

# ENTREPRENEURIAL IDENTITY OF TURKEY: A RESEARCH ON DISTANCE LEARNING STUDENTS

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To Cantillon, entrepreneurship is a self-employment with an uncertain return. Cantillon focused on entrepreneur as a person; for the next 200 years, considerable research investigated the entrepreneurial personality (Dana, 1997). To Schumpeter, an entrepreneur is a person who carries out new combinations, which may take the form of new products, processes, markets, organizational forms, or sources of supply (Sharma and Chisman, 1999). It is clear that the definition of entrepreneurship is multidimensional and that different research questions draw attention to different dimensions of the construct (Busenitz and others, 2000). There is a growing body of literature arguing that intentions play a very relevant role in the decision to start a new firm (Linan and Chen, 2009).

This study uses Entrepreneurial Intention Model (EIM), which was originally developed by Linan and others (2011), to have a cognitive perspective on entrepreneurship. According to EIM together with entrepreneurial intention (EI) and motivational factors such as personal attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control, entrepreneurial behavior is also affected by environmental factors such as having closer environment valuation and social valuation of the entrepreneurship. In other words, based on EIM communication level with the environment also affects the entrepreneurial behavior. The effect of these factors on each other and on entrepreneurial behavior differs based on the regional culture and sub-identity of the entrepreneurs.

A Turkish translation of the questionnaire, which was originally developed by Linan and others (2011), was used with the permission of the author. The questionnaire was put into Anadolu University (AU) online distance learning (DL) student information system and students were asked to respond voluntarily. DL Faculty of AU, which has completed the 34th year, provides higher education to approximately 1 million 650 thousand students, also has a role by special projects to overcome Turkey's educational problems. Although this study keeps the focus on the EI of DL Faculty Business Administration department 3rd and 4th year students, which are considered as the entrepreneur candidates of the future, participants from other departments were also accepted to analyze the effect of the courses at business administration department on the EI. The quantity of the total participants is above 7000 from 81 different cities in Turkey. The result of the study is expected to provide information on the entrepreneurial identity of the DL Faculty students and the comparison between departments, cities and regions will be facilitated to identify the differences and possible causes.

Difference between eastern and western regions of Turkey in terms of development and national culture is significant, and business opportunities between touristic and industrial areas also differ. Therefore, elective courses should be prepared to cover the requirements of the entrepreneur profiles from different regions. Identifying the identity such as the most innovative entrepreneurs, the most conservative entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs willing to cooperative is significant and by publishing the results the identity of the Turkish entrepreneurs is going to be revealed through DL students.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship, entrepreneur candidates, distance learning, open and distance learning, management trainee