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Entrepreneurship in a cultural context: A research on Turks in Bulgaria

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is seen as incubator of economic growth. Entrepreneurship profile may show some similar features all over the world but the rest is under the influence of culture. Our study aims to identify the national culture that people perceive, to analyze entrepreneurial intention, preferences of professional options and cultural differences between people born before and after 1980, and to explore relationship between people's perceptions of national culture and entrepreneurial intention. The survey of this study was conducted on 384 people who live in Bulgaria with Turkish roots. To test the hypotheses, a field survey using questionnaires was conducted. Data were analyzed through SPSS program and differences and relations were tested through t tests and regression analyses. Analyses results revealed that attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control have significant and positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. The factor having the greatest impact on intention is perceived behavioral control. It's found that there are differences between people's born before and after 1980 entrepreneurial intention, preference of professions and perceptions of national culture. In accordance with the regression analyses results, only power distance is found to have a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention and its effect on intention is negative.

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1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is one of the most important factors that affect economic dynamics. According to Alfred F. Whitehead, big societies are those who understand the magnitude of the role of entrepreneurs

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(İrmiş et al., 2010). Entrepreneurship is seen as an alternative to unemployment and a route to escape poverty (Bogan and Darity, 2008). For these reasons entrepreneurship is encouraged to stimulate growth. In this process we need to learn how one can stimulate the volume and intensity of entrepreneurial activity, and why some people choose an entrepreneurial career and others do not. Policy makers and scholars should concentrate on these questions to find effective answers to be a strong actor as national or sectoral etc. in the competitive world (Turker and Selcuk, 2009). Some explanations; personality characteristics, national incentives, education, culture etc. are used to solve these questions. Culture is the most influential factor because of its connections to all human related fields. Eventually people act as part of the myths, dogmas, ideologies and undeveloped theories (Denzau and North, 1994). Therefore, entrepreneurship cannot be thought that it is not affected by the traditions, customs and moral values generate culture (Güney and Nurmakhamatuly, 2007). Although some social structures courage entrepreneurial spirit but others do not. The previous studies in the literature use different cultural context to explain entrepreneurial intention (EI). In this study GLOBE dimensions is preferred to analyze culture.

This study follows the cognitive approach, through the application of an Entrepreneurial Intention Model. According to it, a narrow relationship would exist between the intention to be an entrepreneur, and its effective performance. Intention becomes the fundamental element towards explaining behavior. It indicates the effort that the person will make to carry out that entrepreneurial behavior. And so, it captures the three motivational factors that influence behavior: attitude towards the behavior, perceived social norms and perceived behavioral control (Liñán and Chen, 2006). Within the framework of cultural and entrepreneurial differences, our study focuses on the entrepreneurial intentions. In this context, the study begins by a literature review of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions, culture, government and entrepreneurship interaction and go on to development of hypotheses. At the second section, research methodology, results and research model will be expressed. The results of the analyses will be discussed and recommendation will be provided for policy makers, managers and scholars at the last section.

2. Literature Review And Hypotheses

2.1. Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions

Entrepreneurship is defined as the main factor for economic growth (Casson, 1995). Initially entrepreneurship was detected as starting a business with people using their own capital. Classical economists' saw entrepreneur, not only as "a leader or a manager," but also as "the person providing the capital" (Küçük, 2005). Entrepreneurs with their pivotal role have been known to exist for a long time, but the study of entrepreneurship in the contemporary sense started with Schumpeter (Fiş and Wasti, 2009). The best known economist Joseph Schumpeter, defined entrepreneurs as "innovators, who use a process of shattering the status quo of the existing products and services to set up new products, new services" (Sharma et al., 2013). Different theories emerged to explain entrepreneurship. These are economic-based approaches, psychology-based approaches and social-based approaches. Each theory focused on different points of entrepreneurship. Psychological and sociological theories focus on personality traits, values, attitudes, and expectations, economic theories focuses on goals, objectives, entrepreneurial process and performance. However, the important point here is that phenomenon of entrepreneurship cannot be explained with one theory alone (<http://sbaer.uca.edu/research/icsb/1997/09.pdf>).

The human organism is under the influence of numerous stimuli arising from internal and external factors (Aytaç, 2000). In general, behaviors are respectively shaped by the shape of the outside world,

represented in the mind and person's preferences (Shaver and Scott, 1991), in other words behaviors can be defined as "the organism's response to certain stimuli" (Eroğlu, 2011). Guerrero et al. (2008) identified six basic EI model developed in this area for detection of entrepreneurial intent and behavior. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is one of the basic models used in the literature for the analysis of entrepreneurial intention (Miralles and Riverola, 2012; Kolvereid, 1996; Schlaegel and Koenig, 2013; Fretschner and Weber, (in pres); Do Paço et al., 2011; Fini et al., 2009). As in the original theory of reasoned action, a central factor in the theory of planned behavior is the individual's intention to perform a given behavior. Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior. As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance. It was found that intentions are influenced by three factors: Attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude toward the behavior is about degree to which a person has positive or negative evaluations of the behavior in question (Erten, 2002). An increase in a person's attitude toward entrepreneurship influences the person's desire to establish his own business and to realize entrepreneurial desire positively (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2013). Subjective norms are about perceptions of what important people in respondents' lives think about performing a particular behavior (Krueger et al., 2000). In this context, subjective norm is defined as "perceived social pressure to do or not do a particular behavior" (Ajzen, 1991). Situational variables and behavioral differences influence who will be in the reference group. Sometimes this group encompasses family and friends, and sometimes is able to express the general public (Başbuğ, 2008). Perceived behavioral control refers to "personal perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior of interest" (Ajzen, 1991). Since it was understood that the intentions, attitudes, norms, behaviors and other cognitive processes are affected by the culture, many studies shows that culture have a significant role on individual decision-making (Choi and Geistfeld, 2004). Therefore, to carry out a better analysis of behavior, cultural infrastructure should be examined carefully.

2.2. Culture

Entrepreneurship profile may show some similar features all over the world but the rest is under the influence of culture (Ozgen, 2012). The most important point of the definition of culture is shaping people's interpretations and perceptions. Differences in the interpretation and perception, lead to the emergence of different behaviors (Engelen et al., 2009). Tylor said that "culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (http://anthro.palomar.edu/culture/culture_1.htm). Entrepreneurs who are the most dynamic segment of society are immediately affected from cultural change; in order to survive they have to follow current events very closely. Culture leads to variations in entrepreneurial activity. These are: Cultural background has a decisive significance on exchange of information; local culture (effect and effected by the regional institutions, etc.), beliefs, understandings and practices shared by the community define everything in the market and regional-based cultures build a basis for economic activities through many factors such as innovation (Pütz, 2003).

In order to identify national culture, different studies have been carried out but in this research it is thought that family structure, education systems etc. are effective within the scope of the culture and therefore the GLOBE study consisting of nine cultural dimension defined by House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman and Gupta, (2004) were evaluated. Cultural dimensions are: Power distance, uncertainty avoidance, institutional collectivism, in group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, assertiveness, humane-orientation, future-orientation and performance-orientation (House, et al., 2004). Powers distance "is a

general measure of the degree of interpersonal influence that those who hold power in a social structure can exert over those who lack power" (Bwisa and Ndolo, 2011). The uncertainty avoidance dimension "expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity" (<http://geert-hofstede.com/dimensions.html>). Institutional collectivism dimension measures the degree to which society encourages collective action and in-group collectivism refers to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations and families (Steers, Sanchez-Runde and Nardon, 2010). Gender egalitarianism is the extent to "which an organization or a society minimizes gender role differences and gender discrimination" (Javidan and Dastmalchian, 2009). Assertiveness dimension is about the degree to which people are assertive, confrontational in relationship with others (Ozgen, 2012). The other dimension, humane-orientation can be defined as the degree to which members of a society are fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring and kind to others (Schlösser, 2006). Future-orientation is defined as "the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification" (Sokoll, 2011). Performance-orientation "reflects the extent to which a community encourages and rewards innovation, high standards, excellence, and performance improvement" (Grove, 2005).

2.3. State

There are different definitions about state depending on assets, land, people and the authority (İşçi, 1999). "The state's goal is to adapt to civilization and morality of the masses according to the requirements of sustainable development of economic device of the production" (Hall, 1999). The state can be explained by using five features (Türköne, 2011): Sovereignty (refers to absolute and unlimited power over all society), public sphere (collective decision making and implementation), legitimacy (Common good and to maximize the interests of society), govern (ensure compliance with the law and to punish non-compliance) and geographical area (connect everyone unconditionally within specified limits). The state makes decisions for transportation to the maximum welfare evolving everything and everyone under the auspices of possession and it can be said that the state shaping social life by having the right to enforce criminal sanctions when failure to comply with this decision. However, the state can shape human behavior via the following social policies (Eroğlu, 2011). States does not affect entrepreneur just the way of management, but also the policies of the state and relationships with businessmen (especially individualized relationships) are the determining factor on size and types of enterprises (Hall, 1999).

2.4. Development of hypotheses

A research which aims to study the students' intentions of entrepreneurship found that the TPB is proven significant to predict students' entrepreneurial intention whereas subjective norm was the strongest variable in the modeling (Astuti and Martdianty, 2012). Leffel's study (2008) which was established to determine students' preferences on professions who are from the department of business administration in USA, found that intention to work in own business is directly influenced by subjective norms. In many other studies it was found that subjective norm has positive impact on entrepreneurial intentions (Tkachev and Kolvereid 1999; Kolvereid and Isaksen 2006; Hagger et al., 2007). At the same time some research found that perceived behavioral control related to entrepreneurship is the strongest factor to predict entrepreneurial intentions (Fini et al., 2009; Almobaireek and Manolova, 2012; Autio et al., 2001). Some other studies exposed that positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship will increase the attractiveness of the person to self-employment, and this allows intent to convert into the behavior (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2013; Hagger et al., 2007; Fini et al., 2009). When considered these findings

together, three factors are seen to affect entrepreneurial intention positively. Our hypotheses about this issue are as follows:

- H1: Perceived behavior control, subjective norm and attitude toward behavior positively related to entrepreneurial intention.
- H2: There is a significant difference between people's entrepreneurial intention born before and after 1980.
- H3: There is a significant difference between people's preference of professions born before and after 1980.

In the cultural context, previous research found that managers in low power distance cultures will have more autonomy and deal with less hierarchical bureaucracy. These situations allow people to engage in more risk taking behaviors than those in high power distance cultures (Ozgen, 2012). In the institutional dimension, some studies found that entrepreneurs have a high level of individuality (Liñán and Chen, 2009). Some studies on the level of economic development and welfare it was found that there is a positive relationship between levels of economic development and entrepreneurship (Tiessen, 1997; Arıkan, 2004; Terrence and Ulijn, 2004). In earlier studies masculine values as higher income level, to be in a respected position in the society and to be successful were established to be an important motivational tool for entrepreneurship. These values can be accessed through entrepreneurship. Therefore, a relation between masculine values and possibility for the creation an association can be expected. Considering the results of the research, the data confirms this expectation, the masculine values also increased with increasing possibility for the creation the business (Günay and Gökten, 2012). Successful entrepreneurs are often self-confident. These entrepreneurs, accepts the risk of conflict, rely on their own behavior and their beliefs encourage them (Adams, 2001). In this respect, following conclusion can be reached: Self-reliant communities are one step closer to entrepreneurship, because in this culture people sympathize with the stronger and entrepreneurship is a symbol of power. Indeed Calvelli, et al., (2012) found a positive relationship between assertiveness, and negative relationship between dimension and the average rate of total entrepreneurial activity. Further Zhao et al. (2010) reported that there is a direct and positive correlation between humane orientation and entrepreneurial activity. Future orientation was found highly correlated with the entrepreneurial activities in a country. According to GLOBE research, in countries with high entrepreneurial rate the future orientation values are relatively high, whereas countries with low orientation rate the future orientation values are relatively low (Ozgen, 2012). Petrakis (2010) found that society's beliefs on future orientation attitudes shape the portfolio of innovative and equilibrating entrepreneurial events. In the light of the literature our hypotheses about culture and entrepreneurship are as follows:

- H4: There is a significant correlation between people's perceptions of national culture and entrepreneurial intention.
- H5: There is a significant difference between people's perceptions of national culture born before and after 1980.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research goal

In this survey we aim to identify the national culture that people perceive, to analyze entrepreneurial intention and cultural differences between people born before and after 1980 and to explore correlation between people's perceptions of national culture and entrepreneurial intention.

3.2. Sample and data collection

The survey of this study was conducted on people who live in Bulgaria with Turkish roots. The reason for selecting Turks in Bulgaria is the political regime changes in 1990. Along with this change, the socialist regime was destroyed and democracy has become the new form of government. Due to these changes, it is assumed that behaviors of people living in socialist and democratic regime are different.

To test the hypotheses, a field survey using questionnaires was conducted. Data obtained from 384 people. Data were analyzed through SPSS 20 statistical packet program and differences and relations were tested through t tests and regression analyses.

3.3. Analyses and results

A Scale developed by House et al. (2004) was used to obtain data related to national culture. This scale consists 9 dimensions. Entrepreneurial intention scale is adopted from Liñán and Chen (2006), which measures those variables central to the entrepreneurial intention model: i.e., personal attraction (5 items), perceived social norms (3 items), self-efficacy (6 items) and intention (6 items). 7 point scale was used for two part of questionnaire.

Table1.Regression Analysis Results on the Entrepreneurial Intention

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	,318	,368		,863	,388
1 Personal attraction	,375	,089	,184	4,212	,000
Perceived social norms	-,118	,085	-,060	-1,381	,168
Perceived behavioral control	,807	,072	,501	11,206	,000

Dependent Variable: entrepreneurial intention

In Table 1, it can be seen that the attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control have significant and positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. The factor having the greatest impact on intention is perceived behavioral control (beta=0,501). Perceived social norms have no significant effect on intention. So, regression analysis results support "H1: Perceived behavior control, subjective norm and attitude toward behavior positively related to entrepreneurial intention" partially.

Table 2. T Test Results on Entrepreneurial Intention Differences

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Entrep. intention	Equal variances assumed	,149	,699	5,022	382	,000	1,25746	,25039	,76515	1,74978
	Equal variances not assumed			5,022	381,979	,000	1,25746	,25037	,76519	1,74973

Table 2 shows the differences between people's entrepreneurial intention born before and after 1980. Results revealed that there is a significant difference between two groups' intention. The reason of this, entrepreneurial intentions of born before 1980 (mean=4,9957) is lower than born after 1980 (mean=3,7382). T test result supports H2: "There is a significant difference between people's entrepreneurial intention born before and after 1980".

Table 3. T Test Results on Differences between People's Preference of Profession

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Civil servant	Equal variances assumed	1,767	,185	-3,337	382	,001	-,55983	,16779	-,88973	-,22993
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,337	382,000	,001	-,55983	,16778	-,88971	-,22995
Salaried work	Equal variances assumed	15,186	,000	3,249	382	,001	,51998	,16005	,20529	,83467
	Equal variances not assumed			3,254	356,827	,001	,51998	,15982	,20567	,83429
Liberal profession	Equal variances assumed	,929	,336	,716	382	,475	,13081	,18278	-,22857	,49019
	Equal variances not assumed			,716	379,252	,474	,13081	,18269	-,22840	,49001
Entrepreneur	Equal variances assumed	14,607	,000	3,289	382	,001	,54730	,16642	,22008	,87452
	Equal variances not assumed			3,295	338,760	,001	,54730	,16610	,22057	,87402

Table 3 shows the differences between people's preference of profession born before and after 1980. Results show that, just in terms of liberal profession there is not a significant difference, but for the other three professions it is seen that there is a significant differences between those born before and after 1980. The reasons for these differences can be seen in Table 4. H3: "There is a significant difference between people's preference of professions born before and after 1980" is partially accepted.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Differences between People's Preference of Profession

		Group Statistics			
Generation		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Civil servant	born before 1980	193	1,9637	1,65319	,11900
	born after 1980	191	2,5236	1,63457	,11827
Salaried work	born before 1980	193	3,3420	1,76987	,12740
	born after 1980	191	2,8220	1,33367	,09650
Liberal profession	born before 1980	193	3,5078	1,87394	,13489
	born after 1980	191	3,3770	1,70272	,12320
Entrepreneur	born before 1980	193	2,2332	1,90464	,13710
	born after 1980	191	1,6859	1,29605	,09378

In Table 4, it is seen that people born before 1980 prefer to work as a civil servant than others. But people born after 1980 prefer to be an entrepreneur more than others. Both groups preferred the liberal profession at least.

Table 5. Regression Analysis Results on the Relations of Entrepreneurial Intention and Culture

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4,617	1,307		3,534	,000
Uncertainty avoidance	-,102	,100	-,054	-1,027	,305
Power distance	-,183	,084	-,116	-2,170	,031
Institutional collectivism	-,061	,083	-,040	-,731	,465
In-Group collectivism	-,201	,118	-,089	-1,699	,090
Future orientation	-,105	,070	-,079	-1,487	,138
Assertiveness	-,081	,108	-,039	-,746	,456
Gender egalitarianism	,389	,201	,098	1,933	,054
Humane orientation	,048	,079	,034	,610	,543
Performance orientation	-,058	,065	-,049	-,888	,375

Dependent Variable: entrepreneurial intention

In accordance with the regression analyses results seen at Table 5, only power distance has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention and its effect on intention is negative. "H4: There is a significant correlation between people’s perceptions of national culture and entrepreneurial intention" is not supported.

Table 6. T Test Results on Perceptions of National Culture

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Perceived uncertainty	Equal variances assumed	1,009	,316	-2,976	382	,003	-,40020	,13446	-,6645	-,1358
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,977	381,404	,003	-,40020	,13443	-,6645	-,1358
Perceived power distance	Equal variances assumed	,795	,373	-2,389	382	,017	-,38866	,16269	-,7085	-,0687
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,390	381,164	,017	-,38866	,16264	-,7084	-,0688
Perceived institutional collectivism	Equal variances assumed	,464	,496	-2,145	381	,033	-,36639	,17078	-,7021	-,0306
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,146	380,309	,032	-,36639	,17070	-,7020	-,0307
Perceived in-group collectivism	Equal variances assumed	7,900	,005	-2,619	382	,009	-,29683	,11333	-,5196	-,0739
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,616	357,752	,009	-,29683	,11348	-,5200	-,0736

Table 7. T Test Results on Perceptions of National Culture (Continuation)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Perceived future orientation	Equal variances assumed	,230	,632	-1,223	382	,222	-,23829	,19476	-,6212	,1446
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,224	381,559	,222	-,23829	,19472	-,6211	,1445
Perceived assertiveness	Equal variances assumed	,153	,696	,410	382	,682	,05170	,12617	-,1963	,2997
	Equal variances not assumed			,410	381,951	,682	,05170	,12615	-,1963	,2997
Perceived gender egalitarianism	Equal variances assumed	5,581	,019	1,056	382	,292	,06893	,06528	-,0594	,1972
	Equal variances not assumed			1,055	363,456	,292	,06893	,06535	-,0595	,1974
Perceived humane orientation	Equal variances assumed	,068	,794	-2,210	382	,028	-,40329	,18252	-,7621	-,0444
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,210	381,976	,028	-,40329	,18252	-,7621	-,0444
Perceived performance orientation	Equal variances assumed	1,513	,219	-3,043	382	,003	-,65906	,21661	-1,0849	-,2331
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,042	380,137	,003	-,65906	,21668	-1,0851	-,2330

A t-test was conducted to find out whether people born before and after 1980 had significantly different cultural practices in terms of GLOBE's cultural dimensions. Results revealed that the people born before and after 1980 had significantly different cultures in terms of perceived uncertainty, perceived power distance, perceived collectivism, perceived in-group collectivism, perceived humane orientation, perceived performance orientation dimensions, as shown in Table 6. According to T test results H5: "There is a significant difference between people's perceptions of national culture born before and after 1980" is partially accepted.

4. Conclusion

This study examined the entrepreneurial intention, perceived national culture and relationship between entrepreneurial intention and national culture. Some of the findings of our study support but some are in conflict with previous studies. Although previous research suggests that there are relationships between cultural dimensions, the results of this study do not confirm these suggestions except the power distance dimension's correlation with culture. This study also provided support for the entrepreneurial intention model. Results suggest that strong perceived behavioral control and attitude toward the behavior encourage individuals to create their own business. Together with these, differences are found between people born before and after 1980. It is also important because political regime changes affect on perceived national culture and preferred professions. It was found that changes in upbringing-culturing process lead to differences in perceptions and preferences of individuals. People born before 1980, prefer to keep them protected, so they prefer to be civil servant. But the others prefer to be entrepreneur.

This survey is conducted on Turks in Bulgaria; findings might not be transferable to all cultures and countries. Therefore, further investigation can perform the research to generalize findings over different ethnic groups and in different countries. Another limitation of this survey is to use questionnaire to obtain data, further surveys can use different methods.

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