In addition, the Ministry of Health established numerous "Migrant Health Centers" for Syrian asylum seekers. Turkey has spent more than US $ 25 billion in UN standards to dress wounds of Syrian asylum seekers and to make sure they hold on to life again. (AFAD, 2016).

As of 12.02.2016, 2,778,878 Syrian asylum seekers have been registered biometrically and their Temporary Protection Identity Cards have been issued. Among these foreigners, the number of people residing in 26 Temporary Refuge Center established in 10 cities by Prime Minister Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) is 256,971 and there are 2,521,907 Syrian foreigners outside of the Refuge Center. According to the official numbers, as of 18.12.2015, 2,415.494 Syrian people are registered. The principles for foreigners to work in Turkey have been regulated by the Regulation for Work Permits of Foreigners No. 4817. With the amendment made on the Law on Foreigners and International Protection No. 6458, the Work Permit Exemption Certificate is considered as a residence permit. Foreigners can take work permit both from Turkey and abroad. Work permit aplications made abroad are taken Turkish Republic representatives in the country where they permanently reside. For domestic applications, applications of foreigners who have been granted at least 6-month residence permit
except for their residence permits granted for education (General Directorate of Immigration) are accepted.

The services offered in the refugee camps are generally expressed as good. But the issue outside this is that there are many Syrian refugees living outside the camp, there is much deficiency that they cannot reach these services and their basic needs cannot be met. The Syrians living outside the camp are those who must live under bad conditions and have financial hardship; for this reason, they resort to the ways to make Money such as begging, informal employment, etc. (Yılmaz, 2013: 9).

**Social Entrepreneur, the Importance of Social Entrepreneurship**

Even though the history of social entrepreneurship goes back a long way, the recognition and use of it as a concept increased in 1980 all over the World with Bill Drayton establishing Ashoka. Later, in 2006, with Mohammed Yunus receiving the Nobel Peace Prize with his Grameen Bank Project, worldwide recognition of the social entrepreneurship peaked.

When the definitions of social entrepreneurship are examined, some researchers study it only within the framework of non-profit organizations, while others define it from a wider perspective within the framework of public, private, non-governmental organizations. Austin et al., (2006) defined social entrepreneurship as a creative, social value-creating activity that can be seen in private, public, or non-profit public interest. In this sense, the three basic elements of social entrepreneurship should be highlighted in the definition made by Austin and his friends. These elements are as follows;

- **Innovation**: It is a process where new ideas are constantly produced.
- **Social Value Creation**: It is aimed to create social benefit.
- **Sectors**: It can come into existence in all sectors both Public and private
Besler (2010) defines social entrepreneurship as a sustainable, innovative social process that is driven by the effective use of resources to create social value and change, and by taking risks at certain levels. In another definition, social entrepreneurship is defined as profit oriented organizations’ or people’s efforts to meet the social needs and to solve problems of society (Özdevecioğlu and Cingöz, 2009; 84). Fowler (2000) conceptualizes social entrepreneurship as providing and sustaining social benefits (creating socio-economic structures, relations, institutions, organizations and practices). Fowler also divided the variations of social entrepreneurship activities into three categories and defined them as follows;

- **Integrated Social Entrepreneurship**: At the same time, production activities generate social benefits. Integrated Social Entrepreneurship creates horizontal, vertical, forward and backward links that strengthen the ties forward to provide economic benefits.

- **Re-interpreted NGO**: It is defined as a reinterpreted version of the integrated social entrepreneurship. In this sense, it means that the non-profit organization is diversify its existing activities creatively in order to reduce costs and increase revenues.

- **Complementary Social Entrepreneurship**: This non-profit entrepreneurship variation, which does not have a social benefit, aims to diversify the income stream by establishing a profit oriented initiative to meet the costs of the social duty of the organization.

Social entrepreneurship is works conducted by people or institutions by creating new opportunities and not accepting existing limitations to achieve social change by (Paredo and McLean, 2006: 56). Social entrepreneurs generally address unmet social needs or new social opportunity creation areas that the public or private sector can not handle (Nicholls, 2006: 15). Social entrepreneurship has also led to creating new markets and market areas through initiatives such as fair trade and microfinance, as well as transforming existing markets.
The common thing in all definitions of social entrepreneurship is the reality that the driving force that forms the basis of social entrepreneurship is to create social value rather than personal and partners’ wealth. The main driving force of social entrepreneurship is the social issue handled (Austin et al., 2006: 2).

Social entrepreneurship is often found as an interaction between NGOs and other organizations through self-sustained and independent activities that vary within economic and legal framework within a country. In addition to this, when there is sufficient cooperation between social institutions and the private sector with the ability of improving social side of social organizations various organizational forms can be developed with different social outcomes (Crisan and Borza, 2012: 107).

Social entrepreneurs are leaders in the field of social change and can be found in private, public and non-profit sectors. These social innovators combine an entrepreneurial spirit with a concern for the "social" basic line besides its "economic" concept, accepting that strong and vibrant communities are a critical factor in sustaining economic growth and development (CCSE, 2001: 2).

Social entrepreneurs develop new opportunities by catching points that others cannot notice, revise systems and bring new ideas and solution proposals to the bleeding wounds of the society. Like an entrepreneur in a commercial sense who finds new ideas and puts them in practice, social entrepreneurs also try to solve the existing problems of the society with innovative solutions (Ersen, Kaya, Meydanoğlu, 2010: 10). Social entrepreneurs are visionaries who have the power and competence to overcome the obstacles they will face with, and have the financial sources to put their ideas into practice in this sense. (Johnson, 2003:4, Hasan, 2005: 3).

Social entrepreneurs play a change agent role in social sphere. In this context (Dees, 1998, 4);
They create and maintain social value by adopting a mission. They reduce needs rather than meeting needs. They want to create lasting improvements.

They seek the opportunities to serve the missions they have identified and pursue them patiently. In other words, they consider the issues others see as problems as opportunities. The question of ‘How can we overcome this obstacle’ is their philosophy.

They constantly learn and go after innovations. Social entrepreneurs have high tolerance in the sense of uncertainty.

They seek lasting solutions in the social sphere by bravely evaluating opportunities rather than being limited to scarce resources.

There is an unlimited sense of responsibility in finding resources for charities.

In sum, social entrepreneurs are individuals offering innovative solutions to the most urgent social problems of the community. They are ambitious and insistent, handling big social issues and offering new ideas for large scale changes. Social entrepreneurs find out what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution and persuading all societies to move in different directions.

Social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs are becoming increasingly important for country economies in terms of their ability to create value from the social and economic perspective and to take a role in the solution of social problems. The most significant contribution of social enterprises to the economy is to put the workforce which does not work but has the potential to produce at the disposal of economy. In this sense, it is extremely important that they generate employment and help disadvantaged groups (young people, homeless people, women, disabled people, etc, etc.) to get employed and reintroduced into society.

The disadvantage of social entrepreneurship is that it provides psychological relief by eliminating people’s intimidation for problems that seem impossible to be solved by innovative approaches it shows to
solution of problems while contributing to the solution of problems (TOG, 2013: 10). They also open the way for efficient use of resources by relieving the public through efficient, sustainable, innovative social services.

Social capital is defined by the OECD as "networks with common norms, values and insights that facilitate collaboration among or within groups". In this definition, we can consider networks real world connections between groups or people. The importance of social enterprises and social responsibility projects in strengthening of this link is a stubborn fact.

Social enterprises and entrepreneurs develop new goods and services for social and economic development. They seek new answers to social problems, determine and offer new services that improve the life quality of individuals and societies. Social innovation seeks new ways to boost creative economic value to satisfy needs unmet by the market. For this reason, social innovation is seen as a way to increase the welfare of individuals and communities and has been successfully implemented by social initiatives (OECD, 2010: 196).

Finally, social entrepreneurship addresses social issues by providing reintegration of disadvantaged groups into the labor market and by providing appropriate goods and services to those in need, and it fosters a more equitable society by trying to ensure sustainable efficiency, not merely with profit maximization, but continuing social mission (Nagler, 2007: 7). For example; Nobel Prize-winner, Mohammed Yunus has supported women and included women in the labor market with his Grameen Bank Project and in this sense, has supported development by creating social benefit. Therefore, to capture the economic and social development level, basic components of development, it is necessary not to ignore programs that would encourage social entrepreneurship as well as financial investments (Koçak and Kavi, 2014, 31).

**Solution to the Refugee Problem of Social Entrepreneurship**
Many nongovernmental organizations and institutions in our country are working in the field of social enterprise. But they have not yet created a full sector and have not developed their ability to operate together. Therefore, the development of the skill mentioned will be possible through the communication between the social enterprises and the correct exchange of information. Only this way, a social awareness can be created in and good examples within the project scope can be transformed into models and prod the masses into action with big multiplier effect (Ersen, Kaya, Meydanoğlu, 2010: 27). For this reason, only government initiatives will not be enough with refugee flows that our country has been exposed to in recent years due to its geographical position. Strengthening the connections between social enterprises and NGOs can be called a stop to a bleeding wound by creating a synergy and reaching the required level of communication.

Since the beginning of the Syrian Crisis in 2011, nearly 4 million of the millions of Syrian refugees who have had to shelter in neighboring countries have been forced to migrate to Turkey. As war continues, their responsibility of stepping forward not only for for their own socio-economic structures but also for the refugees, is increasing. In this sense, there is a need for sustainable and innovative solutions to the solution of the socio-economic problems faced by refugees and their host countries and to the adaptation of refugees to the regions reside.

Providing long-term social integration of the Syrians is extremelly important to eliminate the despair and aimlessness within the Syrian youth, faced with the risk of being a lost generation, and also it is vital important for them not to fall into radical groups’ traps. The realization of policies to be produced in this direction only by the state will bring problems in terms of both time and economy in reaching the desired goals. Therefore, the involvement of entrepreneurs in social projects will ensure that civilian institutions take action. Involvement of non-governmental organizations and non-profit organizations will increase the number of the projects to be developed and bring about more innovative solutions to the problems.
The Conference on "Innovative Solutions for Refugees", which Ashoka, the world's first and largest social entrepreneurial network, has organized for refugees in Turkey, in partnership with the Vehbi Koç Foundation and Koç University has offered innovative solutions to the refugee problem as one of the best civil initiatives put forward for the long term integration of immigrants into social and business life. The first one is ReDI School of Digital Integration, which improves refugees' chances of finding a job through trainings by improving their coding skills, makes effort to meet need for staff this way with coding skills which is extremely important for the IT sector. In Turkey, KAMER is trying to solve the problem of adaptation of this disadvantaged group with sports by making efforts to strengthen women and children. Another non-governmental organization, AYDER and the Dreams Academy, have given diving and swimming courses and have set up a maritime search and rescue team to use for the refugee problem. Revealing unseen potential of refugees through social enterprises, creating creative employment models, using sports and digital technologies to empower refugees, employing women and young people by empowering them can be considered as a start to prevent refugee crisis deepen. Thus, while providing the families with income, the steps will be taken to make them have the skills they can use both in other countries and in Turkey.

**Evaluation and Result**

Economic and social developments, the geographical region being resided, and wars bring along serious changes and public burdens for countries. It is not really possible for the government to meet all such necessities timely and completely. During such times, social entrepreneurs, who strive to establish a sustainable world for individuals and the society, reduces the burden on governmental units by producing projects aimed at improving social prosperity.

It would be optimistic to claim that problems that linger within the society despite intense governmental effort would be totally resolved by social entrepreneurs and social novelties. However, suggestions for
solutions that social entrepreneurs provide could contribute greatly to the solution of the problem or its minimization. Social attempts that are put forward by social entrepreneurs using new tools and methods are important in order to reach out to and cooperate with diverse sections of the society. It is important to ensure a large societal participation whenever a suggestion for a solution is attempted the first time. The ultimate goal of providing social benefit will be attained through this cooperation.

It is getting increasingly burdensome for Turkey to accommodate Syrian refugees. This burden does not only make itself felt economically, but also socially. The fact that the civil war in Syria will not be resolved in a short term indicates that social problems stemming from refugees cannot be resolved via classical approaches. Social attempts would be able to resolve one of the biggest problems, integration into social life, by ensuring a large-scale, innovative participation of entrepreneurs. This method could also resolve problems such as destituteness and poverty.

It must be noted that refugees in Turkey do not constitute a homogeneous social and economic block; in terms of economic prosperity, education, and ability, they form a multi-layered community. For this reason, the extent to which the abilities of the refugees can meet the needs of the Turkish labor market should not be emphasized; instead, they should be incentivized to set up new businesses and make new investments in Turkey.

The encouragement of entrepreneurs within the refugees will not only increase the employment of Syrian workforce, but also contribute to the economic development of local regions close to the border. Especially, in the premises where Syrian refugees reside densely, semi-official organizations (chambers of commerce, agencies of development, etc.) play an important role in terms of entrepreneurship. These organizations should be motivated to act as local authorities in ensuring the accordance of Syrian businesses with local economic life. It should also be ensured that they act as important players in minimizing the negative impacts of international immigration and contribute to both the refugees and Turkey in economic matters.
In order to touch the lives of refugees in our country and reduce the plausible socio-economic friction, it is important for our entrepreneurs to lend a hand to refugee entrepreneurs. Furthermore, Syrian women refugees, who have set up successful businesses with women entrepreneurs in Turkey, sharing their experiences would constitute a very important step. Women refugee entrepreneurs would lead the way in entrepreneurship, revealing the strong bond between social interaction and entrepreneurship and increasing social awareness.

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