

## Entrepreneurial Development at Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey

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**Abstract:** Nowadays, universities are being challenged to transform their systems of higher education and to be more entrepreneurial in order to succeed in a changing environment. This issue becomes more important when one studies HEIs in emerging economies in which the entrepreneurial mission of universities has been defined recently. There would be different approaches in studying these entrepreneurial developments. Thus, the main purpose of this article is to review the result of the unique discussion session conducted during the peer-learning workshop on 'Entrepreneurial Teaching' during the international conference HEInnovate: Supporting Institutional Change in Higher Education at Ruse University 'Angel Kanchev', Bulgaria. The case of Entrepreneurial Development at Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey was the topic of the discussion. To do so, as the authors were engaged in the process, a group discussion and the data were analyzed by coding the observation field notes and interview transcriptions according to emergent themes. Findings reveal the issues related to initiatives, their expected outcomes, main activities, key stakeholders, and key barriers. In addition to this, some key learning conclusions are suggested accordingly.

**Key words:** Entrepreneurial Universities, Entrepreneurship Education, Academic Entrepreneurship, Regional Socio-Economic Development, Higher Education, Turkey, HEInnovate.

**JEL Classification:** M13

### I. Introduction

Higher education is changing and Entrepreneurship Education in Higher education institutions (HEIs) has gained global significance as a lifelong learning process. Naturally, universities play a key role in this continuous changing environment. Although there are many studies and finding of Entrepreneurship Education worldwide, it is known that the progress varies widely, between countries, regions and individual universities. More specifically, Entrepreneurship Education is being delivered effectively in Europe, not only by the top-ranked institutions but also by others that are less well known in a diverse range of contexts. This includes not only different countries or institutional character of the HEI, but also the supporting environment of entrepreneurship teaching, which may vary according to the level of institutional support, access to teaching resources

and the amount of general administrative support for Entrepreneurship Education. There is no single model which can be applied to all the institutions and, therefore, it is important to share experiences and exchange ideas among the educators so that individual institutions can create their own unique model in their own environment.

The purpose of this article is to review the result of the unique discussion session conducted during the peer-learning workshop on 'Entrepreneurial Teaching' during the international conference HEInnovate: Supporting Institutional Change in Higher Education at Ruse University 'Angel Kanchev', Bulgaria on 14th June 2018. Besides, it will outline the main questions and answers raised during the discussion session. It is also aiming at sharing the experience learnt from the workshop and suggesting recommendations for future

research directions. In order to achieve these objectives, the authors first review the existing literature and then propose the research methodology. Afterwards, the findings are discussed and the paper concludes with some remarks and directions for future research.

## II. Literature review on Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is a critical domain, since it deals with promoting entrepreneurial attitude, as well as awareness of the trainees. Thus, it has drawn the attention of different scholars in the last decades (Henry & Lewis, 2018), and entrepreneurship education programs have started to grow around the Globe (Salamzadeh et al., 2013). This trend was highly affected by similar programs such as business courses, management science programs, as well as technology management courses (Fitz-Koch et al., 2018); but, more specifically, the field of entrepreneurship education focuses on developing creativity and enterprising skills of the learners in order to enhance their chance of starting a new venture or turning a new idea into a marketable product/service with an entrepreneurial approach (Jones & English, 2004). These educational programs would be assessed based on their efficiency and effectiveness through measuring a variety of key performance indexes (KPIs) (Radović Marković & Salamzadeh, 2012).

As Henry et al. (2005) argued, a significant number of studies in this field have been done, based on the framework proposed by Jamieson (1984), who categorized the main issues as: (i) raising pure awareness, (ii) preparing individuals to become self-employed or run their own venture, and (iii) developing the skills and abilities of trainees to become able to run an existing venture. However, there are still several issues to be discussed by existing scholars, which are mentioned in some works of scholars such as Baptista and Naia (2015), Sirelkhatim and Gangi (2015), Schmitz et al. (2017), Galvão et al. (2018). It is noteworthy that most of the current research is mainly focused on changing the attitude of trainees (Nabi et

al., 2018), as well as on bridging entrepreneurship education and technology transfer and commercialization efforts (Lackéus & Williams Middleton, 2015).

Another important topic is entrepreneurship pedagogy, which is studied by scholars such as Kuratko (2005), Pittaway and Cope (2007), and Lautenschläger and Haase (2011). For instance, Solomon (2007) argued that entrepreneurship pedagogy must mostly deal with personalities and characteristics of trainees, and considers such courses as capacity building programs. The important question in this domain is how to design the right curricula. This stream of research still needs more attention, since as the field grows, several branches of entrepreneurship education programs come into existence, such as social entrepreneurship education (e.g. see Kirby & Ibrahim, 2011; Pache & Chowdhury, 2012; Salamzadeh et al., 2013), technological entrepreneurship education (e.g. see, Waters, 2010), and the like.

Last but not the least is the challenges among trainers and trainees, as well as their qualifications. This stream of research is more recent. For instance, Nkirina (2010) and Lourenço and Jayawarna (2011) explore this relationship and investigate the relevant challenges. Moreover, Ghina (2014) also investigates the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions and the role of trainees and trainers. This challenge is important, since if the trainers or trainees do not have the required qualifications, their relationship and the learning curve might turn into a vicious circle (Baliyan & Baliyan, 2013).

## III. Research Methodology

In this study a qualitative research methodology approach was followed. Interviews and group discussions were used to gather the required data, which were mainly done by the researcher. The peer-learning workshop on 'Entrepreneurial teaching' took place during the International Conference on HEInnovate as mentioned in the introduction. The workshop was in the format of speed-dating setting where the author presented the initiative three times

in the course of 1 hour and 30 minutes. The sessions were conducted 3 times for 25 minutes, each in front of a changing group of interested participants from different countries. The first 12-13 minutes were used to tell the audience more about the initiative and then the remaining 12 minutes were dedicated to discussion. The participants were free to ask questions within the group and exchange ideas while the presenter received feedback. Having this exercise three times in a different crowd was a great opportunity to get integrated with the participants within a very limited time. A database was designed to increase the validity and reliability of the findings.

#### IV. Findings

The author has collected information from her institution by using HEInnovate tool prior to the event. The sample was collected amount 50 students and staff who took the Entrepreneurship Education at Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey. Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning, Internationalised Institution and Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs received the highest score among seven key areas (now eight including digital capability and transformation which was introduced after the event) and identified the strengths and weakness in each as shown in Figure 1, 2 and 3.



Figure 1. The Internationalised Institution

1.1 The HEI provides diverse formal learning opportunities to develop entrepreneurial mindsets and skills. 3.71

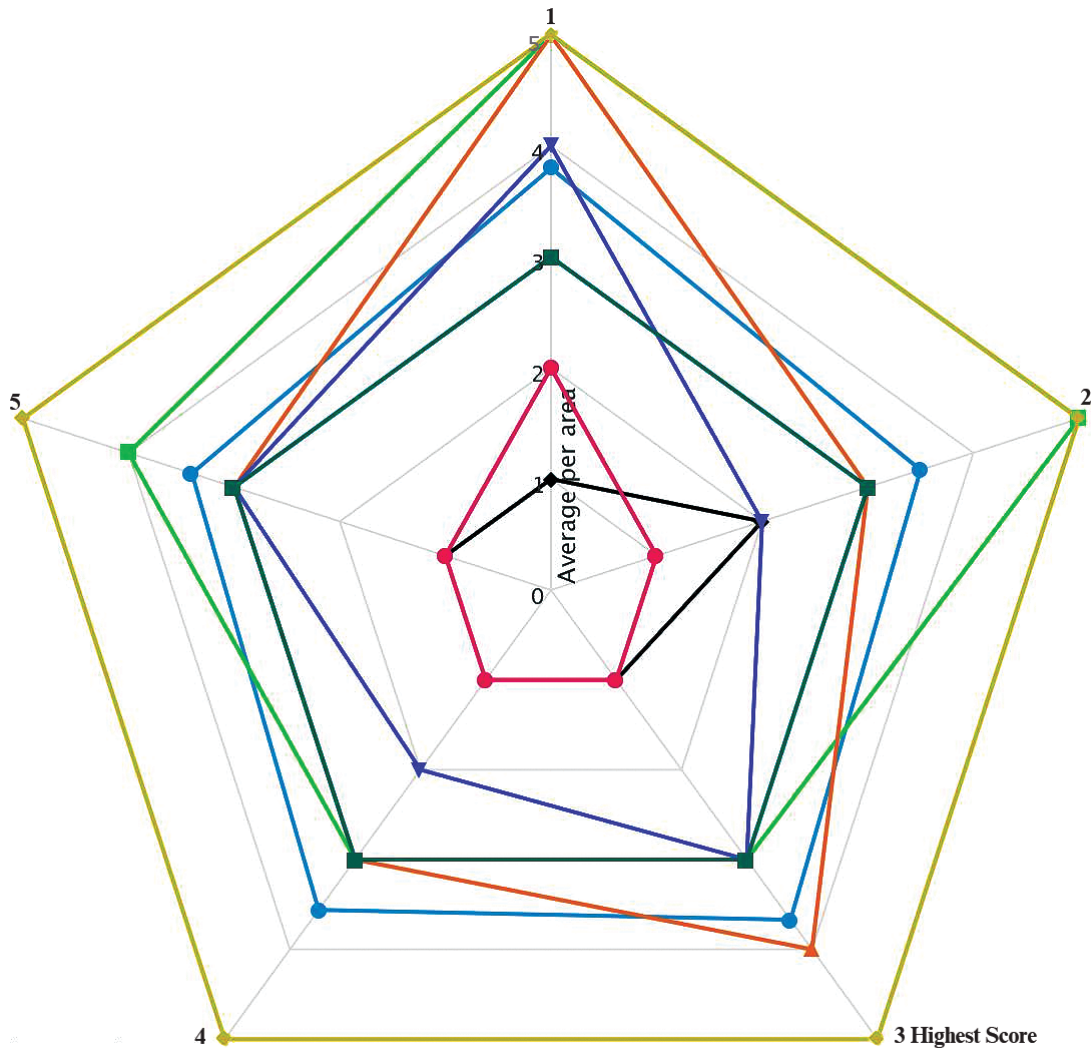
1.2 The HEI provides diverse informal learning opportunities and experiences to stimulate the development of entrepreneurial mindsets and skills. 3.29

1.3 The HEI validates entrepreneurial learning outcomes, which drives the de-

sign and execution of the entrepreneurial curriculum. 3.31

1.4 The HEI co-designs and delivers the curriculum with external stakeholders. 3.27

1.5 Results of entrepreneurship research are integrated into the entrepreneurial education offer. 3.18



**Figure 2.** Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning

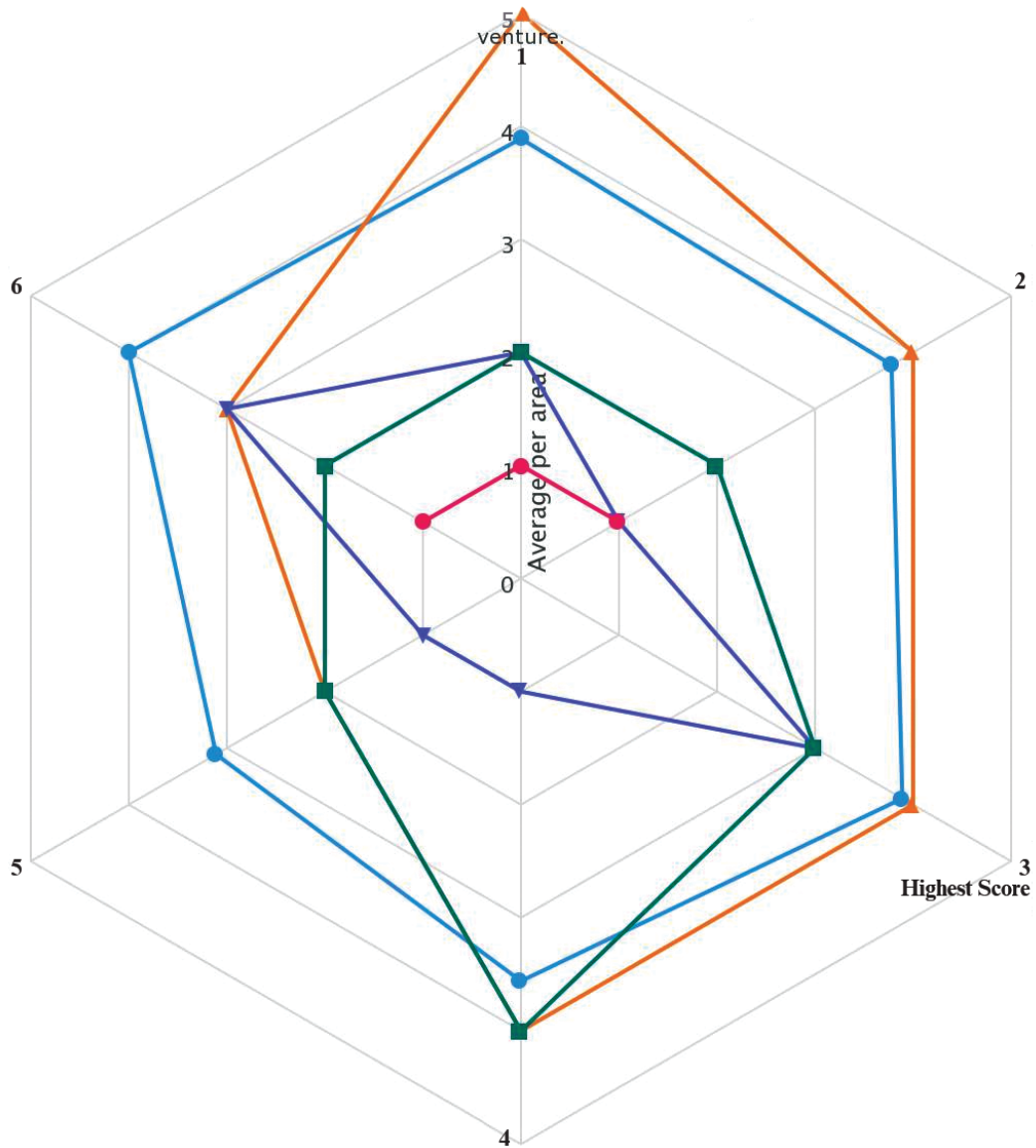
2.1 Internationalisation is an integral part of the HEI's entrepreneurial agenda. 3.64

2.2 The HEI explicitly supports the international mobility of its staff and students. 3.79

2.3 The HEI seeks and attracts international and entrepreneurial staff. 3

2.4 International perspectives are reflected in the HEI's approach to teaching. 3.21

2.5 The international dimension is reflected in the HEI's approach to research. 3.5



**Figure 3.** Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs

3.1 The HEI increases the awareness of the value of entrepreneurship and stimulates the entrepreneurial intentions of students, graduates and staff to start up a business or venture. 3.46  
 3.2 The HEI supports its students, graduates and staff to move from idea generation to business creation. 3.23

3.3 Training is offered to assist students, graduates and staff in starting, running and expanding a business. 3.75

3.4 Mentoring and other forms of personal development are offered by experienced individuals from academia or industry. 3.42

3.5 The HEI facilitates access to financing for its entrepreneurs. 2.75

3.6 The HEI offers or facilitates access to business incubation. 3.46

According to the findings shown in Figure 1. The Internationalised Institution was identified as one of highest scored dimensions at OMU. This is due to the wide opportunities available at OMU for International credit mobility for students and staff exchange programmes such as Erasmus+ KA103, KA107 and Mevlana Programme. In addition, Participation at Youth Projects including KA105 EVS projects is highly recommended and support is available to interested students.

The title of the initiative was "OMU Entrepreneurship Education" and Entrepreneurial Development at Ondokuz Mayıs Univer-

sity, Turkey was presented by the author sharing her 5 years entrepreneurial experiences, emphasising on Entrepreneurship Education and its associated activities. The information below is the summary of

the presentation prepared by the author which was available to participants prior to the session.

<p>HEInnovate Dimension/s mostly relevant for the initiative</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration The Internationalised Institution</p>
<p>Objectives and expected outcomes of the initiative</p>	<p>To provide courses in English To create international learning environment To create active student and staff network To introduce entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial learning.</p> <p>Entrepreneurship Education increases Entrepreneurial intentions among students and academic staffs. To be able to promote and support entrepreneurship, universities have to be entrepreneurial and innovative. However, these are still new tasks for many universities and they need assistance at all levels. Therefore, the guiding framework to help universities pursue the goal of becoming an "Entrepreneurial University" would be a valuable tool for managers. The higher education council needs to introduce implementation of new policies in order to support the academic entrepreneurship alongside the entrepreneurial education in the curriculum on a national scale.</p>
<p>Why have you started the initiative – in response of which challenge/opportunity?</p>	<p><b>Problems at OMU</b> Fewer opportunities for International Students, exchange students (Erasmus and Mevlana) to get together with local students and the community</p> <p><b>What can we do?</b> To create formal activities where all students can join together and learn in a global environment.</p> <p><b>How?</b> Providing support and guidance for Interactive learning Environment – Offering courses open for all in English, creating social entrepreneurship projects. Our Core Course 'Innovation and Entrepreneurship'</p>
<p>Activities (undertaken so far, or planned)</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial University Awareness Rising Activities Between 2013-2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First event organised towards the Internationalisation of Entrepreneurial University in collaboration with University of Tehran, Faculty of Entrepreneurship- 2013</li> <li>• Workshop for Ph.D. students - Research on Entrepreneurship with data from GEM (3ECTS)</li> <li>• Guest Professor: Thomas Schott from University of Southern Denmark and the head of Global Entrepreneurship Monitor in Denmark -2014</li> <li>• A joint panel with UiTM, Malaysia</li> <li>• "Entrepreneurial Leadership – Good Practice" – 2015</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A joint Conference with UiTM, Malaysia - Good Governance International Conference in Istanbul – 2016</li> <li>• HOW TO LEARN, HOW TO ACT – CREATIVE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROJECT (A STUDY ON UNIVERSITY-SCHOOL COLLABORATION) 2013-2015</li> <li>• Courses organised by International Relations Office 2017: Creative Entrepreneurship / Global Citizenship and Languages (Japanese)</li> <li>• This <b>1601 Capacity Building for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Grant Programme</b> was initiated by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey in 2014 and 14 universities were granted the support of Entrepreneurship Certificate Programme at their institutions. In 2015, 61 Universities submitted their application and 35 universities were selected for the grant. OMU is among the eligible universities for this programme grant. We have been running the Entrepreneurship Education Lessons since 2015 under the framework of this project (this will end in 2018)</li> <li>• We have successfully obtained new project funds from <b>DOKAP</b> and established an <b>Entrepreneurship Incubation Centre</b> at the Faculty of Agriculture. We are providing <b>Entrepreneurship courses</b> and also conducting research.</li> </ul>
Key stakeholders (inside and outside the HEI)	Schools / Different Faculties / NGOs / Youth communities / Business Associations / University Management / Higher Education Council / Policy Makers / Funds providers
Key barriers, challenges and bottlenecks in implementing the initiative	Dealing with Bureaucracy within the University, Securing the funding, Lack of support and understanding among academic staff
What have you learned from implementing the initiative so far?	<p>There is a high demand and potentials to spread the entrepreneurial learning environment / mindset. However, we need a system and these initiatives must be supported by the policies and by the management.</p> <p>Our next step is to contribute to the improvement of the related policies which affect the development of the University.</p>
3 key achievements to date	<p>Provided Entrepreneurship Education to over 1000 students and 50 academic staff</p> <p>Establishment of active youth group (For Erasmus+ KA105) Success story – Accepted projects under the Youth Project – Created International Network</p>
What would you do differently if you could start with the initiative from scratch	It would have been more structured if we could have started our initiative as a capacity building project at system level.

### Questions raised and suggestions / comments given by the participants during the discussion sessions

In general, positive feedback was received and most of the participants were interested in the continuous support provided for students and the successful outcome of the En-

trepreneurship Course we offered. One of the groups of students which we have been mentoring has successfully created the opportunity to put the theory into the practice under the framework of Erasmus+ KA105 Youth Exchange Programme. This specific type of continuous training – combination of formal and informal education is not commonly provided by the participating HEIs. When the story was presented, few participants were actually interested in getting their students involved in this type of projects.

The main discussion issues were addressed to how to develop the Entrepreneurship Education Programme and each HEIs seems to have similar barriers such as lack of support among colleagues from different fields and University management to create an eco-system within and outside the campus.

It was then highlighted by one of the participants that collaboration between internal and external stakeholder is required within and among university personnel involved in Entrepreneurship Education as this could enhance the quality of the Entrepreneurship Programmes. HEIs should consider extending existing networks and using the networks to further integrate alumni, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders into Entrepreneurship Education for better outcome of the programmes. She then presented a brief experience of her HEIs and how the Entrepreneurship Education was introduced in a disadvantaged environment. After the conversation, the author requested for assistance to share the knowledge and experiences in order to help developing the capacity building strategies at authors' institution. Erasmus inter-institutional agreement was then signed between the affiliated HEIs and the ideas exchanged during the workshop are to be realised in the near future.

The snowball sampling technique was applied during the discussion and as the above examples illustrate, snowball sampling helped each session to identify the important issues associated with the topic and also provided the opportunity for further collaboration and development among the peers.

## V. Conclusion

The present paper tried to investigate the state of entrepreneurial approach in Turkish Higher Education Institutions. To do so, the result of the unique discussion session conducted during the peer-learning workshop on 'Entrepreneurial Teaching' during an international conference (HEInnovate: Supporting Institutional Change in Higher Education at Ruse University 'Angel Kanchev', Bulgaria on 14th June 2018) was reviewed in this research.

The findings of this research were in line with the findings of similar studies. For instance, Salamzadeh and Kawamorita Kesim (2014) found similar issues regarding the institutional factors affecting academic entrepreneurship in Turkey. Also, the findings were in line with the findings of the workshop on "Entrepreneurial Universities: What is it, and what it isn't?" (BAP Project) which was held in 2013 in Turkey, as well as the findings of Radovic Markovic et al. (2012).

There is much to learn from each other among European entrepreneurship educators. Entrepreneurship Education should be accepted within university culture, and supported by the management with resources, and it should be an integral part of regional eco-systems. More importantly, the Entrepreneurship Education programmes should be tailored to meet the demands of the organisational and regional environment of their own institutions.

Based on the experience we had during the workshop, exchanging stories of successful and failing case studies and entrepreneurial storytelling seem to be a useful tool to be used among peers. Also, it is suggested to use a formal model with empirical data to support the entrepreneurial stories. Comparative studies on Entrepreneurship Education Programmers' between different countries from a similar environment may attract the interest of educators having similar conditions.



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